

Christian-B. Amphoux and J. Keith Elliott, eds. *The New Testament Text in Early Christianity/Le texte du nouveau Testament au début du christianisme: Proceedings of the Lille Colloquium, July 2000. Histoire du texte biblique, no. 6. Lausanne: Éditions du Zèbre, 2003. Pp. 412. ISBN 2-940351-00-7. €45.00 paper.*

1. The title of these conference proceedings is somewhat different from the title of the original conference ('Le texte du Nouveau Testament et ses témoins avant 200 A.D.'). Apparently the book title was chosen because not all contributions really deal with the NT text from before 200 C.E. One contribution, for example, focuses on variation in the prepositions in Bezae, Sinaiticus, and Vaticanus, another on the Georgian version. In total, this volume contains twenty contributions, of which a narrow majority are in English, and all the others are in French. The book contains separate indices of biblical and patristic quotations, and of modern authors.

2. The introductory essay is by J. K. Elliott and aims to give an overview of the materials available for reconstructing the second-century text. He lists nine or ten papyri from before 200 C.E. (on page 10 one should read P^{52} for P^{62}), and possibly also the parchment majuscule 0189. All these manuscripts have come to light during the 20th century. Extension of the cut-off point to the third century would bring the number up to 60. In passing, Elliott registers his discomfort with the 'undue prominence' given to the papyri in the critical editions. Besides testimony of the Greek manuscripts, the Coptic, Latin, and Syriac versions also find their origin in the second century. Of these three versions only the latter two appear later in the book. Other positive developments of the 20th century are the Nag Hammadi collection, the appearance of the Persian Diatessaron and Ephraem's commentary on the Diatessaron in Syriac. Regarding the Greek Fathers, Elliott mentions the work done on Justin and Justin's sympathy for a Diatessaronic type of text, and he raises the possibility that the longer ending of Mark is in effect 'a digest of Easter accounts assimilated from several different sources, some of them canonical Gospels' (13). Another available resource for the reconstruction of the second century text is the Christian apocrypha. For those familiar with the work of Elliott, there is an interesting surprise. According to Elliott's own admission, he does not think that it is important to use all 5,000 manuscripts of the NT to restore the original text. Ehrman and Parker have persuaded Elliott that the whole textual tradition rather tells 'the story of Christian history and the changes in doctrine and Christology' (15). However, Elliott still holds that all deliberate alteration to the text of the NT was made before 200 C.E. (16), and there is nothing to suggest that Elliott is no longer a 'thoroughgoing textual critic'.

3. The next essay is by David Parker on the Principio project. Though, without doubt, his contribution was up-to-date at the time of delivery, it is rather dated three years after publication. Still it may be of interest for the historiography of the whole Principio project.

4. Klaus Wachtel has an informative contribution on the grouping of manuscripts with some very critical comments on the method developed by Colwell. The disadvantage of Colwell's approach is that it does not take into account all the evidence and is unable to cope with development within the tradition. The brief example of Mink's method shows that the latter method is much better able to cope with change in the textual tradition. (See <http://rosetta.reltech.org/TC/vol07/SWH2002/index.html> for a description of Mink's genealogical method.)

5. Maurice Robinson attempts to demonstrate how many of the examples of a shorter Alexandrian text, relative to the Byzantine text, can be explained by *homoioteleuton*. He provides a long list of readings where both variants make sense and in which the shorter reading can be explained by a jump from one set of letters to the same set later on the page. One wonders if *homoioteleuton* really occurred as often as Robinson envisages. In his eyes a single corresponding letter is already enough to warrant inclusion into the *homoioteleuton* category. Given the inflected nature of the Greek language, one will often find words close to one another that end with a similar letter. Robinson really seems to push the point excessively by including examples of jumps from similar letters within different diphthongs: from -αι to -οι is a jump from one iota to another. Though I am open to the idea that in not a few instances the text which is also supported by the Byzantine tradition may be the original reading, I am not convinced yet that *homoioteleuton* is the source of so much evil.

6. A very interesting project is described by Christian-Bernard Amphoux ('Une édition "plurielle" de Marc'). Amphoux envisages producing an edition of Mark that presents the text of the major text-types side by side. Especially the underlying theory is interesting as it deviates considerably from the views on the early history of the NT text as one will find them in the standard German and English handbooks. Amphoux's investigations have led him to recognise a series of editions of the Greek Bible. Smyrna is responsible for two editions of the Western text. Around 120 C.E. a first edition of the Gospels was produced, which was used by Marcion, Justin, and the school of Valentinus. A decade later the Pauline corpus followed, which, according to the testimony of Marcion, contained only ten epistles. The second edition from Smyrna saw the light of day around 160, and can be recognised in Codex Bezae. Around 180 C.E. an edition was made in Alexandria, and a couple of decades later one in Antioch (the Caesarean text). The two big biblical codices of the fourth century, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, are placed in this framework as follows. Sinaiticus, produced in Caesarea by Eusebius, has an Alexandrian text but incorporates many Caesarean and Western readings; the text is basically eclectic. Vaticanus is an Alexandrian text, though no guarantee exists for its homogeneity throughout the whole Bible. We are looking forward to the results of this project.

