

T H E   S T U D Y

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T H E   D I A T E S S A R O N

S I N C E   C U R T   P E T E R S

(1940 TO THE PRESENT DAY)

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THE STUDY OF THE DIATESSARON SINCE CURT PETERS (1940 TO THE PRESENT DAY)

A harmony of the gospels made in the latter half of the second century is surely amongst the most important witnesses both to the gospel text at that time and to the exegetical and theological principles which guided churchmen of that period: that is to say, potentially a most important witness, if we possessed it and were assured of the reliability of its text. I speak of the Diatessaron of Tatian the Assyrian author of the pungent *Oratio ad graecos*: his harmonistic activity was recorded by Eusebius in the *Ecclesiastical History* about one hundred and fifty years after it had taken place. But first amongst the riddles about it, is the enigma that already Eusebius was unacquainted with the work in detail: it had, so short a time afterwards, apparently disappeared in the Greek church, or at any rate, if it survived, had escaped the careful researches of the "father of church history". It remained lost - if we except the work of Victor of Capua, who in the year 546, in the codex *Fuldensis*, tells us that on finding an anonymous harmony in Latin, he identified it with the work of Tatian mentioned by Eusebius, and this, textually emended and provided with the Canons and sections, lies before us in the codex. In this prologue we find our second enigma, that Victor, stating that he draws his information from Eusebius, nevertheless calls the harmony *Diapente*, not *Diatessaron*, as does Eusebius and the various Syriac sources which refer to the work. This already enigmatic history continued for thirteen centuries: apart from these references, Western scholars knew no more of the work than its name, and what they could, if they wished, learn from the codex *Fuldensis*. Even in the nineteenth century J. B. Lightfoot, answering the sceptic Cassels, could not prove by documentary evidence that the *Diatessaron* had existed: yet he already possessed the Armenian version of the commentary of Ephraem the Syrian upon it, but could not read it. It had been published in 1836 yet was not translated until 1876.

The translation by Aucher published by Moesinger set in train modern study of the work, and the edition of an Arabic version published in 1888 provided further material. The work was adorned by the learning and acumen of many scholars of the time, Zahn, Rendel Harris, Burkitt, Vogels, Plooiij and Baumstark. The point from which we begin today our more detailed survey of recent work

is the discussion by a pupil of Baumstark, Curt Peters, published in 1939 as No. 123 of the series *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, *Das Diatessaron Tatians. Seine Ueberlieferung und sein Nackwirken im Morgen-<sup>land</sup> Abendland sowie die heutige stand seiner Erforschung*. The subtitle of Peters' work emphasises the wide geographical and linguistic range of the research which had been pursued in the seventy years of his survey. It is no surprize that the East should figure within it: the first traces to be published were in Arabic and Armenian, and both clearly stemmed from Syriac sources. To find from this starting point striking contacts in Syriac fathers and lectionaries, in the Old Syriac gospel mss., in Palestinian Syriac, Turkish, Georgian, and Sogdian sources, and in Manichaeian literature might almost have been foretold as inevitable. At least it comes to us with our hindsight, as nothing unexpected. But it was surprizing and still remains to some incredible, that a third of the space of Peters' book, and perhaps more than a third of the actual volume of work which he describes, should be in the area of Western Christendom, and should deal with many of the languages of Western Europe in their medieval form - Dutch, German, English, French, and Italian. The impetus for this development had been given in 1923 by Plooijs' study of a harmony in medieval Dutch, of which he later began a full edition and commentary. He claimed that this was derived from a lost Latin Diatessaron, translated from Syriac, as variants within the Dutch text still revealed. He also discerned traces of this in the Latin commentary of the scholastic Zacharias of Bezançon "In unum ex quattuor". The work was continued by Baumstark who introduced the area of ancient and medieval German literature of the harmony type, and linked with his study of this, his expertise in the Oriental field. Attention was also drawn to a late medieval English harmony, called Pepysian from its owner, the diarist Sir Samuel Pepys: while Tuscan and Venetian harmonies also attracted the attention of editors. The other major event in the period covered by Peters was the discovery in the excavations of the frontier town of Dura-Europos on the Euphrates of a parchment fragment of a harmony in Greek, which showed close relationship to the order and wording of the Diatessaron as known in its Arabic and Fuldensian forms. On palaeographical grounds <sup>the</sup> ~~in~~ fragment could be attributed to the early third century: and the archaeological data confirmed this, since the fragment was found buried beneath

a wall which we know was constructed between 254 and 257 A.D. A Greek harmony, a corrupting influence on such texts as the Codex Bezae, had long been postulated by certain scholars, especially Vogels, and one verse had turned up in a Greek minuscule: now the definitive proof seemed to have appeared. But Baumstark sought to show that the Dura fragment was a retranslation from Syriac, made presumably for Western Christians worshipping with the Syriac church, which used the Diatessaron as scripture: his arguments have seemed cogent to most subsequent students of the problem. As a perusal of Peters book shows, these main developments before he wrote indicate one major methodological problem of the whole area, namely, that constant recourse must be had to arguments of retranslation, and sometimes mistranslation, from an ultimate Syriac, often through many stages, into the most diverse other languages. There are few who can control them all: indeed, Baumstark seems to have been the only scholar who moved with equal ease in the majority of the languages involved.

Peters' conclusions at the close of his study are (a) that the original language of the Diatessaron was Syriac, (b) that its composition was from the four gospels now canonical, plus one other source (hence the term Diapente in Victor of Capua); this source was the gospel according to the Hebrews (which accounts for the fact that Epiphanius identifies this with the Diatessaron), (c) that the structure of the harmony reveals Tatian's rhetorical training and was "ein literarisches Mosaik von hoechste Schoenheit und Vollendung . . . eine wirkliche Harmonie" (this is shown not only in a fragment such as the Dura parchment but in middle German traces like the Schoenbach and Himmelgarten fragments). (d) that it is frequently difficult to extract the original form of the harmony in any particular passage, because of the continual process of revision to agree with the canonical

gospels: if we find a place where the different strands of the tradition are irreconcilably opposed, we should choose the reading furthest removed from the canonical wording. Peters considers that the value of the Diatessaron is enhanced by the information which it can give about its apocryphal source and urges that if we have established the text, we must then seek to distinguish between Tatian and his source, although this may often remain uncertain. He intimates that the encratism of Tatian is a factor which we should not overlook.

