

THE PRESENT STATUS OF TEXT CRITICAL STUDIES IN THE CATHOLIC EPISTLES

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In an earlier issue of *AUSS*¹ we looked at the text critical studies that have been done in the Greek text of the Catholic Epistles since the turn of the century. Our concern in this article will be with the relatively recent works on the Greek lectionary texts, versions, and patristic citations.² Fortunately, for this task we have in one volume the results of most of the latest investigations that have been made in the Catholic Epistles in these three categories: *Die alten Übersetzungen des Neuen Testaments, die Kirchenväterzitate und Lektionare*, edited by Kurt Aland. This is the fifth volume of the series *Arbeiten zur Neutestamentlichen Textforschung*, published in 1972.³ Our dependence on this volume, referred to as *ANTF* 5, will be evident throughout the survey. The reader may also wish to consult the excellent summaries and appraisals given by Jean Duplacy in his "Bulletin de critique textuelle du Nouveau Testament," numbers 1-5.⁴

1. Greek Lectionary Text

1. Sakae Kubo, "The Catholic Epistles in the Greek Lectionary: A Preliminary Investigation," *AUSS* 1 (1963): 65-70. Kubo's

¹ 12 (1974): 103-111.

² For those who are interested in some of the older studies, see Bruce M. Metzger, *Annotated Bibliography of the Textual Criticism of the New Testament 1914-39*, vol. 16 of *Studies and Documents*, ed. Silva Lake and Carsten Høeg (Copenhagen: E. Munksgaard, 1955).

³ This is the series being produced by the Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung, Münster, Germany.

⁴ "Bulletin de critique textuelle du Nouveau Testament," I-V in *RechSR* (vols. 45, 46, 50, 51, 53, 54) and with the assistance of C. M. Martini since 1968 in *Bib* (vols. 49, 51, 52, 53, and 54). At the beginning of each Bulletin, Duplacy conveniently cites the references for all previous bulletins; for the latest record, see *Bib* 54 (1973), p. 79.

study was based on five fully collated lectionaries (147, 809, 1153, 1441 and 1590) and one MS in two lections (1294). The purpose of his investigation was to determine the relationship of the Greek lectionary text in the Catholics with the NT text-types. His control group was based on MSS classified by von Soden with variants in these MSS taken from the critical apparatuses of von Soden, Merk, and Nestle. Tischendorf's apparatus was used for the versional and patristic evidence (p. 66).

Indicating that his conclusions could not at this stage be definite, and that more collations need to be made in order to confirm or modify his results, Kubo suggests that there was a definite trend in these lectionaries toward conformation to the Byzantine text, and that only a minority of the lectionary readings are Alexandrian in text-type (see comments on Junack's study, below).⁵

2. Klaus Junack, "Zu den griechischen Lektionaren und ihrer Überlieferung der Katholischen Briefe," *ANTF* 5: 498-591. Junack examined 100 lectionaries in a "few carefully selected but significant" passages and fully collated about 20. The fully collated MSS supported the conclusions that were based on the selected collations.⁶ Some of his key points are: (1) With the exception of 1596, the lectionaries not only show, at least for James, contacts with the Byzantine text but also represent the important witnesses for this text-type.⁷ The MSS up to 1921 agree with

⁵ Because Kubo's study was based on a methodology that is now outdated (relationships were formed on the basis of the percentages of agreement from the TR), his statistics are subject to modification. A year later Kubo himself abandoned this method in a supplementary investigation to his dissertation (the appendix); his conclusions were based on the percentages of agreement which each MS has with every other MS.

⁶ The selected passages were intended to serve for the identification of text-type and proved in the end to be a valid basis for evaluating the lectionary MSS.

⁷ Junack concludes that even 1596 is basically Byzantine, but that it does have in one series of readings some reminiscences of the older traditions. He states that this lectionary stands outside the pure lectionary tradition. Earlier Junack observed that the "minority Alexandrian" readings listed by Kubo are accidental. It should be noted, however, that Kubo mentioned that 31 of

one another 90-95 per cent of the time, and the date of the lectionary (i.e. early or late) does not affect these high percentages of agreement. (2) The Byzantine lectionaries set themselves off from all other known lectionaries and represent a large, relatively closed group. The preserved MSS do not go back before the 8th century. It is not yet possible to discuss in detail the older elements that developed within the reading system. (3) The special significance of the lectionaries and the MSS prepared for liturgical use is that they give us direction in tracing the history of the text, primarily the Byzantine text, from the time of the second half of the first millennium to the invention of printing.

