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## THE RELATIVE PRONOUNS IN ACTS AND ELSEWHERE

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THE relation of the indefinite relative to the simple relative pronoun in Greek has engaged the attention of many New Testament grammarians and there has been a general effort to show that the classical distinction between them is at least sometimes maintained by New Testament writers. The following full statement from Moulton, *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, I, p. 91f., indicates the maximum concession that is generally allowed to any theory of coalescence:

"Turning to the Relatives, we note the limiting of ὅστις, a conspicuous trait of the vernacular, where the nominative (with the neuter accusative) covers very nearly all the occurrences of the pronoun. The phrase ἕως ὅτου is the only exception in NT Greek. The obsolescence of the distinction between ὅς and ὅστις is asserted by Blass for Luke, but not for Paul. A type like Lk 24 εἰς πόλιν Δαυεὶδ ἣτις καλεῖται Βηθλεέμ, may be exactly paralleled from Herodotus (see Blass 173) and from papyri: so in an invitation formula αὔριον ἣτις ἐστὶν ἰε, "tomorrow, which is the 15th"—cf. Mt 27 62. Hort, on 1 Pet 2 11 (*Comm.* p. 133), allows that "there are some places in the NT in which ὅστις cannot be distinguished from ὅς." 'In most places, however, of the NT,' he proceeds, 'ὅστις apparently retains its strict classical force, either generic, "which, as other like things", or essential, "which by its very nature".' A large number of the exceptions, especially in Lucan writings, seem

to be by no means cases of *equivalence* between  $\delta\varsigma$  and  $\delta\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ , whether agreeing or disagreeing with classical use. Some of them would have been expressed with  $\delta\sigma\pi\epsilon\rho$  in Attic: thus in Acts 11 28 we seem to expect  $\eta\pi\epsilon\rho\acute{\epsilon}\ \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\tau\omicron$ . Others throw a subtle stress on the relative, which can be brought out by various paraphrases, as in Lk 1 20, 'which for all that.' Or  $\delta\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  represents what in English would be expressed by a demonstrative and a conjunction, as in Lk 10 42, 'and it shall not be taken away.' In Mt we find  $\delta\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  used four times at the beginning of a parable, where, though the principal figure is formally described as an individual, he is really a *type*, and  $\delta\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  is therefore appropriate. We may refer to Blass 172, for examples of  $\delta\varsigma$  used for  $\delta\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ , with indefinite reference. The large number of places in which  $\delta\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  is obviously right, according to classical use, may fairly stand as proof that the distinction is not yet dead. We must not stay to trace the distinction further here, but may venture on the assertion that the two relatives are never absolutely convertible, however blurred may be the outlines of the classical distinction in Luke, and possibly in sporadic passages outside his writings. Kälker (*Quaest.* 245 f.) asserts that Polybius uses  $\delta\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  for  $\delta\varsigma$  before words beginning with a vowel, for no more serious reason than the avoidance of hiatus; and it is curious that among twenty-three more or less unclassical examples in the Lucan books fourteen do happen to achieve this result. We chronicle this fact as in duty bound, but without suggesting any inclination to regard it as a key to our problem. If Kälker is right for Polybius—and there certainly seems weight in his remark that this substitution occurs just where the forms of  $\delta\varsigma$  end in a vowel—we may have to admit that the distinction during the *Kowή* period had worn rather thin. It would be like the distinction between our relatives *who* and *that*, which in a considerable proportion of sentences are sufficiently convertible to be selected mostly according to our sense of rhythm or euphony: this, however, does not imply that the distinction is even blurred, much less lost."

No doubt many occurrences of  $\delta\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$  in the New Testament permit of reading into them a kind of generalizing force but there are other phenomena, quite apart from the subjective

evidence of subtle shades of meaning attributed to individual passages by the modern reader, which compel the conclusion that the indefinite relative is merely a synonymous substitute for the simpler form in many Κοινή writings. These lines of evidence are three:

1) The limitation of the forms used. Except for the stereotyped *ὅς ὅτου* only the nominative forms occur. This has always been noted but no reason can be given why the classical indefinite sense should be illustrated so exclusively in the nominative.