In 1942 there appeared from Peters' hand two further contributions to his chosen field. A survey, *Neue Funde und Forschungen zum Diatessaron - problem*, published in Biblica, and a study of the Italian Harmonies, to which he had been able to contribute only the shortest of chapters in his book. The survey covers seven articles: the first, by Stegmüller, hoped to establish the existence of a second Greek fragment, the Berlin NT papyrus, carrying now the conventional number of p25. The main point of the argument is the reading of Mt.xix.5. where the normal text adds Gen.i.27 and ii.24: the papyrus inserts (after the separating verb eipen) the name of Adam, an addition already known from two mss. of the Dutch harmonies. This, it was argued, was due to Tatian's encratite disapproval of sexual union, which by this addition was shown to be Adam's invention, not the creator's intention. The second discussion was of Baumstark's attempt to show that the reading of codex Bezae at Lk.24.13 (Oulammous 1. Emmaous) rests on a Syriac error ('ayin read as lamadh): the name however is found in Gen.28.19, and the reading may thus be an onomastic identification. The English Arabist Beeston had identified a Bodleian ms. of the Arabic Diatessaron: and the Scot Matthew Black had published work on the links of the Palestinian Syriac with the Diatessaron witnesses. The remaining three articles reviewed by Peters were all concerned with the recently published Italian harmonies (1938 in the series Studi e Testi, by Vaccari, Vattasso and Todesco,

a combination of expertise in the Biblical, linguistic and medieval fields): the most detailed was Peters' own, in the Journal Romanische Forschungen. He found that the Tuscan harmony, while frequently accommodated to the Vulgate reading, sometimes nevertheless agrees in contrary fashion with the Dutch harmony tradition. The Venetian harmony however shows in a majority of its text, a relation with the Dutch harmonies. In fact, Peters investigates at some length the possibility of an Italian model for the Dutch tradition: but this he eventually rejects. The Dutch and Venetian harmonies are descendants of a Latin harmony other than that from which the Fuldensis text and the Tuscan harmony are direct descendants, although related to it. This early Latin harmony was the ~~source~~<sup>source</sup> of many readings which before the discovery of the Venetian text were deemed to be the product of a tendency to paraphrase on the part of the translator of the Liege<sup>ms.</sup> of the Dutch harmony. He discusses finally the relatively few readings where the Venetian provides Western attestation of readings already known in the Eastern wing (such as Mt 10.29 "without the knowledge of the Father" l. aneu tou patros tantum) shared by the Venetian<sup>(ia)</sup> with an Arabic translation.) and the case of Mt 4,3/Lk 4.3 where the Venetian<sup>(ia)</sup> alone, in P.'s view, preserve the original wording of the work of Tatian (which has left traces also in two of the mss. of the Palestinian Syriac, as Black,<sup>loc. cit.</sup> had also pointed out).

The only other work to appear during the war years was A. J. B. Higgins summary, in <sup>the</sup> J.Th.S. article, of his doctoral thesis work upon the Arabic Diatessaron: in this, customarily asserted to be very highly corrected to agree with the Peshitta text before its translation from Syriac, he had been able to identify a fairly numerous group of readings in which the Diatessaric base showed through.

Thus in the work of scholars working contemporaneously with Peters, principles very close to those outlined in the conclusions of his book were still dominant. The search for Syriac mistranslations, for tendentious readings, with a close attention to minute detail in every available witness: and a conviction that the newest discoveries confirmed Plooijs' postulate of a Latin harmony, the parent of Western harmonies in general, and now, according to P. himself, known in some aspects of its inner Latin evolution.

It was not until the fifties that work began to appear which was the product of the years between '39 and '45. First we mention Stanislas Lyonnet, Les origines de la version arménienne et le Diatessaron. (1950). Lyonnet had written the sections upon the Armenian

and Georgian versions for M-J. Lagrange's "Critique textuelle; la critique rationnelle" of 1935, and had maintained there the view earlier expounded in great detail by Frederic Macler (Le texte arménien de l'évangile, 1919) that the Armenian was translated from the Greek. That he had subsequently revised his opinion was already clear from essays published in 1938: here is the fuller exposition of the proof. He studies the earliest Armenian authors from the pseudo-Agathangelos (writing about 491, but using earlier documents) and Eznik to Lazar of Pharpi, that is, from throughout the fifth century; the quotations from the gospels in translations made from both Greek and Syriac; the Old Georgian version of which the Armenian origins are well known; and the liturgical books of the Gregorian church. He notes that the earliest authors rarely quote evangelists by name (some never do so). He studies many quotations in detail comparing them with the wide-ranging sources for the knowledge of the Diatessaron. He finds an Armenian version earlier than that known in mss. and studied by Macler. It was translated from Syriac, and shows marked harmonistic features. Was this version a Diatessaron or a Tetraevangelium? He is persuaded that the former is the case, firstly, because of the absence of citation under the names of the single evangelists, secondly, since certain passages in the liturgical sources are clearly harmonizations: thirdly, since readings of known Tatianic provenance are found in parallel passages of two or three gospels, in those sources which give a four-gospel form to this earlier material e.g. the Old Georgian, or in older readings remaining in the later graecized Armenian. This material must have come into Armenian in the single channel of a harmony and its presence in the separate gospels must have been derived from this source when a four-fold gospel pattern was introduced.