2. Versions

Latin

We owe much to Walter Thiele for his enormous accomplishments on the Latin text of the Catholics. His contributions began with a dissertation at Tübingen in 1956.⁸ The second part of this dissertation was the basis for Thiele's first major discussion of the Latin text in the Catholics as a member of the *Vetus Latina* Institute of Beuron. We may note in this early work on the Johannine Epistles Thiele's basic methodology.

1. Walter Thiele, *Wortschatzuntersuchungen zu den lateinischen Texten der Johannesbriefe* (Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 1958). Thiele has two purposes: (1) to further the research on the vocabulary of the Latin Bible, and (2) to formulate a more precise view of the different Latin text-types for 1-3 John (p. 11).⁹

these readings are found in the Nestle text, which would suggest that some of these Alexandrian readings were not considered accidental by the editors.

⁸ "Untersuchungen zu den altlateinischen Texten der drei Johannesbriefe." A summary of this dissertation is given in *TLZ* 82 (1957): 71-72. We should mention, however, one earlier study by Thiele. In a brief article written in the previous year, Thiele attempted to determine to what extent Augustine himself had revised the Latin text of James. "Augustinus zum lateinischen Text des Jakobusbriefes," *ZNW* 46 (1955): 255-258. I know of one earlier work done on the Catholics, a brief MS study by P. Salmon, "Le texte latin des épîtres de S. Pierre, S. Jean et S. Jude dans le MS. 6 de Montpellier," *JTS*, n.s., 2 (51): 170-177.

⁹ Thiele acknowledges that the study of vocabulary is not the only means of research; syntax and style are also important (p. 11).

Part I (pp. 12-24) deals with the materials; a list of Greek words is given with their Latin equivalents and the support of the Latin witnesses. Part II is concerned with several aspects of research, falling under two major headings: (1) General vocabulary research (pp. 25-35) deals with (i) vocabulary variations which are due to a concern for avoiding repetition (a list of examples is given); (ii) the classification of vocabulary under the headings, "Cyprian and contemporary African literature" and "Lacking in Cyprian and pseudo-Cyprian"; and (iii) influence of the Greek text, in which some variations are shown to exist because of faithfulness to the Greek *Vorlage*. (2) Descriptions of text-types (pp. 35-41)¹⁰ show that the African texts K and C can be clearly distinguished from the European texts S, T, V, and Lucifer by examination of their vocabularies, even though there is some overlapping (p. 35). The oldest extant and best Latin texts are the African texts K and C. K is primarily found in Cyprian; C is a later African text which has more European readings than K, and is found primarily in the Donatists and early writings of Augustine. The European text-types are S, T, and V. There is not much upon which to judge the S text-type; it has a few K readings, but many more European words. T is European with some rare African elements; and when we come to V, the Vulgate, we find a purely European vocabulary. See page 10 for a concise list of representatives of these text-types.

2. Walter Thiele, "Beobachtungen zum Comma Iohanneum (1 Joh. 5, 7f.)," *ZNW* 50 (1959): 61-73. The Johannine Comma is one of many passages in the Catholics which show that the Latin text has additions not found in the Greek. Nevertheless a non-extant Greek *Vorlage* is possible.

3. Walter Thiele, ed., *Epistulae Catholicae* This is part of vol. 26 (the other part of vol. 26 covers the Apocalypse) of the *Vetus Latina; Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel*, according to Petrus Sabatier, newly compiled and edited by Bonifatius Fischer

¹⁰ The Latin text-types are also listed with their witnesses on p. 10.

(Freiburg: Verlag Herder). Thiele's volume, 26/1, came out in seven parts, beginning in 1956 with James and concluding in 1969 with an introduction. These seven parts, with their dates, are as follows: (1) James, 1956; (2) I Peter, 1958; (3) 2 Peter, 1960; (4) 1 Jn 1:1-3:17, 1965; (5) 1 Jn 3:18-3 Jn 3, 1966; (6) 3 Jn 3-15, Jude, supplement, and index, 1967; (7) Introduction, 1969.¹¹ The Introduction is invaluable for understanding the Latin text in the Catholics. It is divided into four sections: (i) the textual witnesses, with a detailed description of the MSS, and then a discussion of the citations; (ii) the text of each of the Catholic Epistles according to text-type; (iii) the Greek text; and (iv) the versions. Thiele discusses the Introduction in his contribution to *ANTF* 5 which we treat in entry number 6 below.