2) The large degree to which the corresponding forms of the simple relative have been ousted by the compound. This is more than a repetition of the previous point—for it means, for example, not only that *ἥτις* is comparatively frequent in these writings but that *ἥ* is comparatively rare. Why the proper sense of the simple relative should be less frequently illustrated for example in the feminine nominative singular than in the masculine singular or in the oblique cases of the feminine is a question that would be difficult to answer for those who wish to maintain even an occasional survival of the classical distinction.

3) It is sometimes possible to compare within a single author instances of the use of the two pronouns when the very similarity in thought and form between the parallels shows that the distinction is merely a matter of declension, if one may say so, rather than of sense.

For these reasons it is possible to assert the complete extinction in most New Testament writings (not to mention other examples of late Greek) of any difference between the two pronouns, except for cases when *ὅσστις*, *ὅτι* occurs without antecedent in the sense "whoever", "whatever".<sup>1</sup>

The book of Acts confirms this general conclusion. As Blass already suggested, the intermixture in Luke's writing is very complete. For that author the relatives had become a single pronoun declined as follows:

<i>ὅς ἥτις ὅ</i>	<i>οἵτινες αἵτινες ἃ</i>
<i>οὗ ἧς etc.</i>	<i>ὧν etc.</i>

The exceptions to this composite declension are few (in Acts

<sup>1</sup> Even here *ὅς*, *ὅς ἄν* etc., has become an alternative usage.

only four out of a total for both pronouns of about 200 occurrences):

*ὅτου* genitive occurs as well as *οὗ* in the phrase *ἕως ὅτου* (*οὗ*) in Luke 12 50; 13 8; 15 8 *v. l.*; 22 16; 22 18 *v. l.*

*ὅστις* in Luke 23 19.

*ἣ* in Luke 2 37; 10 39 *v. l.*, Acts 9 36.

*οἷ* in Luke 5 10 17 29; 6 17; 8 13 (*bis*); 9 27 31; 10 30; 13 30 (*bis*); 17 12; 20 47; 23 29; 24 23; Acts 1 11; 7 40; 10 45 *v. l.*; 28 10.

*αἱ* in Luke 8 2; 23 27 29.

These exceptions may many of them be explained on different grounds.

a) Two are doubtful readings

Luke 10 39 *ἣ καὶ παρακαθεσθείσα* (om. *ἣ* N\* LΞ 579 boh)

Acts 10 45 *οἱ συνῆλθον* (*ὅσοι* all Greek MSS except B)

b) Some instances are probably due to Luke's sources

Luke 8 13<sup>a</sup> *οἱ ὅταν ἀκούσωσω*<sup>2</sup> Mark 4 13 *οἱ ὅταν ἀκούσωσω*

Luke 20 47 *οἱ κατεσθίουσιν* Mark 12 40 *οἱ* (article) *κατεσθίουσιν*

Luke 23 19 *Βαραββᾶν ὅστις ἦν διὰ στάσιν τιὰ γενομένην ἐν τῇ πόλει καὶ φόνον βληθεὶς ἐν τῇ φυλακῇ* Mark 15 8 *ἦν δὲ ὁ λεγόμενος Βαραββᾶς μετὰ τῶν στασιαστῶν δεδεμένος οἷτινες ἐν τῇ στάσει φόνον πεποιήκεισαν*

Acts 7 40 *οἱ προπορεύονται ἡμῶν* Exod. 32 1 = 32 23 (LXX) *οἱ προπορεύονται ἡμῶν*

c) In some cases the simple pronoun is used to avoid repetition of similar forms of *τις* or *ὅστις*<sup>3</sup>

Luke 8 2 *αἱ ἦσαν τεθεραπευμέναι (γυναϊκές τινες immediately precedes and the next verse has ἕτεραι πολλαί, αἷτινες κτλ.)*

Luke 9 27 *εἰσὶν τινες . . . οἱ οὐ μὴ γέσωνται θανάτου* (avoiding the repetition in Mark 9 1 *εἰσὶν τινες . . . οἷτινες οὐ μὴ γέσωνται θανάτου*)

<sup>2</sup> So Luke 8 13b has *οἱ πρὸς καιρὸν πιστεύουσι* (no relative clause in Mark) but Luke 8 15 has *οἷτινες . . . ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον* after Mark 4 20 *οἷτινες ἀκούουσιν τὸν λόγον*.