7. In a short study on Φ^{90} , Peter Rodgers addresses the issue of Atticising variants. He opens up the possibility that Atticised Greek was seen in the early second century as a high, formal register of language and was not always regarded as suitable, even in official correspondence. He bases this on a request in which in the draft version Atticising forms occur but which are absent in the final version. The total number of examples is rather low (two), but the suggestion is certainly interesting.

8. Two contributions focus on the most controversial figures of the second-century church: Tatian, the compiler of the Diatessaron, and Marcion. Tjitze Baarda has a long essay that reconstructs the Syriac Diatessaron for a single pericope, Matt 1:18–25. He clearly lines out the problems in reconstructing the Diatessaron. In Syriac we only have a substantial part of a commentary on the Diatessaron (besides an Armenian translation of the work), and the Diatessaron as such has only been preserved in an Arabic translation, which shows clear signs of being edited. Von Soden found the Diatessaron the single most disturbing factor in the whole transmission of the NT, but Baarda disagrees strongly. 'Tatian's influence was limited to only a few passages, especially in the Old Syriac manuscripts' (138). Ulrich Schmid deals with both

Marcion and Tatian and demonstrates that, in the past, readings were often attributed to them without sufficient, if any, evidence.

9. There are three studies that focus on different versions, though none of the three really goes back to the second century, and only one (the Old Latin) to early Christianity (third century). Jean-Claude Haelewyck has a detailed study on the Old Latin of Mark and how this text appears in the quotations by the Latin fathers. The picture that emerges is very mixed. Cyprian clearly uses a text akin to Codex Bezae Cantabrigiae (k). Some later works show an Old Latin text of the African type with various levels of influence from the European type of text, while quite a few authors seem to use a text which is of an Old Latin type but which has not survived in the manuscript tradition. Bernard Outtier has a short contribution in which he publishes two fragments of the old Georgian version; Alain Desreumaux has a study on the various types of text represented in the Palestinian Syriac version. In the latter version two types can be identified in Mark, but these still have to be linked to the Greek tradition.

10. The contributions of Stuart Pickering on the Egerton gospel and of Stanley E. Porter on the value of apocryphal gospels for text criticism are perhaps more accessible than the two last mentioned studies. Pickering and Porter concentrate mainly on P.Egerton 2. Both authors agree that the “unknown Gospel” of P.Egerton 2 is secondary and betrays signs of reworking of the canonical gospel texts. They also agree that this apocryphal gospel should play a role in textual criticism, in that it testifies to readings belonging to the history of NT textual criticism. Though this papyrus is without doubt interesting, it seems to this reviewer that the studies by Pickering and Porter show only that the text of the canonical gospels is reflected in the Egerton papyrus. There is no immediate attestation of the actual text of a gospel in the Egerton papyrus, as the Egerton text is a text in itself. The only thing it might possibly do is suggest that a certain reading of the gospels was known to the author of this document. To me it seems hazardous to give any more weight to such a document.

11. Two contributions focus on the Acts text of Codex Bezae. Josep Rius-Camps shows how the text in Bezae places a much heavier emphasis on Paul’s guidance by the Spirit than Codex Vaticanus does. Jenny Read-Heimerdinger discusses the variants in Bezae, Sinaiticus, and Vaticanus of the preposition pairs ἀπο - ὑπο and εἰς - ἐν. Concerning the first pair, Bezae has five places where it reads ἀπο for ὑπο in places with a passive verb where the ‘action is always one of sending or expressing some kind of movement away from one person to another’ (279), which is in accordance with the text common to all three manuscripts (Reid-Heimerdinger lists two instances on p. 277). One might argue that not all of the five instances of ἀπο with a passive verb in Bezae comply naturally with Reid-Heimerdinger’s definition of ‘sending’ or ‘movement’, such as 15:40 παραδοθεις τη χαριτι κυριου απο των αδελφων. For the pair εἰς - ἐν it is argued that Bezae retains the distinction in meaning between these prepositions much better than Sinaiticus and Vaticanus. Reid-Heimerdinger’s suggestion is that Bezae reflects an older stage of Greek than the two Alexandrian manuscripts and conforms better to the patterns visible in the common text of these three manuscripts. Sometimes the reader might wish that a fuller apparatus was provided to the essays by Rius-Camps and Reid-Heimerdinger, as one sometimes wonders (especially in the case of Sinaiticus) whether one is not simply looking at scribal tendencies of a fourth-century scribe rather than at the ‘Alexandrian’ text.