At the same time as Lyonnet was perfecting his work, the Estonian Arthus Vööbus was pursuing a parallel course of scholarship. His main contention was a challenge to a position classical in this field of study since Burkitt's work, namely that the Diatessaron was supreme in the Syriac field until the episcopate of Rabbula ( ) who then substituted the Peshitta. The Old Syriac, known from two mss., only was a tentative adaptation of a four-fold gospel form which never became widespread. Vööbus declared that the evidence in fact pointed to a fairly <sup>wide-</sup>widespread, and certainly long-lived influence of the Old Syriac within the church, and a much later appearance of the Peshitta than Burkitt assumed himself to have proven. He takes this stand too in relation to the topic of Lyonnet's research: he considers him to

have worked on the assumption that Burkitt's case is sound, and that a Diatessaron was the only Syriac gospel form which could have had official sanction at the operative date. But since he considers his own alternative cogent, his interpretation of the Armenian evidence, much of which he had independently gathered, is that it is a translation of a Syriac four-fold gospel of Old Syriac type, and therefore much under the influence of the Diatessaron, but no longer in the form of a harmony. It is hard to decide between these distinct interpretations of the evidence, since in most instances single verses or phrases are the matter of the debate. I hazard the opinion that what we have here is a conflict of distinct habits of treating evidence between historians on the one hand (Vööbus was professor of historical theology at Tartu University before its destruction), and biblical scholars on the other. Biblical scholars (whatever their ecclesiastical obedience) have been conditioned in a stern school of scepticism, to disbelieve traditions however venerable and to let texts speak for themselves: historians on the other hand are often heard to express surprize or astonishment at this sceptical treatment of plain statements by biblicists (we might recall here the refreshing and challenging approach of the late Johannes Munck, coming from patristic study to the problem of the history of the church of the Pauline period). It is against the background of the historical traditions of the Armenian church that Vööbus bases his doubts about a Diatessaron in Armenian dress: Lyonnet studies the textual evidence in itself and lets it speak. Vööbus does not comment on the significant evidence adduced by Lyonnet from the parallel transmission of readings of Tatianic origin in the separate gospels, and while he acknowledges that the liturgical material is important, and commends Lyonnet on its discovery, he is not to be swayed from his acceptance of certain dicta of Armenian tradition. Yet on the other hand, he does put forward in passing the important observation that "the gospel text of the Syrians . . . strongly influenced the Armenians . . . by means of oral traditions in liturgy, devotion and instruction", a possible explanation of the data uniquely found in liturgical sources, but one ignored by Lyonnet. It is, in short, a very nice question of method, but it is important in fields other than textual study, and deserves our reflection.

Lyonnet's work appeared in 1950 in the series Biblica et Orientalia: the next year in the same series there was published another perhaps yet more important contribution to Diatessaron studies, which, like Lyonnet's work, had been some decades in preparation. This

was the Persian gospel harmony edited as Diatessaron Persiano by Giuseppe Messina, announced by him in fact, in a slender volume in the same series in 1943. It is an edition of the Persian text, with Italian translation, from a sixteenth century ms. of the Library of Lorenzo<sup>di</sup> Medici at Florence. It is itself a copy of the work of a thirteenth century writer, who claims to have composed the harmony which his ms. contains: the editor finds reason to doubt this claim (a similar one is made, incidentally, in the preface to the Liege ms. of the Dutch harmony). He goes on to show that the work is a combination of two sources, either two Syriac harmonies, or a Syriac harmony with a harmonizing lectionary. It is quite clear, from divergences of order with the main Diatessaric witnesses, that this work has completely left the original pattern of the work of Tatian; nevertheless, in the matter of distinctive readings, as opposed to order of pericopae, that it retains close links with that ultimate source. The work is divided into four chapters. The first of these has twice been collated with Diatessaric witnesses; once by Baumstark whose work is given by Messina in an appendix to his introduction; once by the American scholar Metzger on the basis of what Messina published earlier (this collation appeared in the JBL in 1950 and was reprinted in a volume of collated papers in 1963). Both collations<sup>(ec)</sup> amply demonstrate the high value of this harmony for distinctive Tatianic readings.

The Arabic Diatessaron had attracted attention upon its first publication and indeed, had been misused by the textual critic von Soden as a source for knowledge of Tatian's text: it had been re-edited in 1935 by the Maronite Marmardji, and as I have mentioned had been studied by Higgins. Two other works call for mention. Firstly, the Semitist Paul Kahle (in his Schweich lectures of 1941, first printed in 1947, and in a second edition<sup>§</sup> in 1959) had discussed the transmission of this text. He showed that there are in fact two distinct traditions, with clearly demarcated codicological and textual features. The texts are different, and Kahle calls for a new edition in which the distinctions will be made plain. He claims that the links alleged by one tradition with the Christian Arab, Ibn at-Taiyib, (<sup>re</sup>known as a doctor as well as a translator), are fictitious, and part of an attempt to present a defence of Christian belief, backed by highly respected authority, against the challenge of the Muslim theologian al-Ghazali.

Secondly, Vaccari issued an important study in 1957 in which he showed that the Arabic Diatessaron had been enriched by the use of the developed form of the Eusebian canons current amongst the Syrians. This leads, for instance, to the phenomenon that the Arabic Diatessaron will give two separate passages where, not only the Western tradition, but also Ephraem, can be shown to present a filigree in which diverse elements of the gospels are mingled. These two studies are clearly indications that the Arabic Diatessaron demands a new edition and a full commentary (such as it has not yet received).

In the meantime, the progress of our studies was greatly enhanced by a combination of devoted scholarly labour and unexpected good fortune, which we link with the name of Dom Louis Leloir, monk of Clervaux. Leloir, a pupil of Lyonnet, was encouraged by his teacher to make a new edition of the Armenian version of Ephraem's commentary upon the Diatessaron, which, apart from the tiny fragment of Dura-Europos, was the most direct contact with the text of Tatian's original work. The editio princeps had been made in 1836 and was difficult to obtain: yet more difficult was it to find the translation of Aucher revised by Moesinger, on which most scholars relied. Furthermore, this translation was misleading since for the Biblical reference used had been made of the Latin Vulgate as a guide, and many features of Vulgate text had been treated e.g. by Zahn in his great initiatory study, as if they were the text of Ephraem and potentially information about the Tatianic original. Leloir produced a new edition, giving the text of one ms. with a full apparatus criticus of the variants of the other (both from the library of the Mechitarist Fathers of Venice). The text was published (in the Louvain corpus) in 1953; the translation (in the same series) in 1954. Leloir proceeded with Ephraem studies, preparing a repertorium of Ephraem's quotations from gospel sources in works other than his commentary on the concordant gospel, and composing two books based upon his new edition of text of that commentary. These three works were published in 1958, 1961 and 1962 respectively (*L'évangile d'Ephraem d'après les oeuvres editées; Doctrines et méthodes de S. Ephraem d'après son commentaire de l'évangile concordant; and, Le témoignage d'Ephraem sur le diatessaron*). The publication of all three had been held up by the totally unexpected discovery in 1957 of a Syriac ms. in the library of Sir Chester Beatty of Dublin, which

