

# THE TEXT-TRADITION OF LUKE-ACTS

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In the field of textual criticism, no text poses so great a problem for the critic as does that of the collection of documents making up the New Testament.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to the paucity of extant classical manuscripts, there is a great abundance of manuscripts which witness to the text of the New Testament. There are, indeed, more than 4,000 extant Greek manuscripts of portions of the New Testament, 3,000 of the Latin Vulgate, and more than 1,000 of other versions.<sup>2</sup> Add to this the vast number of biblical quotations found in the Fathers, and we find that the great mass of material, while it gives an unparalleled opportunity for the performance of the critical task, is also the source of enormous difficulties.

The application of the classical method of textual criticism, *recensio*, *examinatio* and *emendatio*, is impossible of rigid application to the text of the New Testament. The primary reason for this lies in the extensive process of corruption which has taken place between the various lines of manuscript descent. The presence of contamination makes it difficult, if not impossible, for the critic to decide whether the common errors of manuscripts are due to corruption between various lines of manuscripts or to common descent.<sup>3</sup> Since all of the families of manuscripts containing all or portions of Luke-Acts have been found to be variant carriers to a greater or lesser degree, the words of P. Maas find their application:

However much the two variant-carriers vary in value, the *selectio* must be made independently in each case; no variant should be rejected without testing. After all, in recognizing a witness as a variant-carrier we presuppose that it does not share at least one special error of the other variant-carrier; but if it alone has preserved the original in one passage, we are bound to reckon with the same possibility in all the readings peculiar to it.<sup>4</sup>

The formation of a stemma of manuscripts in the process of *recensio* is dependent on the cardinal principle that community of error indicates community of origin. This is possible of application only in the case of a limited number of minuscule manuscripts of the New Testament dating from the eighth to the fourteenth centuries. New Testament textual critics are primarily concerned with the surviving old uncials and papyri which are widely divergent textually and already have such a long history of textual contamination that no adequate stemma can be constructed.<sup>5</sup>

Zuntz urges that the traditional method of *recensio* can and must be adapted to the particular problem presented by the text of the New Testament. Since the time of Bengel, critics have not attempted to construct strict stemmata of manuscripts, but have rather tended to group them in families, the exact relationship of individual members of a given manuscript family being unknown for the most part. Evidence for and against specific readings has therefore been grouped in these families, one or another of which has been championed by various critics as best representing the original writings.

The text of Luke-Acts poses one of the more difficult problems of New Testament textual criticism. The "Western" text of Acts, for example, contains a number of interesting additions to the text which have resulted in a text one-tenth longer than that of other families. The problem of Luke-Acts cannot be separated from the problem of the Gospels and Acts, since Luke was separated from Acts at a very early date and united with the three other Gospels to form the Tetraevangelium. It does not logically follow, however, that the textual problem of the Gospels and Acts cannot be isolated from the greater problem of the text-transmission of the entire New Testament. It is my opinion that the greatest hindrance to the develop-

ment of sound textual theory of the New Testament has been the conscious or unconscious assumption of its homogeneity. In reality each of the literary units which form part of our New Testament has had a dissimilar history of transmission resulting in unique problems and situations. The present paper is an attempt to deal with one of the logical units which make up the literature of the New Testament.

### Composition and Early Circulation

Luke-Acts, which may also appropriately be titled, "Ad Theophilum,"<sup>6</sup> was originally written as a single literary work in two sections. The destination of the first treatise is explicitly mentioned in Luke 1.3 as being "most excellent Theophilus." Luke begins the second treatise with the words, "I composed the former treatise, O Theophilus, concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach . . . ." The importance of Luke's writings in the wider context of the New Testament may be assessed by the fact that they constitute more than one-fourth of the bulk of the New Testament. Cadbury makes this observation: "In extent of his writings, therefore, as well as for their circulation, the third evangelist must be accounted one of the most important writers in history."<sup>7</sup> On the basis of internal and external evidence the majority of biblical scholars readily assign the two treatises to the same author, and for our purposes we shall assume that they were written before A.D. 70,<sup>8</sup> either in Rome or Corinth, with the possibility that the first part was written in Caesarea during Paul's brief imprisonment there.