<sup>3</sup> In Luke 10 30 and 17 12 *οἱ* is preceded by *τις* and *τινα* respectively.

Luke 9 31 οἱ ὀφθέντες ἐν δόξῃ ἔλεγον (the preceding words are οἷτινες ἦσαν Μωυσῆς καὶ Ἡλείας

Luke 24 23 οἱ λέγουσιν (τινες occurs in verses 22 and 24)

Acts 9 36 ἡ διερμηνευομένη λέγεται Δορκάς (the antecedent is τις μαθήτρια and the last clause of verse 35 is οἷτινες ἐπέστρεψαν ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον).

Similarly in the following symmetrical clauses it may be supposed that rather than a repeated οἷτινες (αἷτινες) the simpler forms were preferred as suiting the gnomic form:

Luke 13 30 εἰσὶν ἔσχατοι οἱ ἔσονται πρῶτοι καὶ εἰσὶν πρῶτοι οἱ ἔσονται ἔσχατοι

Luke 23 29 αἱ κοιλίαι αἱ οὐκ ἐγέννησαν καὶ μαστοὶ οἱ οὐκ ἔθρεψαν.

d) In some cases a somewhat complicated antecedent may explain the use of the simpler relative:

Luke 5 29 καὶ ἦν ὄχλος πολὺς τελωνῶν καὶ ἄλλων οἱ ἦσαν μετ' αὐτῶν κατακείμενοι

Luke 6 17 καὶ πλῆθος πολὺ τοῦ λαοῦ ἀπὸ πάσης τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ τῆς παραλίου Τύρου καὶ Σιδῶνος, οἱ ἦλθον ἀκοῦσαι αὐτοῦ

Luke 23 27 ἠκολούθει δὲ αὐτῷ πολὺ πλῆθος τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ γυναικῶν αἱ ἐκόπτοντο

The Epistle to the Hebrews among the New Testament writings is generally the closest in style to Luke. Though the connection by relatives is frequent<sup>4</sup> there is only one exception to the general rule by which ὅστις supplies three nominative forms and ὅς all the rest. The exception is 11 33 οἷ.<sup>5</sup>

The equivalence of forms from both pronouns may be seen in such cases as:

Heb. 9 2 σκηνὴ γὰρ κατεσκευάσθη ἡ πρώτη, ἐν ἣ . . . ἦτις

Heb. 9 8f. τῆς πρώτης σκηνῆς . . . ἦτις . . . καθ' ἣν

Heb. 13 7 μνημονεύετε τῶν ἡγουμένων ὑμῶν, οἷτινες . . . ὦν

Although Blass claims for Paul more fidelity to the classic distinction between the relatives than for Luke, his case is not well substantiated. There is for Paul practically a consistent

<sup>4</sup> A. Nairne, *Hebrews in The Cambridge Greek Testament*, p. lii.

<sup>5</sup> In view of *δωστας* .. *αἷτινες* in Heb. 10 8 and 11 Hort's conjecture for 10 1 in place of *δωστας αἷς* or *αἷς* of the MSS. should have been *αἷτινες* rather than *αἷ*.

mixed declension identical with that indicated above except for the neuter plural nominative, where *ἄτινα* seems to have nearly supplanted *ἄ*. According to Burton, *I. C. C. Galatians*, p. 257, "the only certain instance of *ἄ* in nom. is Col. 2 22; in 1 Cor. 4 6 and Tit. 2 1 it was felt to be accus.; in Col. 2 17 the reading is uncertain; in Eph. 5 4 it is possibly an accus. but more probably a nom." The nominatives will then be *ὅς*, *ἥτις*, *ὃ*; *οἷτινες*, *αἷτινες*, *ἄτινα*, and for Paul the only exceptions for this mixed arrangement are, in addition to possible instances of *ἄ* just mentioned:

Rom. 16 7 *οἱ καὶ πρὸ ἐμοῦ γέγοναν ἐν Χριστῷ*

Phil. 2 20 *ὅστις γνησίως τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν μεριμνήσει*

In the former case the reading is uncertain: *οἱ* is not read in *S\*D et al.* If *οἱ* is original the form may be due to the desire to avoid repetition (cf. above, p. 153), since *οἷτινες* occurs in the preceding clause modifying the same antecedent. Similarly the *ἄ* of Col. 2 22 is succeeded by *ἄτινα* in the next verse.

