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SOME LINGUISTIC ASPECTS OF THE CHESTER BEATTY PAPYRUS OF THE GOSPELS

AMONG the questions on which the Chester Beatty papyrus might be expected to throw new light is that of grammatical and stylistic emendations of the New Testament text. There is a common impression that these are frequent in the later MSS and even in some of the earlier ones. The supposition is inherently probable, but it is by no means easy to find certain evidence of the fact. The attestation of variants which suggest such an explanation is extremely contradictory.

Prof. Moulton, for example, in his *Introduction to the Study of New Testament Greek*, speaks of anacolutha which have been "removed by the copyists in their zeal for grammatical propriety", but which the oldest MSS faithfully preserve; but the only example which he gives (Matt. vii 9) is an anacoluthon which has been faithfully preserved by practically all MSS except B* and L. Again the remarkable anacoluthon in Luke viii 20 ἀπηγγέλη δὲ αὐτῷ λεγόντων is attested by A and most of the later uncials and cursives against NBDL. There is, however, an interesting anacoluthon in the B text of Mark vi 22, where NBC*L read ἤρρεσεν, while most other MSS continue the series of genitives absolute with ἀρεσάσης. Here the papyrus also reads ἀρεσάσης. The reading of the 'Neutral' text is probably an assimilation to Matthew.

Perhaps Prof. Moulton would have reckoned among the anacolutha removed by later copyists the passages in which a genitive absolute in some MSS is represented by a dative quasi-absolute in others. Some of these dative readings have indeed been explained as emendations of the 'incorrect' genitive absolute, while defenders of the traditional text have considered the genitives as Alexandrian emendations. Three out of six of the series of phrases of this kind in Matt. viii and ix, however, have a dative even in B, while the later MSS have left numerous similar genitives uncorrected. Moreover in Matt. xiv 6 NBDLZ and some others give a real dative absolute γενεσίους δὲ γενομένοις against the genitive absolute of the majority γενεσίων δὲ ἀγομένων. We now have another example of the dative quasi-absolute in the papyrus in Mark ix 28. The variants are: εἰσελθόντος αὐτοῦ NBDLW@ famm. 1 and 13, 700; εἰσελθόντα αὐτόν AEF GH, &c. 5; ἐλθόντα αὐτόν NΣ 92, 256; while the papyrus reads εἰσελθόντι αὐτῷ. The alternation of genitive absolute and dative quasi-absolute is common in Plutarch.

A very frequent variant is the resolution of participial constructions. This is supposed to be especially characteristic of D, although even Bishop Chase admits that this MS often appears on the other side in such variations. There are examples in both directions in close proximity in Mark xv, where in v. 1 D reads συμβούλιον ἐποίησαν against

συμβούλιον ποιήσαντες in ABNX⁵, while in v. 24 it reads *σταυρώσαντες αὐτόν* with the Textus Receptus against *σταυροῦσιν αὐτόν* in BL, and in v. 30 *καταβάς* with NBLA against *καὶ κατάβα* in the Textus Receptus. The papyrus is equally inconsistent. In Mark iv 36 it reads *ἀφίουσιν* with DW[Ⓞ] and others against *ἀφέντες* in other texts, while in v 23 it follows the majority with *ἐλθών* against D's *ἐλθε*. Similarly in Mark vi 48 it sides with A and the Received Text in reading *εἶδεν* against *ιδών* of NBDLW[Ⓞ]. In vii 28, on the other hand, it supports DW[Ⓞ] *famm.* 1 and 13 in reading *λέγουσα*, where most MSS have *λέγει*. In viii 14 it reads *μόνον ἄρτον ἔχοντες* with [Ⓞ] *famm.* 1 and 13 against *εἶχον* in other MSS. In Luke ix 30 it departs from all other MSS in assimilating the construction to that of the parallel passage in Mark *συνλαλοῦντες*. In Luke ix 59 it agrees with the Received Text and with NB in giving a dative participle *ἀπελθόντι* against the accusative participle of D and [Ⓞ] and the infinitive of AW *famm.* 1 and 13. In Luke xiii 15 it has a singular reading *ἀποκριθεὶς* for *ἀπεκρίθη*.