12. Two further studies are apparently also products of the ‘Marc plurielle’ project. Didier Lafleur investigates the relation between \mathcal{P}^{45} and family 13 (f^{13}) as members of the Caesarean text-type and concludes that \mathcal{P}^{45} is connected with the Caesarean text but not especially with f^{13} . There are hardly any variants where \mathcal{P}^{45} , f^{13} and the Alexandrian manuscripts combine against the rest of the tradition. The contribution by Alain Georges Martin sets out to find the relation between \mathcal{P}^{45} and the Old-Syriac palimpsest; no direct relationship could be found.

13. In a second contribution to the collection under review, C.-B. Amphoux lays out another aspect of his Western-priority theory (or perhaps even ‘paradigm’), ‘Marc comme quatrième évangile’. In this essay Amphoux gives three examples of how the position of Marc as the fourth gospel in the earliest Western order (Matthew, John, Luke, Mark) affected the text of the gospels. The first example is the notorious long ending of Mark (Mark 16:9-20), added as an epilogue to all four gospels. That the long ending of Mark is based upon a Western text of the gospels is evidenced by Mark 16:13, where the eleven apostles do not believe. This is in agreement with the Western text of Luke 24:34 (reading $\lambda\epsilon\gamma\omicron\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ instead of $\lambda\epsilon\gamma\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\varsigma$). Amphoux adds as an aside that the Pericope Adulterae was inserted into the four gospel collection at its physical centre. In discussing Origen’s denial of the claim by Celsus that Jesus was a carpenter, Amphoux claims that though Origen did know the normal reading of Mark 6:3 (‘Is not this the carpenter?’), he does not consider Mark as a gospel ‘carried’, that is used, by the church. Rather, Mark as the fourth gospel was treated much more allegorically and hardly functioned in the liturgy: Mark was read differently than the other gospels. The third example concerns Mark 3:7–8, describing from which regions the audience of Jesus came. The current text of Mark is a conflation of the Matthean and Lucan readings made at the first redaction of the four-gospel collection.

14. Wim Hendriks discusses one of the variation units used by Westcott and Hort to demonstrate conflation and thus to establish the secondary character of the Byzantine text. Hendriks agrees with their judgement as regards the Byzantine text, but he would rather argue for the originality of the Western type of reading in Mark 6:33 than for Westcott and Hort’s Alexandrian variant. The main principle that Hendriks uses to establish the development of this and some other readings that he discusses in his essay seems to be that a reading starts short and grows in the course of its transmission. His overall conclusion is that the traditions of the second century (pre-Synoptic traditions in Justin, Gospel of Thomas, Codex Bezae, Diatessaron, citations in Clement of Alexandria) are much closer to the originals than the revisions of the third and fourth century.

15. The final essay by Pier Franco Beatrice deals with two passages commented upon by Irenaeus. Beatrice attempts to demonstrate how the variants in John 13:10 arose because the text was adapted to current liturgical practices. Originally, foot washing was a rite of initiation which rivalled baptism by immersion. The reading of minuscule 579, which offers the shortest reading of John 13:10, fits best with the original context; later readings adapted the text but introduced ‘confused and meaningless variations’. In the second discussed passage, Rom 13:1–7, Beatrice assumes that the whole section has suffered from a serious displacement of several verses. Beatrice offers a reconstruction of the original, which is, by his own admittance, a conjectural emendation. The ‘powers which exist’ are angelic rulers and the current, ‘absurd’ text only came into existence because some glosses on paying taxes were inserted.

16. One of the most refreshing elements of these conference proceedings is the emphasis several authors place on the importance, if not primacy, of the Western text as found in Codex Bezae and some Latin and Syriac versions. Inevitably, this leads to describing the ‘Alexandrian’ text as a revision or redaction. This contrasts with the text criticism as practised in the UBS4 - NA27 editions, where the method is basically eclectic, though the value of the testimony of some manuscripts is esteemed higher than that of others. Both approaches have a respectable pedigree, though in the Anglo-Saxon world the voice of the Western priority approach is not very often heard, perhaps because of the language barrier. In the book under review most, but not all, contributions assuming Western priority are in French. At times, one is led to wonder what the reason is why some people end up in one school of thought and some in the other. It cannot simply be because one happens to be taught by a professor who holds one or the other opinion, can it?

17. *The New Testament Text in Early Christianity* discusses a broad range of topics, and not a few of these deserve to be discussed further. As such it is a most welcome, valuable, and refreshing contribution to the discipline.

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