

VI.

THE TEXT
OF THE CODEX ROSSANENSIS (Σ).

[W. SANDAY.]

Gebhardt, Oscar von, *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*; I. Band, Heft iv, *Die Evangelien des Matthäus und des Marcus aus dem Codex Purpureus Rossanensis*, Leipzig, 1883.

SOME three (four) years ago there appeared a sumptuous volume¹, by the eminent critics O. von Gebhardt and A. Harnack, containing the description of an ancient MS. of the sixth century, hitherto unused in editions of the Greek New Testament, and lost to sight and knowledge in the Cathedral Library of the town of Rossano in Calabria, not very far from the site of ancient Sybaris. The description of which I speak was, however, especially tantalising to the textual critic, because it was confined to the external characteristics of the MS. and said very little about the text. It is true that externally the MS. presented features in their way of considerable interest. In the first place it was one—and if not quite the largest, probably on the whole the most important—of several extant specimens of the *Codd. Purpurei* of the Greek Bible. These MSS. had their vellum dyed purple, and the letters seem to have been written upon it with a chemical preparation of silver and gold². Jerome speaks scornfully of these purple codices as a kind of *éditions de luxe*, which he would leave for his opponents to prize for the magnificence of their outward appearance, while he himself

¹ *Evangeliorum Codex Purpureus Rossanensis*, Leipzig, 1880.

² Dr. Scrivener (*Introd.* p. 25, ed. 3) says 'stamped rather than written'; but see Gardthausen, *Griechische Paläographie*, p. 84 f.

was content with a poorer material, if only it offered (as his own translation did offer) a purer text (*Praef. in lib. Job, ad fin.*): a maxim which, by the way, might with advantage have been taken to heart by some modern editors of Biblical MSS. The practice must from this have attained considerable dimensions in the time of Jerome. Most of the extant examples date from the sixth century. After that date they become rare in the East, which observed a greater sobriety in such matters than the West. Three of the most important MSS. of the Old Latin, *b* (Cod. Veronensis), *c* (Cod. Palatinus), *f* (Cod. Brixianus), and the famous Cod. Argenteus of the Gothic version are written in this way. Under Charlemagne and his successors silver and gold were lavishly used, but the purple dye more sparingly: in the Cod. Aureus at Stockholm alternate leaves are purple.

More important still, from the same external point of view, is a collection of miniatures, at the beginning of the volume, representing scenes from the close of our Lord's earthly ministry, beginning with the raising of Lazarus and ending with the scene in which our Lord and His accusers both appear before Pilate. After the Agony in the Garden are interpolated, in the present order, the healing of the man born blind (St. John ix), and the Good Samaritan; so that it is clear in any case that the present order is not original. And it is highly probable that Gebhardt and Harnack are right in supposing that the miniatures still preserved are only the remains of a larger collection, the rest of which have been lost. The miniatures are said to present a close resemblance to some of the mosaics at Ravenna (p. xxvii). There is only one other Biblical MS., and that also a Codex Purpureus (of Genesis, at Vienna), which contains illustrations of the same date—the sixth century. And the scarcity of these forms of art at this period gives them an additional value.

This date, the sixth century, seems to be generally accepted, so far as the information at present accessible allows, by the scholars who have examined the subject. A more precise

definition may perhaps be possible, but will require a renewed examination of the MS. It is worth notice that the additional matter, the *Ep. ad Carpianum*, the *κεφάλαια*, etc., which the MS. contains, are written though in the same hand, in smaller characters, differing, as it would appear, somewhat considerably from the main body of the text. A similar phenomenon was observed by Tregelles in the Cutena which accompanies the Codex Zacynthius (Ξ). It is found also in Cod. Guelpherbytanus I (P. Gospp.). And the beginnings of something of the same kind may be seen in the Cod. Alexandrinus, where the subscriptions to St. Matthew and St. Mark and the superscription of the latter Gospel are said to be different in style from the body of the text, though they also are probably by the same hand.

It was not, however, my intention to go particularly into these points of external description. I will only therefore summarise them briefly by saying that the MS. is written in uncial letters of silver (the three opening lines of each Gospel in gold) on a purple ground, the colour, especially on the smooth side of the leaf, being for the most part well preserved. It consists of 188 leaves of fine vellum, containing the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, damaged towards the end of the latter Gospel and ending at Mark xvi. 14 (it therefore possesses the disputed verses). The sheets are arranged in quinions (like B), with original signatures in silver uncials at the lower right hand corner¹. The present dimensions are 30.7 centim. (13½ in. Scrivener) high by 26 centim. (10¼ in.) broad. The writing is in two columns of 20 lines to a column and 9-12 letters to a line. The MS. has the Epistle of Eusebius to Carpianus, containing an account of the use of the canons which follow; a table of the Eusebian Canons; the so-called Ammonian sections, and the Eusebian Canons noted in the margin; a table of *κεφάλαια* or longer sections,

¹ There are two rather important misprints in Scrivener's account of the MS. (Introd. p. 128, ed. 3). It ends at Mark xvi. 14, not xiv. 14; and the gatherings are quinions, not quaternions.

and headings corresponding to the *κεφάλαια* at the top of the page. It is illuminated and mutilated; its designation is Σ.