Other variations in verbal forms are no less difficult to fit into any rigorous theory of "corrected" and "uncorrected" texts. Mark vi 36 shows the papyrus supporting NBLW[Ⓞ] (and A 7005 with a somewhat different context) in reading *τί φάγωσιν* against D's *τί φαγείν*. In Luke xii 5, on the other hand, we have a singular reading *λέγω ὑμῖν τοῦτον φοβηθῆναι*, where all other MSS read *φοβηθῆτε*. The behaviour of the papyrus in the matter of tense-forms in John xi is particularly interesting. In v. 29 we find it on the side of the Textus Receptus with *ἐγείρεται* and *ἔρχεται*, in the historic present, against the aorists of NBCLW, and in the first case of D also. In v. 33, on the other hand, it goes over to D with *τοὺς Ἰουδαίους κλαίοντας τοὺς συνελθούσους αὐτῆ*. It also sides with D in the words which follow *ἐταράχθη τῷ πνεύματι ὡς ἐνβριμούμενος*. John x is notable for the consistency with which the papyrus employs singular verbs with neuter plurals, in which its support from other MSS is extraordinarily inconstant. In v. 8, for example, it agrees with L alone in reading *ἤκουσεν*, while in v. 12 it gives *ἐστίν* with NABLW[Ⓞ] against the *εἰσί* of D and the Textus Receptus. In v. 14 it has *γινώσκουσι* corrected to *γινώσκει*, which has the support of Epiphanius, while *γινώσκουσι* is read by NBDLW. In v. 16 the readings are inconsistent, *ἐστιν* and *ἀκούσουσιν* with most MSS and *γενήσονται* with N²BDLW[Ⓞ] against *γενήσεται* in N^{*}A5. In v. 22 it agrees with the majority of MSS in reading *ἐγένετο* against the *ἐγένοντο* of D. The case is much the same in the other Gospels. In Mark ix 3 our text reads *ἐγένετο* with NBCW[Ⓞ]5 against *ἐγένοντο* in ADL *famm.* 1 and 13. The examples in Luke are for the most part undisputed, but in xii 6 NB[Ⓞ] and *fam.* 13 read *πωλοῦνται* against the *πωλεῖται* of the papyrus, which is supported by ADLW *fam.* 1 5. The singular verb in the papyrus in

v. 30 is again supported by the Textus Receptus with AW^Θ fam. 1 against NBL and fam. 13.

It is interesting to observe that the papyrus gives no countenance to the only example of *δοῖ* in the New Testament, but in Mark viii 37 reads *δώσει ἄνθρωπος* with ACDW^Θ against NB. It has, however, one example of *γνοῖ* in Mark v 43, but here the only alternative is *γνώ*. In Mark vii 25, on the other hand, it favours the more unusual reading *εἶχεν θυγάτριον ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ* in company with W and fam. 13. In Mark v 23 it joins A and K in the "correct" neuter *αὐτῷ* in place of the more general *αὐτῆ*.

Conflicts in the cases governed by prepositions are common, and the oldest MSS change sides in the most bewildering fashion in their attestation. In Matt. xxvii 29, for instance, we have *ἐπέθηκαν ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν* in ADN^ς and *ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς* in NBL, while in John xix 2 AUH have *ἐπέθηκαν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν* against *αὐτοῦ τῆ κεφαλῆ* of other MSS. Again in Matt. xiv 19 C²EF and most of the later uncials read *ἐπὶ τοῖς χόρτους*, while L reads *ἐπὶ τοῦ χόρτους*, NBC* *ἐπὶ τοῦ χόρτου* and D *ἐπὶ τὸν χόρτον*. In the parallel passage in Mark all MSS read *ἐπὶ τῷ χλωρῷ χόρτῳ*, and the papyrus agrees with them except that it omits the article. In Mark vii 30 it gives its testimony among conflicting witnesses. Here NBDL read *ἐπὶ τὴν κλίνην*, while the papyrus supports AW famm. 1 and 13^ς in reading *ἐπὶ τῆς κλίνης*. It seems clear that there was sufficient uncertainty as to the cases governed by *ἐπί* throughout the period covered by our MSS, including the papyrus, to account for all existing variants without assuming any deliberate emendation. But has any grammarian defined the classical usage with any certainty? Herodotus has *ἐπὶ τῶν ὄνων* and *ἐπὶ τοὺς ὄνους* after *ἐπιτίθημι* in the same paragraph ii 121 (4), unless this is a scribal error.

There are a number of passages in which the papyrus shews a preference for *ἐπί* over other prepositions, such as *εἰς* and *ἐν*. In John xi 6, for example, it reads *ἐπὶ τῷ τόπῳ* with D against *ἐν ᾧ ἦν τόπῳ*, attested by most MSS, and in v. 30 it again has *ἐπὶ τῷ τόπῳ* with ^Θ and fam. 13 (*εἶτι ἐπί*), against *ἐν τῷ τόπῳ* in ADL^ς and *εἶτι ἐν τῷ τόπῳ* in NBCW fam. 1. In Luke xii 51 again it reads *ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς* against *ἐν τῇ γῆ*, the reading of most other MSS. In Luke xiii 17, on the other hand, it appears to support D in *ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐνδόξοις* against the *ἐπί* of other texts. In Luke ix 31 it reads *εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ* with D against the *ἐν* of other MSS, while in v. 51 it agrees with the majority in reading *εἰς* against *ἐν* attested by A. In Mark ix 31 it appears to have read *παραδίδοται ἀνθρώποις* in place of *εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων*.