4. Bonifatius Fischer, "Codex Amiatinus und Cassiodor," *BZ* n.F., 6 (1962): 57-79. Different texts underlie parts of the Codex; for the Catholics, a local British text.

5. Walter Thiele, *Die lateinischen Texte des 1. Petrusbriefes* (Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 1965). The book is divided into six chapters, with each chapter discussing a text-type: (1) Old African text K (pp. 16-31); (2) later African texts, C and A (pp. 38-65); (3) European text S (pp. 66-88); (4) European text T (pp. 89-108); (5) European text V, the Vulgate (pp. 109-159); and (6) general vocabulary research (pp. 160-213). In the first four chapters Thiele discusses the witnesses of the text-types and their linguistic characteristics (vocabulary and relationship to the Greek text). In the Catholics, the creator of the Vulgate had a European old Latin text before him; like Jerome, he also compared it with a Greek text that stood in marked contrast to the "Western" tradition (p. 221).

6. Walter Thiele, "Probleme der Versio Latina in den Katholischen Briefen," *ANTF* 5: 93-119. This article is based on Thiele's previous studies. Even though the citations found in the writings

¹¹ The paging also begins with p. 1 as did the text for James in the first *Lieferung*; and in order to distinguish between the original paging, the pages in the Introduction have an asterisk by each number.

of the church fathers remain fragmentary, the broadest attestation for the Latin text of the Catholics is found in their writings; apart from the Vulgate, the MSS make up only a small part of the tradition (p. 93). Although the earliest Latin quotations are found in Tertullian (1 Peter and 1 John), it is not until Cyprian that we have a firm basis for discussing the text (p. 93). What Thiele writes about Cyprian (K text-type), etc., in his book on 1-3 John (see no. 1 above) holds true for most of the Catholics.¹² While the K witnesses form a relatively closed group, the other witnesses portray quite a diverse picture, often changing text-types from letter to letter (pp. 94-95). When one compares the K text-type with the later text-types (the text-types of the *Versio Latina* which can be regained in the Catholics are mentioned by B. Fischer on pp. 26-27 of *ANTF* 5), many differences are evident at first observation. The differences are in vocabulary as well as in the relationship to the Greek text. Thiele assumes, however, that originally there was a common *Vorlage* for all seven Epistles (p. 95).¹³

The K text-type is given high marks; it does not contain the contaminations and duplications which are common to the mixed texts (p. 96). Thiele discusses variants which are stylistic, stating that the K text is not a slavish word-for-word translation of its Greek *Vorlage* (pp. 97-100). He points to Latin variants which are verified by a Greek reading (pp. 100-101),¹⁴ and then takes up the readings which are not supported anywhere; an "inner-lateinische" explanation answers many of the questions (p. 102). Additions found in the Latin, especially the older texts, are some obvious readings not attested by the Greek.¹⁵ Thiele mentions

¹² Traces of K are transmitted through Lactantius in James (p. 94).

¹³ Thiele shows why he believes this to be the case. Lucifer's text is the best link between the K text-type and the later text-types even though only 1-2 John offer adequate material for comparison. Lucifer is the first tangible witness of the European text.

¹⁴ These readings may, however, now exist only in a version or a patristic citation.

¹⁵ Only in the Vulgate have these readings been eliminated (p. 103).

three kinds of additions: (1) those in which the content of the additions is often based on biblical readings; (2) those which are of an explanatory nature; and (3) additions concerning dogmatic content, 1 Jn 5:7 being among the examples cited (pp. 108-113). Although Thiele believes it cannot be definitely decided whether additions of the first two types go back to the Greek or were created within the Latin (pp. 103-106), he is of the opinion, however, that they nevertheless lead to a Greek *Vorlage*. The third kind, too, are partially determined by the content of other Bible texts (p. 109). Since these three categories of additions cannot be traced back to a purely inner Latin development, Thiele suggests that these readings point to a "Western" text of the Catholic Epistles; even the nature of variants reminds one of the "Western" text of Acts (p. 111).¹⁶ Because we have only fragmentary records, it is not possible to trace all of the stages of change away from the K text (pp. 113-116). The final section of the article deals with the Vulgate. In those places where a clear comparison with the Greek text can be made, the Vulgate proves itself to have its own peculiar character. In the Catholics the Vulgate is clearly not by Jerome (pp. 116-117).