And now to come to the inside of the MS. and the character of its text, which is the subject more especially before me. Our curiosity in respect to this has been only recently satisfied. The editors hoped, when they brought out the first instalment of their description of the MS., to have an opportunity of inspecting it at leisure either in Rome or Naples. Failing this, they were prepared to return to Rossano. And Von Gebhardt set out thither in the spring of 1882, taking with him an artist to reproduce the miniatures and a photographer from Naples to reproduce both the miniatures and specimens of the writing. His disappointment may be imagined when, upon his arrival at Rossano, all access to the MS. was refused him on the pretext that the Chapter themselves were about to publish a complete edition of it. Considering that this learned body, of some forty-eight persons, did not even know in what language the MS. was written, the prospect of an edition brought out under their auspices is not very encouraging. And the world at large would doubtless have been better pleased to see it in the practised hands of the two German scholars. Perhaps the uncomfortable disclosure just mentioned may have had something to do with the refusal. At any rate, it is to be hoped that higher influences may intervene to prevent the work being carried out by altogether incompetent persons or deferred till the Greek Kalends. But in the meantime there was nothing for it but that Von Gebhardt and his cavalcade must return with their purpose unaccomplished. And, as a consequence, we have now to be content with the original collation made by Von Gebhardt and Harnack at their first visit, hurriedly indeed, but with as much care as time permitted. The text of the MS. is printed from the collation in the third issue of the *Texte und Untersuchungen*.

I have not had time to examine with any care more than the readings of the first ten chapters of St. Matthew, and

just those sections of the latter half of the Gospel which Σ (Rossanensis) has in common with its fellow purple MS. N (fragments at London, Rome, Vienna, and Patmos). But this examination, together with the classified collection of readings given by Von Gebhardt in his introduction to the text of the MS., will enable us to form a sufficient idea of its general character.

Turning, then, to the beginning of St. Matthew's Gospel, we observe at once that our MS. has the ordinary spelling of the proper names, Βοός, Ὠβήθ, Ἀσά, Ἀμάμ, and not Βοίς with N B k (Bobiensis) and the Egyptian versions, Ἰωβήθ with N B C^Δ Δ Egyptt. Aeth. Arm., or the very peculiar Ἀσάφ of N B C (D in Luke iii.) Egyptt. etc., and Ἀμάμ of the same list of authorities somewhat strengthened. It has Σολομῶνα (v. 6) with Δ and a few others, as against Σολομῶνα, not only of the best, but of a majority of the MSS. After Δαυεὶδ δέ it inserts ὁ βασιλεὺς with the mass of the MSS. and Textus Receptus, against N B Γ, Egyptt. Cur. Pesh., k of the Old Latin, and others. In fact, so far as the genealogy is concerned, it presents a thoroughly commonplace text, relieved only by a single reading, which does not at all redound to its credit, the insertion of the name Ἰωακίμ in v. 11, Ἰωσίας δὲ ἐγγέννησεν [τὸν Ἰωακίμ. Ἰωακίμ δὲ ἐγγέννησεν] τὸν Ἰεχονίαν, which is obviously put in to make good an apparent defect in the genealogy; and besides that it does not tally with the express statement that the genealogy contained only fourteen generations between David and the Babylonian Captivity, is only supported by a quite weak body of authorities, M U and others, with the two later Syriac versions. In v. 18, however, Σ has γένεσις with the older MSS., against γέννησις of E K L and the later ones. But this is the solitary spark of originality throughout the chapter. In the insertion of γὰρ after μνηστευθείσης, in the compounds παρα-δειγματίσας and δι-εγερούεις, and in the insertion of τὸν [υἱὸν] αὐτῆς τὸν πρωτότοκον it keeps in the most beaten of beaten tracks.

A similar character is observed throughout chap. ii. The order *Ἡρώδης ὁ βασιλεὺς* in v. 3, *Ἰσση* for *Ἰσπίθη* in v. 9, *ἐπὶ* for *διὰ Ἱερουσόλων* in v. 17, the insertion of *θρῆνος καὶ* before *κλαυθμὸς* in the quotation that follows, and the form *Ναζαρέθ* all duly appear. In one point *φαίνεται κατ' ὄραρ* in v. 19 Σ goes with **N B D Z** and the older versions against the later authorities, and in v. 22 it omits *ἐπὶ* (in the phrase *βασιλεύει ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰουδαίας*) with **N B**, some cursives, and Eusebius.