was found upon examination (by Cyril Moss of the British Museum) to contain part of Ephraem's commentary in the original Syriac, dating from the early fifth century. Clearly, this marked a major step forward in Tatian studies: and Dom Louis postponed his work while he undertook the edition of the Syriac. This appeared in 1963 in the series of Chester Beatty monographs: facing the Syriac text it has a Latin translation, with footnotes, and is in itself a valuable tool of research. It gives us, for instance, the form known to Ephraem of three textual points which have been called "hallmarks" of Diatessaric descent, namely the Davidic descent of Joseph and Mary, the light which shone over Jordan upon Jesus' baptism, and "he looked on him with love" as Jesus' reaction to the character of the rich young ruler. It changed critical opinion on several points e.g. Ephraem makes five references to "the Greek" viz. to gospels either in Greek, or, as is more likely, so called since translated afresh from the Greek. These had been considered, before the discovery if this ms. to be interpolations in the Armenian version of Ephraem's work. Now it is clear that they are genuine: Dom Louis acknowledged his own change of mind. Again, studies of Matthew Black had discussed linguistic features of the Old Syriac gospels (already pointed out by Burkitt) which belong to West Aramaic not to Edessene Syriac: Black's view was that these features came into the tradition of the separated gospels from a source other than the Diatessaron which also influenced their form. The presence however of some of these in the text of Ephraem suggests that they were a factor in the composition of Tatian's text. Perhaps they were linked with Tatian's apocryphal source, but this possibility has not been examined.

Leloir's book on the witness of Ephraem to the Diatessaron is a basic source book for Tatianic studies. Firstly he gives a tentative reconstruction of the Diatessaron as it lay <sup>fore</sup> before Ephraem with a tabular comparison of the Arabic, Latin (viz. Fuldensis), Dutch, Venetian and Persian harmonies. Secondly, he gives in a Latin rendering, with reference to both Syriac and Armenian (for the two sometimes differ), the text of the Diatessaron as quoted or referred to by the father. Thirdly, he gives a detailed and <sup>copious</sup> ~~copious~~ commentary upon this material, showing its link with every source, direct and indirect, of our knowledge of Tatian's work. This is a quite indispensable tool for any student in the field: even when, as here and there must be, one disagrees with Dom Louis' conclusions, the richness of the

information is the very source of one's own judgement.

In a final chapter Leloir passes rapidly but never superficially over questions of literary and textual criticism raised by his studies and publications. He discusses the structure of the Diatessaron and emphasises that in the major matters of structure it is clear that Ephraem and the Arabic represent a distinct tradition from the Western witnesses (in the light of Vaccari's observations about the detail of the text where, as he finds, Ephraem agrees with the Western witnesses against the Arabic, this evidently raises a very intriguing question of textual transmission). He notes the varying degrees of influence upon the construction of the Diatessaron: John is clearly the basic pattern, but Matthew is also highly influential, with Mark and Luke however making but little contribution. The heretical tendencies and the apocryphal materials used by Tatian have been somewhat corrected in the centuries which lie between him and the commentary of Ephraem. Nevertheless, some traces remain and Leloir is able to refer back to about a dozen places where either apocryphal elements or links with the tradition of Jesus' words as transmitted in the gospel of Thomas may still be discerned. He concludes with a list of variant readings from the Textus Receptus of the gospels found in Tatian according to Ephraem, where other support is known within the New Testament textual tradition.

The latest contribution in this area to be made by Dom Louis is his repertorium of "Citations du nouveau testament dans l'ancienne tradition arménienne" of which the volumes containing quotations from the gospel of Matthew appeared in 1967.

In 1962 a study appeared from the pen of Franco Bolgiani devoted to the singular problem to which we have already referred, the use of Victor of Capua alone of the term Diapente to describe the harmony of Tatian. He surveys the suggestions made in explanation of this - a simple lapsus calami, a reference to the apocryphal source used by Tatian, an allusion to harmonic theory. He concludes that Victor introduced Diapente into his quotation as a reference to the perfect harmony which the "compagination" of the gospels produced: he may perhaps (though Bolgiani admits that this is sheer conjecture) have also had in mind the image of the Eusebian Caonons which are four columns bounded by five pillars - one enters into the gospels "through the five". This is the best documented study of this crux interpretum whether or no we agree with the views expressed.

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The year 1963 saw the continuation of the edition with commentary of the <sup>Liège</sup> ~~Leige~~ Diatessaron which Daniel Plooij had begun in 1929 and had continued until the fifth fascicle had appeared in 1938. The final fascicles were at length brought out in 1963, 1965 and 1970 ~~as~~ as Verhandelingen der koninklijke Nederlandsche Akademie van wetenschappen. While after fifty years perspectives have somewhat changed, and no scholar today would have Plooij's confidence in the capacity of the Dutch Harmonies to reveal easily the ultimate Syriac base, this commentary remains a useful repertorium of information about relevant data, and the earlier fascicles contain much valuable discussion of critical points.

Habent sua fata libelli: this is true not only of the Diatessaron itself, but sometimes of books about the work. Baumstark had promised in an essay of 1936 to publish shortly a study of the Old High German Tatian, long regarded as a mere literal translation of the Latin of the Fuldensis: Peters had written of the impending appearance of the study. But the ms. disappeared from sight: <sup>it</sup> ~~it~~ did not come to light amongst Baumstark's papers until after 1960 and at length was published under the editorship of the Germanist Johannes Rathofer, already the author of a magisterial work on the Old Saxon Heliand. Rathofer in his introduction indicates that knowledge of Baumstark's work has led him to do this. To find, for instance, that the reading "the gates of Hell shall not overcome thee" are a Tatianic reading which goes back to Tatian as known from Ephraem's commentary (14.1 & 3) makes it less acceptable a solution to attribute its occurrence in the Heliand to a medieval exegetical tradition or ecclesiastical Tendenz, since it is possible that it lay before the poet in the Latin harmony which was his source. And at another place (Mary's response "I am God's handmaid") Lk.1.38 where the substitution of "God's" for "The Lord's" might in the Heliand be due to the demands of the rules of German epic style, he found reason to pause since in the prose OHG Tatian (in contradistinction <sup>nc</sup> ~~to~~ to the Latin text in the same ms.) the same variant is found. 4nc