It may be assumed that the original intention of the author was that the two treatises be circulated as one work, although they were separated very early in the history of their transmission. While the Gospel's account of the life of Christ has retained its appeal to the Christian community throughout its history, the Pauline emphasis of Acts may have led to its own unpopularity during the eclipse of Pauline theology in the early post-apostolic age. It is certain that Luke-Acts was composed on two rolls of papyrus. Both treatises are very nearly equal in size, Morgenthaler finding 19,404 words in Luke and 18,374 words in Acts.<sup>9</sup> On this basis it has been variously estimated that Luke would occupy a papyrus roll of some 31 feet, and Acts a roll slightly smaller.<sup>10</sup> From the remains of literary papyri of the time contemporaneous with the composition of Luke-Acts, it has been learned that a papyrus roll of 20-30 feet would constitute a full-size papyrus, with the latter limit rarely being exceeded.<sup>11</sup> It would appear that Luke wrote each of his two treatises on rolls of papyrus, utilizing the full length allowable by literary convention.

The decisive stage in the separation of Luke-Acts took place when the Gospel was joined to the other three, each of which had been widely circulated individually. Any consideration of the textual history of any or all of the four Gospels must take into account that each had an independent textual history previous to the formation of the Tetraevangelium, and that later the Tetraevangelium and rolls of individual Gospels were circulating side by side.<sup>12</sup>

In successive copying of Luke-Acts at this early date the textual evidence indicates that no great effort was taken to transmit the text with minute accuracy. Luke's writings were, first of all, not immediately recognized as sacred by all who received them. Then again, his work was not copied by professional scribes but by private individuals. Under such conditions errors in transcription became, in the words of G. Milligan, "almost a matter of necessity."<sup>13</sup> Little is known of the history of the text of Luke-Acts during the course of the second century, and scholars are agreed that the scientific illumination of the original text can only take place when that history is adequately understood.<sup>14</sup> The primary reason for the rapid spread, both geographically and numerically, of the New Testament documents lies

in the fact that they were the written expression of the Church's proclamation and as such they were spread by the travels and ministries of Christian teachers and missionaries.<sup>15</sup>

The collection and transmission of the Gospels in a single corpus was made possible by the development of the papyrus codex. The Chester Beatty Papyri of the Gospels and Acts (P45), constitute a single codex dating to the middle of the third century, confirming the evidence that the early Christian communities preferred the codex form to that of the roll. It is my opinion that the codex arose in the Christian community as the answer to at least three needs: 1. It provided the only satisfactory way to transmit the Tetraevangelium as a single corpus of literature, 2. Writing upon both the recto and verso of each papyrus leaf would be an economical measure in view of the expense of papyrus sheets, and 3. Frequent reading and consultation of the Gospels would be awkward in the roll form as opposed to that of the codex. The earliest fragment of the codex form is that of the John Rylands fragment of John, which has been dated by C. H. Roberts to the middle of the first half of the second century. By A.D. 125, therefore, the codex was in use in Christian communities in Egypt. If the codex form presupposes the collection of the four Gospels into a single corpus, as I think it does, that collection could be placed at approximately A.D. 110, with the Pauline epistles being collected somewhat earlier, perhaps ca. A.D. 90. Justin Martyr gives definite evidence that the Tetraevangelium had reached Rome by A.D. 155,<sup>16</sup> and it may be assumed that they had arrived there much earlier.<sup>17</sup> The collection of the four Gospels into one corpus was the result of the Church's growing view of the authority of the apostolic writings—especially those which narrated the life of Jesus—in opposition to early heresies. The existence of the Gospel corpus together with a collection of the Pauline epistles eventually necessitated a connecting link which was already found existing in the Acts of the Apostles.<sup>18</sup> It was then possible to regard both collections of authoritative books as parts of a larger whole.

### **The Radical Revision of Marcion**

Marcion is without doubt the most infamous heretic of the early days of the Church. His docetic and gnostic views resulted in his expulsion from the church at Rome (ca. A.D. 140). Marcion was an admirer of Paul, whose views he carried to an extreme by totally rejecting all Jewish elements which he felt still clung to the Christian faith. He taught that the strict God of justice in the Old Testament had been superseded by the God of love revealed by Jesus. With the typical gnostic dichotomy between flesh and spirit, he separated the Creator God from the Redeemer God and placed the two in total opposition. Marcion is equally well known for establishing the first canon of New Testament writings, which consisted of two parts—Gospel and Apostle. The "Gospel" was apparently a modified form of the Gospel of Luke, while the "Apostle" was the corpus of ten Pauline epistles. Because of his literal approach to the interpretation of Scripture, Marcion could not explain away difficult passages through the use of allegory, as did the majority of his Christian contemporaries. Marcion's way out was a more drastic one—that of wholesale textual alteration. He felt that since his views of Pauline theology were normative, the followers of Jesus had corrupted the gospel to the point where it was all but unrecognizable. He therefore proceeded to delete, emend and add phrases and words which were more consistent with his conception of the original Christian message. The Hebraic tone of the first three chapters of Luke, for example, resulted in their omission from Marcion's Gospel, which began with Luke 4.16.