In chap. iii, of the readings I have noted eight agree with the common text, while *ποταμῷ* is inserted after *Ἰορδάνη* (in v. 6) with **N B C* M Δ** in what the strong attestation proves to be a right reading, though otherwise it might be suspected, and in v. 8 *καρπὸν ἀξίων* is read instead of *καρποὺς ἀξίους* of the *Textus Receptus*, but only with the great majority both of MSS. and versions.

It will be observed in the last chapter that Σ stumbles just as a commonplace MS. may be expected to stumble. It completes what seem to be defective expressions, adding *αὐτοῦ* after *ἡ τροφή, τὸ βάπτισμα*. It fills in the missing proper name *ὁ δὲ Ἰωάννης*, for the sake of clearness. It removes an asyndeton in v. 2, and substitutes *καὶ* for a rather tautological *δέ* in v. 16. The same sort of phenomena may be observed persistently. In chap. iv. there is an insertion of *ὁ Ἰησοῦς* just of this character, *Ἰσσησω* and *λέγει* assimilated to surrounding presents in vv. 5, 9, and *ἐπὶ* [*παραὶ ῥήματα*] substituted for *ἐν* because of *ἐπ' ὄραρ* preceding. To the credit side may be placed the insertion of an article before *ἄθρωπος* and omission of a superfluous subject in v. 18, but in each case with overwhelming authority. When Σ is right it takes care, as a rule, to have a substantial backing.

In the Sermon on the Mount it has increased opportunities of going wrong with the multitude, and it makes good use of them. Here are some of its more conspicuous blots. I can only regard in this light the insertion of the Doxology after the Lord's Prayer, against the general consent of all authorities older than the fourth century, with the exception of the Old

Syriac, the Thebaic or version of Upper Egypt and *k* of the Old Latin, the last two in variant forms. We must now add the *Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles*, but also with a variation. Without wishing to underrate this last accession to the evidence, it cannot be held to counterbalance the great preponderance of ante-Nicene authority. The long insertion in v. 44 from the parallel passage in St. Luke naturally finds a place. Glosses like [πᾶν ποιητῶν] ῥῆμα and ἐλεημοσύνην for δικαιοσύνην in vi. 1 are adopted. Additions like ἐν τῷ φανερωῖ in vi. 4, 6 come in to heighten the antithesis; and the various corrections of style by which the later text is characterized are almost all represented. It is noticeable that one reading, ἀντιμετρηθήσεται for μετρηθήσεται in vii. 2, found in Σ, though it has gained a footing in the Textus Receptus, has only cursives and some Old Latin MSS. in its favour. Here, as in a number of other cases, Σ heads the list for the debased text.

Summing up the result for the three chapters Matt. v-vii, I find that there are thirty-six places in which Σ joins the Textus Receptus in what is probably a wrong reading. There are several instances in which Σ joins a long array of weightier authorities in deserting the Textus Receptus. In v. 39 it strikes out a bolder course, δοτις σε βαπτίζει (pres.) εἰς (for ἐπι) τὴν δεξιὰν σιαγόνα. For the first two variations from the Textus Receptus Σ is allied with N B alone of uncials. For σιαγόνα, without σου, it has the solitary support of N (with cursives and some MSS. of the Old Latin). Again in the reading προσέχετε δέ in vi. 1, Σ joins a small group, N L Z 33. Memphitic version, which I see is followed (with δέ in single brackets) by Westcott and Hort. On the surface one might have been disposed to set it down as rather an Alexandrine correction of style by removing the asyndeton. In vii. 9, 10 ἔν ἐν αἰρήσει followed by καὶ ἐν αἰρήσει, Σ has just stopped short of adopting the whole of the amended text: αἰρήσει is a single relic of the original reading. In the narrative verses at the end of chap. vii. Σ has rightly the simple verb ἐπέλεσεν and οἱ γραμματεῖς αὐτῶν, but in both cases with a strong backing.

The audacity of v. 39 and vi. 1 has no other parallel in these chapters.

The remaining chapters, viii-x, offer merely a repetition of the same phenomena. Faults of the kind already noticed are plentiful, especially supplementary and explanatory insertions. Once or twice, as in viii. 32 ἡ ἀγάπη without πάν χοίρων, and ix. 13 ἁμαρτολόγος without the addition of εἰς μετένοιαν, the temptation has been resisted. But in these cases there is a strong supporting phalanx in the background. The same, or nearly the same, holds good of the two other most important right readings which Σ presents in these chapters, Γαδαρηῶν in viii. 28, and ἐσκελεμένοι καὶ ἐρριμένοι in ix. 36.