Rathofer takes these examples from the Saxon Heliand (partly because he is concerned with that poem in his earlier monograph, and had used Baumstark's book in ms. while preparing his study. But he has another reason for discussing these points, namely, that he was) and <sup>thus</sup> ~~this~~ takes up a position in a somewhat controversial debate between the Germanist Krogmann and the Dutch (Religionsgeschichtler)

Quispel in this area, and specifically upon the possible links of the Heliand with the Diatessaron and through it with the lately discovered Coptic Gospel of Thomas. Quispel's article (1959) was one of a long series on the importance of this apocryphal document for an insight into certain areas of early Christian life and thought: I shall return to these in a moment. But while in the Germanic area it is best to deal with the problems of the Germanists. The matter can be dealt with in summary fashion. Against a number of examples adduced by Quispel, Krogmann advanced two main arguments: in some cases (that above becoming the locus classicus of the debate) the variant has its origin in the demands of prosody; in other cases, the accommodation of the gospel scene to the pattern of Germanic society at the time of the poem's composition have led to verbal change. Elsewhere, although this does not enter so much into his contreface with Q., K. has brought forward medieval exegesis as the cause of change. Now there is no doubt prima facie that Krogmann is making important points which are relevant here, and which, mutatis mutandis, are relevant whenever a scholar must leave his Fachgebiet to deal with related material which is more usually the object of some other colleague's research. We must take account of all the basic rules and modi operandi which the traditions and experience of that other craft have established. It is a relevant warning to the Diatessaronforscher for he of all men is the most likely to be moving, indeed, sometimes veritably, flitting about, from one end of the Christian world to another, from the second to the fourteenth century, and back again. Krogmann in other words does not appear unreasonable in what he writes. Yet we may also take note that to Quispel's side, in answer to these particular challenges from the Germanist side, have rallied Germanists Huysman and Rathofer: and their answers appear cogent enough.

And so to return to the work of Quispel so far as it touches upon the Diatessaron. The gospel of Thomas is one small part of the remarkable discovery of Coptic Gnostic documents found at Nag Hammadi in 1945. These documents did not begin to be published for a decade: the Gospel of Thomas was the second to be published in any detail, first, in translation, shortly afterward with text and translation by a team of experts of whom Quispel was one, and also in photographic reproduction, as part of the publication of the whole find. Very shortly after its publication, Quispel, one

of its editors, began independent discussions putting forward his understanding of the gospel, especially those sayings of Jesus contained therein which have clear affinity with those already known to us in the canonical synoptic gospels. He holds that the material is not derived from the canonical texts, but is a parallel transmission, derived ultimately from gospels in Aramaic current amongst Jewish Christian groups in the earliest Christian centuries. In a series of articles, he seeks to show firstly, the basic Semitic cast of the sayings, and secondly, to trace their distribution and attestation in early Christian sources. Here he finds links in the Clementine literature and in the so-called Western text of the gospels: the article published in 1959 in the journal *Vigiliae Christianae* deals with the links which he perceives between these sayings of the gospel of Thomas and the Diatessaron witnesses. He gives an impressive list of variants in common between the two: he shows also that for instance, the Clementines and the Diatessaron share a similar set of variants: and concludes that these three draw this shared material from a common source. This he links with the alleged fifth source of Tatian (on which as we saw, Peters had placed some emphasis as one of the secured results of the studies which he surveyed, and in which he saw the origin of the enigmatic Diapente of Victor), and sees it also as a source upon which little known gospels such as the gospel of the Ebionites and of the Nazoreans drew: following Epiphanius he wishes to call this source the gospel according to the Hebrews. He urges that there are signs of its Semitic language: and excuses the sporadic and piecemeal way in which the Diatessaric witnesses present their affinities with these other sources by the suggestion that not only has the material in the course of the transmission of the Diatessaron been conformed to the canonical texts current in this or that age and area, but also that Tatian himself exercised an editorial freedom in composing his original harmony. (The material is rich and presented with careful detail). (Quispel is very enthusiastic about his theories, and it may be that this or that point is not well taken: but the proof on the whole is cogent and impressive). Because of the new evidence available, this marks a rather surer way in this area of Diatessaric research than we have previously seen. A similar line of research, confined to one specific variant of the tradition, was published by

Dom Aelred Baker (JThS ns XVI. 1965. pp. 449ff) in which the links of Logion 89 of Thomas with the Diatessaron tradition (Aphrahat, Darab, Dpers, Dliege, Dven), with quotations in Tertullian and Augustine, and in the so-called Acta Archelai are shown: and links are also indicated with the tradition of spiritual teaching in Psmacarius (whose author probably had a Syrian domicile). /rt

The Dutch scholar Klijn, (whose early work "A survey of the researches into the Western text of the gospels and Acts" contained a good survey of pre-war Diatessaric study insofar as it impinged upon gospel textual criticism, and still has much to teach) reviews the same material as Quispel. He notes in dealing with the Diatessaron that its stream of tradition has links with several different apocryphal sources, some wellknown, other obscure, with forms of gospel quotation in such works as the Clementine literature and in Justin, and with various of the phenomena associated with the Western text. It seems that no ~~one~~<sup>one</sup> source or document can account for this, although there is some evident homogeneity and many cross-links (as Quispel's work has shown). How are we to explain these data? Klijn points out that it is clear that oral tradition continued to flourish after the writing of the gospels; he suggests that in areas where oral tradition still flourished there would be a tendency to embellish the written gospels by its addition. The apocrypha and the quotations in the fathers will come, perhaps independently, from sources such as this; Tatian too may have taken his non-canonical matter from such oral sources, and not necessarily from a written source, or at any rate not from an apocryphal gospel nor from a canonical gospel already contaminated with such oral additamenta. This is very plausible for the relation of Tatian and the apocrypha and certainly would explain why Tatian's source cannot be defined as any single apocryphon known to us: but in my view, it does not explain the Old Syriac version, which seems clearly to have been derived from Tatian's work, and it does not answer the problem about the Latin text of the fourfold gospels where there are some similar phenomena to those of the Syriac. Yet Klijn has made a step forward of great value and probably has a <sup>surer</sup> analysis than Q. who has imagination. (In books more related to the textual criticism of the gospels than to the Diatessaron particularly we might mention the earlier work of C S C Williams "Alterations to the text of the Synoptic gospels and Acts" in which there is a good section related to the work of T.