The equivalence in meaning and use of the two pronouns in Paul is well illustrated by the list of greetings in Romans from which one doubtful exception is derived:

Rom. 16 4ff. *οἷτινες . . . οἷς . . . ὅς . . . ἥτις . . . οἷτινες . . . οἱ*  
(*v. l.*) . . . *ἥτις*<sup>6</sup>

or from parallels between Ephesians and Colossians:

Eph. 1 22f. *τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἥτις ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ*

Col. 1 24 *τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ ὃ ἐστὶν ἡ ἐκκλησία*

Eph. 5 5 *πλεονέκτης, ὅς (v. l. ὃ) ἐστὶν εἰδωλολάτρης*

Col. 3 5 *πλεονεξία, ἥτις ἐστὶν εἰδωλολατρία*

Compare also the parallels:

Rom. 4 16 *Ἀβραάμ, ὃς ἐστὶν πατὴρ πάντων ἡμῶν*

Gal. 4 26f. *ἡ δὲ ἄνω Ἱερουσαλήμ . . . , ἥτις ἐστὶν μήτηρ ἡμῶν*

The evidence from these writers is confirmed by the general though not absolutely uniform custom of the other books of the New Testament. Two facts, the survival of certain nominative forms of the indefinite relative, and particularly the fact that these forms have nearly driven out the corresponding forms of

<sup>6</sup> Blass however maintained even here that the exchange depended on whether a mere fact (*ὅς*) or a characteristic (*ὅστις*) was given.

the simple relative, seem to prove that there is not a difference of meaning and that the almost uniform employment of certain parts of the indefinite relative forbids any argument based on its earlier use to express cause, characteristics or indefinite reference.<sup>7</sup>

What led to this development in Hellenistic Greek we may of course only conjecture. The avoidance of hiatus is a natural suggestion since *ἦτις*, *οἵτινες*, *αἵτινες* are forms of the indefinite relative with a terminal consonant which would replace forms of *ὅς* ending in a vowel. There is however little if any evidence of intention to avoid hiatus by New Testament writers. If that is the original intention or tendency the motive must have been already forgotten.<sup>8</sup>

Another suggestion may be offered. The avoided forms of the simple relative are the only ones which agree in all but accent with the corresponding forms of the article (i. e. *ἡ*, *οἱ*, *αἱ*).<sup>9</sup> Especially where a participle followed in the nominative the ambiguity of the short forms in unaccented text or in speech might be annoying.<sup>10</sup> In any case the presence of the compound relative is due in the New Testament to an established tendency of the language away from the forms *ἦ*, *οἷ*, *αἷ* (and, perhaps by

<sup>7</sup> See the effort to explain its occurrences in A. T. Robertson, *Grammar of Greek N. T.*, pp. 726—731, and the claim of at least occasional special meaning in such English commentaries (to mention no others) as Lightfoot on 2 Thess. 1 9; Gal. 4 24; Phil. 1 28, 4 3; Westcott on Heb. 2 3; Frame on 2 Thess. 1 9; Charles on Rev. 2 24 *al.*

<sup>8</sup> As already mentioned by Moulton, F. Kälker, *Quaestiones de elocutione Polybiana in Leipziger Studien* II (1880) ii. 245 ff., argued that *ἦτις*, *αἵτινες*, and *οἵτινες* as well as *ἥτις* etc., *ἐπειδὴτις* etc. were used to avoid hiatus both by Polybius and (p. 311) by Diodorus Siculus. For Polybius Hultsch, *Philologus* XIV. (1859), 288 ff., XV. (1860), 152 f. agrees. As for Moulton's observation with regard to the Lucan writings that in some 23 unclassical occurrences of the indefinite relative 14 without it would have produced hiatus it may be answered that this is no evidence of an interest in the avoidance of hiatus since nearly half the words in the New Testament begin with vowels. Thus of the 25 instances in Luke's writings of *ἦ*, *οἷ* and *αἷ* above, p. 153 some 15 are found to be followed by vowels.