Up until a very few years ago, it was generally held that Marcion had used a particular family of New Testament manuscripts which have been given the name "Western."<sup>19</sup> This is known primarily through Irenaeus' quotations of Marcion's own version of the Gospel. The extent to which Marcion's text of the New Testament influenced other text traditions is uncertain, but the facts indicate that there was at least a limited degree of influence.

In Luke 4.16 it has been generally acknowledged that Marcion omitted the words *hou en tethrammenos* and *kata to eiothos autoi*.<sup>20</sup> Marcion probably omitted the first phrase ("where he had been brought up"), because it stated that Jesus had been raised in Nazareth, a Jewish district, and the second ("according to his custom"), because it stated that Jesus had customarily attended a Jewish synagogue. Interestingly enough, codex Palatinus, a fifth century old Latin manuscript omits the Latin equivalent of *kata to eiothos autoi*, while codex Bezae, a fifth century Greek uncial, omits *tethrammenos* and *autoi* after *eiothos*.<sup>21</sup> It is difficult to conceive of these alterations coming from any other hand but that of Marcion. Again in Luke 10.21 in a prayer of Jesus which begins, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth," Marcion omitted the phrase *kai tes ges*, in keeping with his dichotomy between the Creator and Redeemer God. This same omission is found in some manuscripts of the Byzantine family, Clement of Alexandria and—surprisingly enough—in P45. The implications of this fact are important in assessing the value of P45 as a whole.

### Tatian's Diatessaron

Another important phase in the textual history of Luke-Acts concerns the Gospel harmony attributed to Tatian, a Syrian Christian of gnostic learnings who spent some time in Rome as a disciple of Justin, and departed for Mesopotamia ca. A.D. 172.<sup>22</sup> "In the history of the versions, as well as in the early phase of textual developments of the New Testament as a whole there is no greater and more important name than Tatian. This not an overstatement."<sup>23</sup> Eusebius describes Tatian's brand of Marcionitic heresy together with his composition of the Diatessaron:

But their chief and founder Tatianus, having formed a certain body and collection of gospels, I know not how, has given this the title, Diatessaron, that is, the gospel by the four, or the gospel formed of the four; which is in the possession of some even now. It is also said that he dared to alter certain expressions of the apostles, in order to correct the composition of the phrase.<sup>24</sup>

Any discussion of the Diatessaron is hampered by the fact that whether it was originally composed in Syriac or Greek—the former seems much more probable<sup>25</sup>—there is no surviving manuscript of the Diatessaron in either language. There are, however, extant versions of the Diatessaron in Arabic, Persian, possibly Latin, Dutch, German, Italian, French and English.<sup>26</sup> The text of the harmony seems to be a combination of the "Western" and Alexandrian families,<sup>27</sup> the implications of which will be discussed later. Tatian's method in the composition of his harmony was to conflate the four Gospels into a continuous narrative, while preserving as far as possible the original wording, and including everything possible.<sup>28</sup> The Diatessaron flourished until ca. A.D. 430, when it was suppressed by Rabulla of Edessa in favor of the *Evangelion da-Mephareashe* ("Gospel of the separated ones"), as embodied in the Peshitta Syriac. The studies of Vogels and Plooiij have indicated that a Latin harmony underlay the old Latin text of the Gospels, and may have had a profound effect on the peculiar "Western" text of the Gospels which is so largely attested by the old Latin version.<sup>29</sup> In assaying the value of the old Latin and old Syriac witness to the text of Luke, as well as that of the rest of the New Testament.

it is impossible to say definitely whether singular readings are the result of the joint influence of the Diatessaron or of an underlying Greek text common to both.<sup>30</sup> The answer to this question lies in the determination of where the Diatessaron was originally composed. Tatian's composition of the Gospel harmony was guided by dogmatic considerations similar to those of Marcion. Vóóbus finds Tatianic alterations due to his ascetic and anti-Jewish leanings.<sup>31</sup> While H. von Soden held that most harmonistic variants in the texts of the four Gospels were the result of the influence of the Diatessaron, F. C. Burkitt held that only the text of the Gospels in Syriac had been influenced to any great extent.<sup>32</sup>

### Second Century Alterations of Luke-Acts

Our consideration of the work of Marcion and Tatian in connection with the text of Luke-Acts has given irrefragable evidence that the two Lucan treatises were treated with considerable freedom during the course of the second century. A number of miscellaneous factors which have to do with the corruption of the text remain to be considered in summary fashion.