It is derivative rather than original, but a good summary and stimulating.)

Klijn also discusses the work of Juw fon Weringha, a Germanist, who turned his attention to the problem of the Heliand under Quispel's direction. In his valuable "Heliand and Diatessaron", following a survey of work in the field up to 1965, he lays down a regular procedure for isolating Tatianic readings in the poem. The data seem to point to a Diatessaric origin for at least some variant readings of the gospel text in the Heliand. Western variants are more frequent than others: and within these 44 agree with the the Dutch branch of attestation. This points to a particular form of Diatessaron tradition, perhaps localised in Utrecht, and coming from thence by the agency of Liudger to Werden where it provided the basic material for the Heliand. Klijn thinks it significant that 29 of the readings considered come from the birth narrative parts of the poem, and notes that another Germanist Pickering thinks that Heliand used the apocryphal Pseudo-Matthew. However, Klijn "does not know what" these data "mean". He thinks that the Diatessaric influence on the Heliand was indirect since there is no intimation that the list discussed by fon Weringha is exhaustive. Indeed, it can be supplemented by at least one more parallel, which I myself chanced to find. Ephraem's commentary on the Diatessaron says that at Christ's death, the mountains were moved and the sepulchres were opened and the veil was torn (combination of Lk 23. 45-48 Mt 27. 51-53 with an addition). The Heliand (Fitte 67:lines 5662b ff.) reads erda biboda/ hrisidun thia hohun bergos harda stenos cludun/ felisos after then felde endi that feha lacan terbrast/ an middion an tue (earth trembled/ the high mountains rent, hard stones split/ the crags on the field and that fair curtain tore/ in the middle into two). In spite of the work of Quispel and fon Weringha a full collation with all Diatessaric sources has perhaps not yet been accomplished.

We turn finally to the Eastern wing of Diatessaron studies in which the Spanish scholar Ignaz Ortiz de Urbina has made a major contribution. In 1959 an article in OCP (vol. 25) intimated his concern with the earliest form of the Diatessaron, "Trama e carattere del Diatessaron di Taziano". Working at that time with the Armenian version of Ephraem's commentary as edited by Leloir, de Urbina first of all lists the scriptural passages exactly in the order in which they occur in the text: he then rearranges this by various rational principles (a) rearranging verses quoted clearly out of order (b) pl<sup>c</sup>aying verses quoted by Ephraem in confirmation of exegetical points in the context to which they belong in the canonical order (c) assuming that the Diatessaron contained not only the few verses of a particular episode of parable which Ephraem happens to use but the context of those which are found. He arrives thus at an order of which he says "it is clear that the Diatessaron does not follow very exactly the chronological order of the gospels in which they are individually arranged." He concludes that the original purpose of it was a lectionary. He gives a useful list of the episodes which are not found at all to which we shall revert. "Vetus evangelium Syrorum et exinde excerptum Diatessaron Tatiani" It falls into two parts: first we have lists, in gospel order, of gospel citations in Syriac authors, whether preserved in Syriac or in translation, which do not concur either with the Peshitta or with the two known mss. of the Vetus Syra. This involves a fairly lengthy list. To each quotation is given a number and its source is given in the lower margin of the page by a conventional abbreviation. The second part of the work is the restored text of Tatian, given in the order of pericopae established in the article to which we have referred. This text is established according to criteria listed towards the end of the introduction.

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1. Ephraem is the basis of the reconstruction: where his commentary and quotations in other works disagree the commentary form is given preference (6). Where the commentary text itself differs on different occasions, the form closest to the Greek is accepted.
2. Third century writers are held to attest the Diatessaron.
3. When Western and Eastern Syriac writers agree, the form is certainly Diatessaric.
4. Aphrahat, Cyrillona, Marutha and Balaeus are presumed to be citing the Diatessaron.
5. The Liber Graduum is accepted as a witness when it agrees with other and certain witnesses, never when it stands alone.
6. Above under 1.
7. Neither the Armenian nor the Greek versions of Syriac authors are presumed to give certain attestation.
8. No doubtful work of Ephraem or Balaeus is deemed to give certain attestation unless it is within criterion 3. (As Fr Robert Murray has said, in a magisterial review (Heythrop Review vol. 10 pp. 43-49)) some of these are acceptable others highly questionable. We indicate only the questions.) A. to accept the Ephraemic reading which accords with the Greek in divided cases is dubious (see below). B. to reject the Armenian evidence out of hand is contrary to what Lyonnet and the Repertorium of Leloir have shown. Murray gives substantial documentation for his strictures on these points. I would make a number of additional comments. The absence of two well known Diatessaric additions from de Urbina's reconstruction is surprising: doubtless the first criterion had its influence here. These are the feature of the miraculous Light or Fire appearing on Jordan after Jesus' baptism: this is known in the Commentary on the Diatessaron and is found in the work of Ephraem. And at the end of the gospel, an addition to Lk 23.48 is well known : the crowd depart, saying, Woe to us! What has befallen us? This is attested not only in Ephraem, but in Addai and Aphrahat, and one would have thought that de Urbina's own criteria would have demanded its inclusion. Murray has noted de Urbina's curious refusal to admit the mss. of the Vetus Syra as witnesses to the text of the Diatessaron: this perhaps has led to the exclusion of this reading. The second work is a leaf from the Papyrological Seminar of Barcelona, which with much likelihood is part of the same ms. as now reposes in the Chester Beatty Library. It was edited by Ortiz Valdivieso in

Studia Papyrologica. (His name is given by de Urbina on both occasions of reference in the work under review as Valdivielso; but the edition in St. Pap. gives the name in the form without a second l.)