<sup>9</sup> Contrast *ὁ* vs. *ὅς*, *τά* vs. *ἃ*.

<sup>10</sup> So Blass; note however that when Luke has retained *οἷ* with the analytical imperfect *ἦσαν* immediately follows the relative (Luke 5 17, 29; 8 2).



analogy, from  $\acute{\alpha}$ )—a tendency revealed in other writings not only by the frequency of  $\eta\tau\iota\varsigma$ ,  $\omicron\tau\omega\varsigma$ , etc., but by the extensive use of the intensives  $\delta\sigma\pi\epsilon\rho$  and  $\delta\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota$  and (in the plural) of  $\delta\sigma\omicron\iota$ .

$\delta\sigma\pi\epsilon\rho$  is not represented in the New Testament though it would have been very convenient for supplying the neuter forms which  $\delta\ \tau\iota$ ,  $\acute{\alpha}\tau\iota\nu\alpha$  did not satisfactorily provide. Of 109 instances of  $\delta\sigma\pi\epsilon\rho$  in Josephus collected by H. Paur, *Observationes et notationes ad Flavii Josephi elocutionem*, p. 24,  $\delta\pi\epsilon\rho$  accounts for 48,  $\acute{\alpha}\pi\epsilon\rho$  for 31. The other compounds in  $-\pi\epsilon\rho$  occur occasionally in the New Testament and seem to retain sometimes their literary flavor, e. g. Luke 11  $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\epsilon\iota\delta\eta\mu\epsilon\rho$ . They are especially common in Hebrews.

$\delta\sigma\omicron\iota$  and  $\delta\sigma\alpha$  occur frequently in the New Testament both where  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$  precedes and where no quantitative force seems to be implied.

$\delta\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota$  appears also to be used in Hellenistic Greek in much the same way as  $\delta\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ ,  $\delta\sigma\pi\epsilon\rho$ ,  $\delta\varsigma\ \delta\eta$ , and without giving to the succeeding word the emphasis which  $\kappa\alpha\iota$  is expected to convey. This appears especially in the neuter singular where neither  $\delta\sigma\omicron\nu$  nor (on account of confusion with  $\delta\ \tau\iota$ )  $\delta\ \tau\iota$  could be employed. Note in Acts:

11 30  $\delta\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \acute{\epsilon}\pi\omicron\iota\eta\sigma\alpha\nu$

26 9  $\delta\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \acute{\epsilon}\pi\omicron\iota\eta\sigma\alpha$ .

Perhaps it is this idiom which accounts for the likeness of Gal. 210 to Acts 11 30 rather than the literary dependence which Plooiij and others find (*Harvard Theological Review* XV (1922), 169). Similarly an unnecessary  $\kappa\alpha\iota$  occurs after  $\delta\iota\delta$  (=  $\delta\iota\ \delta$ ), e. g. Luke 1 35; Acts 10 29; 24 26. Where the demonstrative and antecedent are included in the neuter relative of course the simple  $\delta$  (or  $\acute{\alpha}$ ) is used (see Bruder's concordance, p. 621). Beside the neuter forms several instances of  $\eta\ \kappa\alpha\iota$ ,  $\omicron\delta\ \kappa\alpha\iota$ ,  $\acute{\alpha}\iota\ \kappa\alpha\iota$  occur (Luke 10 39 *v. l.*; 23 27 *v. l.*; Acts 1 11; 28 10) as well as instances in the oblique cases. A further study of this colorless use of  $\kappa\alpha\iota$  in relative clauses (which appears also in the papyri) would correct certain common errors of translation and interpretation in the New Testament.