Luke-Acts exhibits a number of harmonistic alterations, which fall into at least three categories. There is first of all the assimilation of parallel passages in the four Gospels. In addition, there is the alteration of quoted passages of the Old Testament to bring them into conformity with the then current text of the Septuagint. Lastly, there are the alterations which attempt to harmonize the text of Luke-Acts either with itself or with other parts of the New Testament, excluding the Gospels. An example of Synoptic harmonization is to be found in Luke 11.25, where codices B, C and L, together with minuscule 565 add the participle *scholazonta* to the phrase *heuriskei sesarómenon kai kekosmémenon*, in order to agree with the parallel in Matthew 12.44. This is a second example of an inferior reading found in the Alexandrian text which may hold to be the most trustworthy representative of the original. An example of an altered quotation of an Old Testament passage is to be found in Luke 3.22, where the statement made by the heavenly voice has been brought into conformity with the LXX text of Psalm 2.7. While the reading which resists harmonization is the more widely attested, the harmonistic reading nevertheless has the support of codex Bezae, old Latin manuscripts a, b, c, ff<sup>2</sup>, l, r, as well as Clement of Alexandria, Justin, Origen, Methodius, Hilary and Augustine. Justin Martyr, who exhibits a tendency to combine the Old Testament with the New, is a possible candidate for the originator of this particular variant.<sup>33</sup> Another variety of the harmonistic alteration is the conflation of details from two or more accounts in the Gospels which are parallel, on the analogy of Tatianic alterations. In Luke 12.24 in P45, for example, we find the phrase *katanoésate ta peteina tou ouranou ka(i) tous korakas*. Most manuscripts omit the phrase "the birds of heaven," and simply read "Observe the crows," with the exception of Bezae which contains *ta peteina tou ouranou* and omits *touskorakas*. The parallel in Matthew 6.26 contains the phrase *emblepsate eis ta peteina tou ouranou*, and has obviously influenced both P45 and Bezae in some way or other. In this case it is more than probable that the ancestors of P45 lacked the reading *kai tous korakas* since the pronoun *auta* agrees only with *ta peteina* in gender.

Despite the denial of Westcott and Hort, a number of dogmatic alterations to the text of Luke-Acts were made during the second century. In an effort to preserve an emphasis upon the virgin birth, for example, the word *autou* replaced *autón* in the phrase *hai hémerai tou katharismou autón*. Since Joseph was not regarded as the actual father of Jesus, he had no need to submit to the Jewish period of purification. This reading is supported by Bezae, the Sinaitic Syriac, the Sahidic version,

the Armenian version and minuscules 21 and 209 although it is manifestly inferior. Another notable example of dogmatic alteration, either by deletion or addition, is the "Sweat of Blood" passage in Luke 22.43-44, which is one of Westcott and Hort's so-called "Western" non-interpolations. Reference to Christ's agony and sweat of blood in the garden is thought by some to have been deleted in the interests of the docetic views of Christology which were current in the second century Church. The reading is supported by the first hand of codex Sinaiticus (though it is marked for omission by a later corrector), the Byzantine family, codices D, Theta, 0171, the old Latin, the Peshitta Syriac and the quotations of Justin and Irenaeus. The passage is omitted by codices B, A, W, family 13, the Sinaitic Syriac, the Coptic versions, minuscule 579, Marcion, Clement and Origen. The evidence splits so evenly among the authorities that any decision on the genuineness of the passage, or the lack of it is difficult to make. The difficulty, at any rate, indicates the difficulty of always following the canon "*lectio potior brevior*" rigidly.<sup>34</sup>

Another quite different variety of textual alteration is the floating tradition of the Church—possibly very genuine—which found its way into the text. In Luke 6.4, for example, codex Bezae contains a short pericope which is found in no other manuscript witnesses: "On that day, when he (Jesus) saw a certain man working on the Sabbath, he said to him, 'Man, if you know what you are doing you are blessed, but if you do not know what you are doing you are cursed and a transgressor of the Law.'" This is probably to be identified with a floating fragment of authentic tradition which was inserted at an appropriate place in the Lucan narrative.