Ortiz de Urbina's collection has shortcomings, as we have noted but it is a further landmark on the road to the restitution of the work of Tatian. It will be regularly consulted by anyone working in this field. There is an interesting contrast between its presentation and the conclusions of the earlier essay. There de Urbina gave an interesting list of episodes which are not referred to in any context by Ephraem in the commentary. There are eight of these: we discover that from the wider coverage which de Urbina here makes, two passages are included as certain parts of Tatian's work, four as dubious; two only remain excluded. These are Mt.26.1-5 (Judas' betrayal and the counsel of the priests) and Mk.12.38-44 (the widow's offering).

The work of Ortiz de Urbina was made the basis of a publication in Oriens Christianus vol. 53-55 in which J. Molitor gives (in every case in Latin rendering of his own) the text in Urbina's reconstruction, the text of the Curetonian, Sinaitic and Peshitta versions of the Syriac, and the Old Georgian as represented in the adys, Opiza and Tbet mss. While some useful information is thrown up by this method, it has a number of disadvantages. Molitor gives the text in a series of sections apparently of his own numeration, unrelated to any other (even his own in the synopsis of the Georgian gospels in Latin rendering which which he produced as an aid to students of the version). Apart from this inconvenience, the absence of reference to the Armenian provides a gap between the Syriac and the Georgian, and thus deprives the latter of the significance which it might have in the discussion. It does however throw into relief the apparent shortness of the Tatianic text in a number of instances. Yet there is a grave shortcoming in that Molitor's view of the Greek text seems very static: in the discussion of Jesus cry of jubilation ( ) and the order of the Father-Son, Son-Father clauses about mutual knowledge, he suggests that the order found in the Diatessaron has no contact with the Greek text and Armenian in which however there is a little evidence in both Matthew and Luke, not to speak of an interesting suggestion of emendation by Harnack.

Even more than Urbina's work itself, Molitor's commentary at its highest estimation can be deemed only raw material. (Molitor OC53. H54 &66f)

Within the context of the international New Testament society I have had the honour to be convenor of a seminar devoted to Diatessaric studies. We have had a number of valuable papers from Dr. Baarda of whom I have spoken. Perhaps I may briefly mention three short papers which I have presented on areas peripheral to these studies. It was suggested by Harnack that an early Georgian martyrdom, that of Eustace of Mzk'et'a, had contacts with the Diatessaron in the account which it gives of the hero's catechesis upon his joining the church. An investigation of this in the original (which Harnack was unable to make, although he had a Georgian informant Dzavachishvili) showed that although the gospel account was presented in harmonized form, it had no links with the Diatessaron and there were signs that the harmony post-dated the formation of the four-fold gospel in Georgian. A second investigation has been into the sources of the middle English harmony known as the Pepysian harmony. This has been frequently used by editors such as Leloir, Plooij, Baustark, Messina: and attention has been drawn e.g. to the presence of the Light at Jesus' baptism in this fourteenth century document. An investigation into the probable immediate sources however, showed that for this item, and for a number of others, we need seek no further than the *Historia scholastica* of Petrus Comestor, and for other features in other well known collections or catenae of exegesis in the medieval West. This is not to rule out an ultimate Diatessaric origin for other items, since the necessary collation and commentary has never yet been made, although the work was published in 1923: but the upmost stratum in the geology of this harmony is doubtless the medieval exegetical tradition. Thirdly, a less conclusive sounding was made into the gospel material in a curious Greek anti-Jewish dialogue, *The Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila*: of uncertain date (second to fifth century, in different estimates) and published only once, it has a number of gospel references, and one longer passage, the unjust vinegrowers who killed the heir (Mt. 21. 33-46 ) in a harmonized form. Although some links with features of the Diatessaron were discerned, the longer passage was harmonized in a manner quite other than the Diatessaron. It may take us back into an earlier period than Tatian, such as the quotations of the gospels in Justin Martyr seem to indicate: but this is still not proven.

Fortunately, in our type of science a negative result may be of as great significance as a positive: here, that we have no Greek Tatian!

The study of the Dutch Diatessaron tradition has received a further boost from the series lately initiated by de Bruin - *Corpus Sacrae Scripturae Neerlandicae Medii aevi* (Leiden 1970). In the subsection, *Series minor*, a number of harmonies have now been published: namely the Liege, the Cambridge, the Haaren (which is a new addition to the known harmonies), and a Middle German Harmony Diatessaron *Theodiscum*, established on the basis of a number of mss. De Bruin is author of a standard study of the Middle Dutch translations of the New Testament (1935). His basic views may be gleaned from his general introduction to the Corpus and his specific introduction to the Liege Diatessaron: their origin was a harmony of Fuldensis type: preVulgate readings, on which the Diatessaron-forscher have placed weight have been introduced into the text by the Benedictines and other monastics who were interested in old text forms, and the presence of such readings emphasises that the Vulgate was not supreme in the middle ages. He places confidence in the prologue and sees the harmony in its present form as the work of the compiler, who drew upon the expositors of the middle ages as well as upon a harmony or *Vita Christi*. The edition is a valuable addition to the printed textual information on which Diatessaronforscher will no doubt continue to draw.

Let us summarize the profit from these studies of thirty years work and publication. Chief amongst these must rank the rediscovery of so much of the Syriac text by means of Ephraem's commentary, mainly in the Chester Beatty ms. and in two other sources. We have now a check on the trustworthiness of the Armenian, which can now no doubt, in those places where it alone is extant, be used with greater confidence and circumspection, and perhaps emended where this can be essayed. The work of Baarda in rescuing a fragment from a florilegium also suggests that this kind of exploration (which Rendel Harris successfully embarked upon long ago, without editions such as we now possess) could well be taken up again with fruitful result. In the Eastern field we have in addition, the edition of the Persian Diatessaron, which while not significant for the order of the harmony in its original form, is replete with readings from that source. The Armenian and Georgian gospels and quotations have

been intimated, but scarcely exploited to the full: while Voobus amongst many other contributions, has shown that traces of the Diatessaron lie even in the Ethiopic version (a version which of course deserves to be edited and studied in its own right).