There is an interesting reading in Luke ix 53, where the papyrus supports certain Old Latin texts in making *πορευομένον* agree with *αὐτοῦ*, and not with *πρόσωπον*, as in all known Greek MSS. In Mark viii 12

again it supports the majority of MSS, including the latest, in the difficult "Semitism" *εἰ δοθήσεται τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ σημεῖον*, which W and fam. 13 have paraphrased by assimilation to Matthew.

In Mark ix 7 the papyrus apparently offers a new example of a genitive pronoun so placed as to combine its possessive function with that of an ethical dative: οὐ]τός μ[ού ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς ὁ ἀ]γαπ[ητός. It does not seem that this restoration of the text can very well be wrong, unless the reading was *μοι*, and a somewhat similar construction is found in Clement of Alexandria and in the Clementine Homilies, οὗτός ἐστί μου ὁ υἱός.

Among orthographical variants one of the most interesting is the use of *εἰάν* as equivalent to the conditional particle *ἄν* with relatives. This is a usage which is supposed to have been frequently 'corrected' by later MSS, although examples of *εἰάν* are not lacking in the Received Text, while B reads *ὅς εἰάν* in one place and *ὅς ἄν* in another in two precisely similar phrases in Luke ix 48. In both these cases the papyrus reads *ὅς ἄν*, with the support of DLΞ 33, 69 in the first place and BKLUX 33, 69 in the other, while the Textus Receptus reads *ὅς εἰάν* in both instances. This consistency, however, is not maintained, for in the other examples in Luke the papyrus has *ὅπου εἰάν* in ix 57, *εἰς ἣν εἰάν πόλιν* in x 8, *εἰς ἣν εἰάν πόλιν* in x 10, *ὅτι εἰάν* in x 35, and *πᾶς ὅς ἄν* in xii 8, while in xii 3 it adds an *εἰάν* not found in other MSS, *ὅσα ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ εἰάν εἴπητε*. In Mark vi 23 the reading is *ὅτι εἰάν*, and here only D 69 and a few cursives read *ἄν*. Mark viii 38 shews the papyrus reading *ὅς γὰρ εἰάν* with NBCEF and others against the Received Text and its supporters. There is an example of *ὅσα ἄν* in John xi 22, where the papyrus is supported by ABDLX and the majority of MSS, while NCM and a few others read *ὅσα εἰάν*.

In another matter of orthography the papyrus carries back a reading characteristic of A and the 'Byzantine' text to the third century. N makes Mark consistently use the form *εὐθύς* and never *εὐθέως*, while B has *εὐθέως* twice and the other early uncials fluctuate between the two forms, with the exception of A, which has *εὐθύς* only once. The forms vary in Matthew in all texts, while Luke has only one example of *εὐθύς* attested by NBCLΞ 33 and others, and now also by the papyrus. This attestation has given rise to Souter's description of *εὐθύς* as characteristic of Mark, while Prof. Pernot makes it the basis of an ingenious parallel between the usage of the first century and that of the Modern Greek learned language. The usage of Plutarch and Lucian seems to me to be against this parallel, and we now have the evidence of the papyrus against Mark's exclusive use of *εὐθύς*. The word occurs four times in the extant portion of Mark, once in the form *εὐθύς* and three times in the form *εὐθέως*.

A somewhat similar case is the spelling of certain verbal forms adopted by Hort from \aleph and B, *εἶδαν*, *εἶπαν*, *ἤλθαν*. The papyrus follows the other spelling *εἶδον*, *εἶπον*, *ἤλθον*, except for one case of *εἶπαν* in Luke ix 54.

In Mark ix 21 the papyrus supports an almost singular reading of B, in which a difference of spelling is of much more importance. It reads *ἕως τοῦτο γέγονεν αὐτῷ*. Even Hort seems to have regarded *ἕως* as a mistake for *ὡς*. *ὡς*, however, in the sense which it would have to bear here, is as unusual as *ἕως*. It may be that the B reading is right, and that *ἕως* is used in a sort of inverted sense, the readings *ἀφ' οὗ* of $\aleph\aleph$ and *ἐξ οὗ* of $\aleph^c C^* W$, &c., being paraphrases, perhaps retranslations of the Latin *ex quo*.