It is hardly necessary to go into further detail. A precisely similar character pervades all the later sections that I have examined. And it is abundantly confirmed by the instances collected by Von Gebhardt. The latter gives several interesting lists. First, two, containing in all some 86 distinct readings, in which Σ is in error with little or no support. Then a list in which Σ joins what had hitherto been singular or subsingular readings of Ν 11 times in the two Gospels, of C 20 times, of D 16 times, of Δ 10 times, and of Φ, the hypothetical uncial which forms the common stock of the cursives 13, 69, 124, 346, 13 times. In this company the other cursives 1, 28, 33, 81, 157 are often included. Besides, 1 is in agreement twice, 33 and 157 each four times, either alone or with a few other subordinate authorities.

Next Von Gebhardt works out a problem which is of special interest. I have said that the MS. which presents the closest external resemblance to Σ is N, the other leading Codex Purpureus of the Greek Testament. It is therefore an obvious question to ask, How are they also related as regards their text? The answer is not uncertain. The two MSS. have the closest resemblance. N, it will be remembered, is a series of fragments amounting in all to about 334 verses in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark. In these there are as many as thirty-three hitherto singular

readings of N in which Σ joins. And there are thirty-four others in which N and Σ go together, not indeed alone, but with little further support. From these instances Von Gebhardt justly infers that the two MSS. are near descendants of the same common exemplar. In fact he thinks that both may have been copied from it directly.

Lastly, he gives a list of readings in which Σ joins with a comparatively small group of the oldest MSS. These are in all fifty-two for the whole two Gospels with 1749 verses, which certainly cannot be considered a large proportion. Perhaps the most interesting of these readings are: in St. Matthew viii. 28 Γαδαρηνῶν just mentioned, with B C* M and virtually N* Δ, the graphic ἐπέσπειρεν for ἐσπειρεν in the parable of the Wheat and the Tares with N^b B alone of uncials (well supported, however, by the Latin authorities and Fathers), Ἰωσήφ for Ἰωσή or Ἰωάννης as the name of our Lord's brother in xiii. 55, κακῶν ἔχει for κακῶς πάσχει with N B L Z in xvii. 15, οἰκετείας for θεραπείας with B I L and others in xxiv. 45. In St. Mark iv. 21, Σ also has that curious clerical error ἐπὶ for ἐπὶ τὴν λυχρίαν with N B* Φ 33. In iv. 28 Dr. Hort contends for the peculiar reading πλήρης σῆτον (πλήρης being treated as indeclinable) on the strength of C* only with two lectionaries and partial support from B D and one cursive. Σ now presents the same reading as C*. With the exception of ταλιθὰ κοῦμ for κοῦμι and τὸ εἰ δὲν I hardly think that there is another reading of even secondary interest in St. Mark. In all such crucial texts as εἶδεν τοῦ θεοῦ i. 1, ἐν τοῖς προφήταις i. 2, αἰώνιον κρίσεως for αἰώνιον ἁμαρτήματος in iii. 29, εἰθέως ἀκούσας for παρακούσας in v. 36, ἐποίησεν for ἠπόρει in vi. 20, καθάρισον for καθαρῖζων in vii. 19, καὶ νηστεία in ix. 29, even the interpolation πᾶσα θυσία ἀλλ' ἄλισθήσεται in ix. 49, and in the retention of the last twelve verses, Σ goes with the crowd.

Summarising then, we should imagine that the Codex Rossanensis was just such a MS. as would delight the heart of the Dean of Chichester. In very many places it supplies

the oldest extant uncial authority for the common reading. In the great majority of other cases it votes steadily on the same side. It shares to a very slight extent in the heresies of **N B**. It is found in the long array with the great mass of later documents and Fathers. It is innocent of Origenian or Eusebian mutilation.

On all these points Σ lends its support decidedly to the defenders of the traditional text. And yet even they, we should think, must accept its alliance with some little mis-giving. Of the eighty and odd manifestly wrong and scantily supported readings which it contains, many are obviously mere assimilations of the text of one Gospel to another, or due to other equally unmistakeable causes of corruption. And yet there is no difference in kind between these readings and those which form so large a part of the characteristic text of the great mass of MSS. And the suspicion must ultimately force itself upon the mind, whether, after all, this great numerical majority can be so pure as it is supposed to be, and whether, after all, the process of wholesale correction and emendation which is asserted of it has not some foundation.

As for the Codex Rossinensis it is a typical example of the representatives of this emended and corrected text. Its character is essentially eclectic. It borrows, now from one source and now from another, whatever tends to make the narrative more flowing and more complete. In his original account of the MS. Von Gebhardt laid some stress on the affinities of its text to that of the Old Latin version. To the best of my belief he does not repeat this remark in his later publication. It is true that the MS. has a little sporadic relation to the Old Latin, but hardly more than it has to other forms of ante-Nicene text. Its own fundamental text is a mosaic, like that of the many other MSS. that are allied with it. And the wonder chiefly is that a MS. of such early date should have so few readings that bear the stamp of originality.