The coverage of Western witnesses has increased, with the studies devoted to Old High German and Old Saxon sources. Debate has also raged upon the admissibility of this material - or indeed, as we have just seen, of material discussed for yet longer. Bonifatius Fischer, the learned student of the Old Latin version and till lately director of the Vetus Latina Institut in Beuron, has said how absurd it is to think of Tatian forming a Diatessaron in Rome, and of the possibility of a preTatianic harmony which formed the basis of his work. We must take note when Fischer says that the postulates of an Old Latin harmony would conflict completely with what we know of the history of the gospels on Latin: but neither he nor de Bruin can deny the links which each new discovery or investigation demonstrates in readings between the Eastern and the Western harmony traditions: and while some of these are no doubt due ultimately to a common second century text of the separate gospels, there are others which are not characteristic of separated gospels, but only or primarily of the harmonies and some which have links with texts such as the Coptic Gospel of Thomas. There are others which are known to have Tatianic links, or which are seen to be of Tatianic Tendenz. We cannot put these all down to Old Latin infiltrations into a basically Fuldensian text or fortuitously due to the mistakes of scribes or the inventiveness of Dutch mystics. It is more likely that a harmony is with the separate gospels even if they influence. I do not mean to deny that for late Western texts we must take account of the exegetical traditions - I found this for myself in the Papyrusian harmony - but from where, to take that example - did Petrus Comestor derive the Baptismal light: and we could ask similar questions of de Bruin about the Dutch harmonies. Such source criticism as his answers penultimate not ultimate questions.

The discovery of the gospel of Thomas and the discussion of its affinities with the Tatianic and other witness has also brought advance. Klijn's conclusion of a common oral source for material of this kind is more likely to be correct than Quispel's eager assumption of a rediscovered hypothetical gospel of the Hebrews

since to demonstrate a single known source for the apocryphal material is impossible. The history of the investigation is lined with the record of those who differed in their assumptions over this.

A number of tasks lie before us. An edition of the Arabic (taking into account the new discoveries and insights) is clearly needed: a commented edition would be even more welcome. The Western exegetical tradition also demands new investigation. In many instances this would mean new editions, or impressions for the first time: we think in the first category, of the Bible historial of Guyart Desmoulins, not printed since the sixteenth century, the twelfth century Super unum ex quattuor of Petrus Cantor, which has never been edited. A commented edition of the Papyrusian harmony in middle English, which has often been quoted, but never studied, is also required. Some further basic studies are needed: for instance, no clear statement is to be found whether, since there are well known distinctions of order between the Western and the Eastern tradition, there are also readings distinctive of ten more traditions: what evidence has been collected seems to speak in the other sense. Another possible line of approach would be to try to plot the first incidence of Tatianic readings in the record, and try to build a picture of the knowledge and influence of the work from there: for instance the occurrence of the lance stroke before Jesus death is known from Manichaen sources in Coptic mss. of the fourth century, as well as in a eighth century ms. Many scholars look to the Diatessaron not as an object of research in its own right, but more as a source of textual information about the New Testament text. (While it is nevertheless of interest and importance in its own right, it cannot be gainsaid that its interest for the study of the gospel text is considerable.) Since Hermann von Soden misused the Arabic in his textual studies, scholars have been chary of quoting the Diatessaron, especially since, as our survey will have shown, how complex must be the process of knowing what the text of the Diatessaron was: hence the hand editions of the New Testament by Souter, Nestle-Aland, and Kilpatrick, have not quoted the Diatessaron, or have quoted it only under a misleading variety of terms. It is the merit of the hand edition of Augustin Merk SJ that since its fifth edition (1944) evidence from the Tatianic harmony has been given in "greatly increased volume".

The principles of citation are discussed in the prolegomena where a succinct statement is given. The Arabic is cited even when it agrees with the Peshitta, if the reading is attested by Greek maa. the Old Latin or other ancient readings. If however, (sc the Arabic) Tatian agrees with the Peshitta, against the Old Syriac and other sources, the attestation by it is generally omitted unless the two stand alone or almost alone in their attestation. This has been described by B.M. Metzger as " a sane and balanced statement of the correct methodology of Tatianic-Forschung . . . drawn up with lapidary succinctness".

We have mentioned that Bonifatius Fischer has pointed out that theories of a harmony origin for the Old Latin as a whole are to be rejected on the evidence. This we must accept as the judgement of an expert. On the other hand, the Diatessaron origin of the Old Syriac is widely acknowledged, and these sources, as we have said, should be utilized for the reconstruction of the Diatessaron. How then can we use the work of Tatian in the criticism of the gospel text? We shall use it, not in connection of any theory about its influence, but as a second century text. If taken in this way, its evidence yields some interesting results, of which we give in conclusion two or three interesting examples.

a) At Mk 8.32 codex Bobbiensis of the OL, the Sinaitic ms. of the Old Syriac, share with one ms. of the Arabic Diatessaron the variant "he will speak the word with boldness" for "he spoke the word with boldness" making the apparently part of the first Passion prediction not a description of Jesus' mode of declaration of it. If (teste Fischer) k is independent of the Diatessaron, although no doubt syrs is dependent, we have Eastern and Western attestation for a variant which early dropped our of view.

b) In the pericope about Jesus' cry of jubilation (Mt 11.25-27 parallel Lk 10.21-22) the Diatessaron cited by Ephraem gives the address to the Father as simply "father in the heavens": this (taken with other evidence not in the Diatessaron of textual alteration on a wide scale at this point) suggests that a second century form of text is known which is much shorter and less doctrinally developed than the regular text printed in all critical editions. A shorter text is often found in Tatianic evidence, and one wonders whether this were not a feature of his editorial work (as apparently Molitor thinks from frequent observations in his study):

c) Boismard however used Tatian as evidence of a shorter text of John's gospel with succinct readings such as the form of Jn. 13.10 ho leloumenos ouk echei chreian: for this we have attestation in the Greek ms. 579 and in Tertullian so that a sinister role of abbreviator cannot be thrust upon Tatian for the origin of this variant.

Diatessaronforschung then is an area of vast dimensions, centering upon the second century, but extending into fascinating later periods of the history of the church in its Latin speaking and Syriac based outlayers. Many tasks await eager workers, since the work, for all the progress made, still lies far from the accomplishment of its many-sided purpose.