There remain to be considered certain cases of style rather than of grammar, which have some bearing on the charge of enfeebling the 'vigour and incisiveness of the original writing' so often brought against the Received Text.

In John xi 19 $\aleph\aleph\aleph\aleph$ read *πρὸς τὴν Μάρθαν καὶ Μαρίαν* and D *πρὸς Μάρθαν καὶ Μαρίαν*, while A and the Textus Receptus, with Θ famm. 1 and 13, read *πρὸς τὰς περὶ Μάρθαν καὶ Μαρίαν*. This certainly has rather the air of an 'elegant' emendation, although the expression, in the sense which it obviously bears here, is a favourite one of Xenophon of Ephesus, whose language, though not free from pedantry, is on the whole much more popular than that of any other Greek novelist. Now it appears that the papyrus had this reading. It would perhaps be too fanciful to associate the use of this expression by John with the traditional connexion of the Fourth Gospel with Ephesus.

In the same chapter of John the papyrus has a singular reading in v. 2, where all texts read *ἦν δὲ Μαρία ἡ ἀλείψασα τὸν κύριον*. It is *ἦν δὲ αὐτῆ ἡ Μαρία*, &c. This will hardly seem an enfeeblement of the text to any but those to whom any addition to B is suspect. In chapter x, however, there is a singular reading which certainly is feebler than that attested by most MSS, unless it can be regarded as a means of giving greater force to the repetition of the phrase in its stronger form in v. 14. The papyrus reads in the first place *ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν. ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ δίδωσιν*, &c. In v. 14 it has the common reading. It is curious that D reverses the variation, reading *ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός* in both places in v. 11 and *ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν* in v. 14. It is also curious that the Vulgate reads in v. 11: *Ego sum pastor bonus. Bonus pastor animam suam dat pro ovibus suis*. This seems to suggest *ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν* in the second place in v. 11.

Another important variant may legitimately be regarded as falling within the domain of style. This is in Luke ix 62, where the papyrus reads as follows:

ουδεις εις[
]χειρα αυτου επ αροτρον ευθε[τος

On this Sir Frederic Kenyon has the following note: 'εισ(βαλλων)] επιβαλων NBC famm. 1, 13, 5, επιβαλλων ADLWΘ. Supplementum aliquod videtur fuisse in papyro, cum -βαλλων (vel βαλων) την spatio non sufficiat. αυτου cum SACDLWΘ5, om. B fam. 1 αροτρον]+ και βλεπων εις τα οπισω cett.' It seems clear, however, that the papyrus must have read εις τα οπισω βλέπων και επιβάλλον (vel -βαλων) την χείρα αὐτοῦ ἐπ' ἄροτρον with D a b c e q Clement and Cyprian. This new attestation of the 'Western' reading seems to call for a reconsideration of the unfavourable verdict on this apparent inversion. The other order of words seems inevitable in English, but was it so inevitable in Greek? It seems possible even that the effect of the inversion has been misunderstood through the habit of representing it by an inversion of the English translation. It may rather be an example of an idiom common in Modern Greek and not unknown in the N.T., in which και is used to connect sentences which are not really co-ordinate, but dependent. A good example is Mark xv 25 ἦν δὲ ὥρα τρίτη και ἐσταύρωσαν αὐτόν, which probably implies 'It was the third hour when they crucified Him'.¹ Other examples are Mark v 19, ὅσα ὁ κύριός σοι πεποιήκεν και ἠλέησέν σε and Mark ii 15 ἦσαν γὰρ πολλοὶ και ἠκολούθουν αὐτῷ. If this is the true explanation of the construction, the passage would mean 'No man looking back when he putteth his hand to the plough'. This is confirmed by the reading of b and q *nemo respiciens retro mittens manum in aratrum*, with no *et*. It is even possible that the papyrus omitted the και.

Altogether I think it must be recognized that the new evidence furnished by this venerable MS does not encourage the belief that deliberate 'correction' played any considerable part in producing textual variations. There appears, in fact, to be no important difference in style and language between the earliest MS and the latest. Corrections and improvements and conjectural emendations of apparently corrupt readings are probably not absent from any MS, including the papyrus itself. But the new evidence confirms the impression that in general the frequent variations which suggest such an explanation are just as likely to be due to the hesitation between different grammatical forms and turns of expression which characterized the language throughout the period of manuscript transmission, and which would probably be found to have affected the autographs themselves, if they should ever come to light.

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¹ Cp. S. R. Driver *Hebrew Tenses*³ § 167 for examples from the classical language. [G. R. D.]