7. Bonifatius Fischer, "Das Neue Testament in lateinischer Sprache. Der gegenwärtige Stand seiner Erforschung und seine Bedeutung für griechische Textgeschichte," *ANTF* 5: 1-92. A brief discussion of text-types for the Catholics is given on pp. 26-27. Fischer deals with the Vulgate in section six, and the Catholics are discussed in light of Thiele's work (pp. 73-78). The fluctuations of the Vulgate revisions amount to making an already colorful text even more so (p. 74). Fischer concurs with Thiele that G is the best Vulgate MS, F not much poorer, while A declines; but within the Catholics, the rank changes so that F gradually falls from the first rank to the last (p. 75). Altogether, the transmission in the main MSS of the Catholic Epistles is

¹⁶The character of these "Western" readings keeps them from having any role in determining the original text (p. 112).

poorer and more confused than in all other sections of the NT (p. 77).

Coptic

1. William H. Willis, "An Unrecognized Fragment of First Peter in Coptic," in *Classical, Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies in Honor of B. L. Ullman*, ed. Charles Henderson, Jr., Storia & Letteratura, 93 (Rome, 1964), pp. 265-271. The age of the MS is no later than the turn of 3rd/4th centuries.

2. Karlheinz Schüssler, "Zitate aus der Katholischen Briefen bei den koptischen Kirchenvätern," in *La Bible et les Pères*, ed. André Benoît and Pierre Prigent (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1971).

3. Gerd Mink, "Die koptischen Versionen des Neuen Testaments . . .," *ANTF* 5: 160-299. This investigation is divided into three major sections: (1) The first part (pp. 160-187) considers the language problems involved for the Greek history of the text, and on page 175 Mink refers to the status of research in the Catholic Epistles. Von Soden saw in the Coptic text a confirmation for H as an Egyptian text and proof that the Egyptian influenced α and B. Von Soden also noted the influence of K on the Sahidic and Bohairic. (2) The second division (pp. 188-273) discusses the grammatical nature of the most important Coptic variants and their value. Examples are taken from all of the NT to illustrate grammatical and syntactical constructions with examples from the Catholics given on pages 192, 216, and 231. (3) Section three is concerned with a passage in the Gospel of John.

Armenian

1. Louis Leloir, "Traduction latine des versions syriaques et arméniennes de l'épître de Jacques," *Le Muséon* 83 (1970): 189-208. Leloir gives a literal translation in Latin of the Peshitta and Philoxenian Syriac and Armenian versions as a basis of better studying the versions.

2. Louis Leloir, "La version arménienne du Nouveau Testa-

ment," *ANTF* 5: 300-313. After indicating his conviction that a first Armenian version of Acts was based on the Syriac and that the Pauline Epistles were more than likely based on the Syriac, Leloir asks if we can say the same for the major Catholic Epistles (pp. 302-303).¹⁷ His answer: "Probablement oui." Examples of Syriacisms are given to support the theory that while the Armenian text of our editions is based on the Greek, these vestiges of the Syriac within the Armenian text point to a Syriac *Vorlage* for the first Armenian version (pp. 303-304).

Georgian

1. Joseph Molitor, "Die altgeorgische Version der Katholischen Briefe ins Lateinische übertragen," *OC* 49 (1965): 1-17. Covers James, and 1 and 2 Peter.

2. Joseph Molitor, "Die altgeorgische Version der Katholischen Briefe ins Lateinische übertragen," *OC* 50 (1966): 37-45. Covers 1, 2, 3 John, and Jude.

3. Joseph Molitor, "Zum Textcharakter der altgeorgischen Katholischen Briefe: 1. Der altgeorgische Jakobusbrief," *OC* 51 (1967): 51-66 (see next entry).

4. Joseph Molitor, "Das Neue Testament in georgischer Sprache . . .," *ANTF* 5: 314-344. This is based on a complete revision of the author's work mentioned in number three above, and is divided into three sections: (1) The present editions of the Old Georgian NT and their values. The Catholic Epistles are covered on pp. 317-318 where Molitor writes that the first textual critical edition came to light in 1956 by Mrs. Ke't'evan Lort'k'ip'anidze as vol. 9 of the *Monumenta: Die georgischen Version der Katholischen Briefe nach Handschriften des 10.-14. Jhr.* She originally wanted to examine four MSS from that period, and the work was only partly printed when the Tiflis Museum received the microfilm of the old Georgian Sinaitic MSS. They were rightfully added

¹⁷ He observes that in its beginning the Armenian church was in close contact with the Syrian church; its liturgy, monastic institutions and Christian vocabulary are marked by Syriac influence (p. 303).

in the Tiflis edition. (2) Characteristics of the Old Georgian evidenced in a textual analysis of James (pp. 318-325). It is a long way from the Old Georgian gospels (and their influence by Tatian) to James (p. 318). (3) The textual critical value of the Old Georgian translation of the NT, particularly of James (pp. 325-344).¹⁸ Beginning on page 330, about 260 significant readings are listed (pp. 330-343). These readings are placed in three categories (pp. 343-344): (i) translation liberties within the Georgian; (ii) readings which are influenced by Syriac (in contrast to the Armenian), or are a mixture of Syriac and Armenian; (3) 44 Armenianisms, of which there are 17 cases of verbal agreement with the Armenian text (many times just one word) and 27 cases wherein the Armenian influence is possible, but not certain (pp. 343-344). In summary it may be said that the Syriac influence is more strongly evident than the Armenian (p. 344).

Ethiopic

Joseph Hoffmann, "Das Neue Testament in äthiopischer Sprache. Problem der Übersetzung und Stand der Forschung," *ANTF* 5: 345-373. The text of the Catholics is covered in section IV (pp. 364-367), and briefly in section V (pp. 372-373), where Hoffmann compares the text of James with the text of the Apocalypse. Nothing has yet been published on the text of the Catholics, Hoffmann states (p. 364). He himself has collated 11 MSS, one of these being only a fragment.¹⁹ The editions of the text and these MSS differ only in unimportant readings. The text is essentially the same, going back to a common *Vorlage*, believed by Hoffmann to be the Greek.²⁰ Because James offers too little

¹⁸ His primary concern for James is due to the fact that James will appear as the first part of the *Editio maior critica* (p. 330).

¹⁹ Hoffman singles out British Museum MS 496 for special mention. It seems to be more a paraphrase than a translation, and has explanations interspersed between the passages (p. 364).

²⁰ A list of places where the Ethiopic and Greek completely agree is given. There are, of course, variants which disappear via translation. For examples in the Ethiopic, which has no article, it is not possible to tell whether or not

material for comparisons, Hoffmann believes we must wait until all of the Catholics have been studied before we can speak about the text-type. He suspects that all of the Catholics have the same *Vorlage* (p. 365). The Ethiopic text of James offers us only insignificant agreements with other versions, and these are probably accidental. Where the Sahidic differs from the Greek, the Ethiopic agrees with the Greek; and where the Ethiopic, however, differs from the Greek, the Sahidic agrees with the Greek. No influence on James can be detected from the Sahidic, the Bohairic, and the Syriac (p. 366). As far as the Arabic influence on Ethiopic James is concerned, Hoffmann has not yet made a study, but he believes that Arabic texts translated from the Greek or Syriac may have influenced the Ethiopic. This would not be true, however, for Arabic texts which came from the Bohairic (p. 367). After discussing the text of the Apocalypse, Hoffmann draws the following conclusions regarding a comparison of the texts of James and the Apocalypse: (1) The method of translations was different; the translation of James was much freer with the Greek than was that of the Apocalypse (p. 372).²¹ (2) The text of James agrees with other versions only in unimportant variants, whereas the Apocalypse has many foreign elements (p. 373).

3. *Patristic Citations*

So far as the attempts to establish the earliest text, text-types, or history of the text are concerned,²² nothing has been done with the Greek fathers in the Catholic Epistles. Extensive work has been done with the writings of the Latin fathers, and some work

there was an article in Greek; similarly with the $\kappa\alpha\iota$ where the translator was very free with the use of θ (p. 365).

²¹ In James the use of the demonstrative pronoun is normal, and in the Apocalypse its use is excessive; both books had a different *Vorlage* and translator (p. 372).

²² As is the case for the versions, the support of the church fathers for certain variant readings has long been available in the apparatuses of some editions of the Greek text. Furthermore, some brief accounts have been given in several important commentaries.

has been done on the writing in the Coptic language (see under *Latin* and *Coptic* above).

(to be concluded)

Note: The concluding article in this bibliographical survey of the text-critical research in the Catholics will be primarily concerned with listing the collations that have been made of Greek MSS in the Catholic Epistles.