### The Major Text-Families of Luke-Acts

The traditional methodology of New Testament textual criticism has been the determination of the major groupings or families of manuscripts which are connected to one another by common internal characteristics, the most important of which is, of course, the dictum "community of error indicates community of origin." This framework is, in our opinion, more suitable for the discussion of the text of the Gospels and Acts than any other logical unit or corpus of New Testament literature.<sup>35</sup>

#### 1. The "Western" Text

The existence of the "Western" text of Luke-Acts constitutes the greatest single problem in the reconstruction of that text. Most discussions on the text of Acts are preoccupied with the problem of the great divergence between codex Bezae, the primary representative of the "Western" text, and codex Vaticanus as the representative of the Alexandrian text,<sup>36</sup> with the majority of critics holding to the priority of the Alexandrian text over the "Western."

The "Western" text is apparently the oldest family of manuscripts to which the Fathers and the versions give attestation. The text of the quotations of Justin, Irenaeus, Marcion, Tertullian, Hippolytus and Cyprian, to name just a few, support the "Western" family. In addition to this, the older versions of the New Testament, the old Latin and old Syriac, similarly are of the "Western" variety. Even scholars who seriously question the claim of the "Western" text to be the best representative of the original admit that it was almost completely dominant during the second century.<sup>37</sup> No one, indeed, questions the fact of the antiquity of the "Western" text, which goes back at least to the second half of the second century, and very probably much earlier.<sup>38</sup> This text of Luke-Acts is primarily characterized by spectacular additions and omissions when compared with the Alexandrian, Caesarean

or Byzantine families. The former are primarily the characteristic of Acts, while the latter are more peculiar to Luke. Since the "Western" text generally seems to be characterized by a fullness of form and expression, the Lucan deletions have proved to be a special problem. Westcott and Hort applied the term "non-interpolations" to these phrases which were omitted from the "Western" text, and thus avoided called the presence of these passages in codex Vaticanus interpolations.<sup>39</sup> In the text of Acts, the longer readings increase the bulk of the document by one-tenth.<sup>40</sup>

Friedrich Blass, in his critical edition of Acts published in 1895, developed the theory that the original author had himself published two editions of his entire work.<sup>41</sup> He found very able support in this theory from Theodor Zahn and William Ramsay, the latter of whom was convinced of the historicity of many of the additions to the text of Acts. This theory, which Blass applied to both Luke and Acts, has not met with wide-spread acceptance. A supporter of the "Western" text of Acts was to be found in A. C. Clark, a famous corpus professor of Latin at Oxford. In his 1933 edition of the text of Acts he takes the position that the shorter text of Acts, which is best represented by codex Vaticanus, represents a deliberate revision of the more original "Western" text.<sup>42</sup> J. H. Ropes, on the other hand, held to the opposing theory, namely that the "Western" text itself was a rewriting of the more ancient text represented by codex Vaticanus.<sup>43</sup>

The internal evidence seems to show the inferiority of many of the "Western" readings. A pietistic tendency may be seen at work in the amplifications of the Lord's name. Thus to the widely attested *ho kurios iêsous* in Acts 1.21, *Christos* is added in the text of codex Bezae. More of this same tendency is to be found in Acts 2.38, 7.55 and 13.33. Then again, the "Western" text of Acts shows frequent harmonization of Old Testament quotations to the LXX text. It also tends to simplify the more difficult readings of the Alexandrian family, and apparently makes attempts to clear up inconsistent chronology.<sup>44</sup> Yoder has noted a number of anti-theological tendencies in the text of Luke-Acts of the "Western" family which seem to defy explanation.<sup>45</sup>

C. C. Torrey, the noted Semitic philologist, attempted to explain the divergences between the "Western" and the Alexandrian families by advancing the theory that the former was the result of a re-translation of Luke-Acts from Aramaic to Greek.<sup>46</sup> This theory apparently finds support in the fact that numerous variations between the "Western" and Alexandrian texts are wholly inexplicable on the basis of normal scribal errors or license.<sup>47</sup> Taking the Gospels alone, the "Western" text of Bezae omits some 3,704 words; adds 2,213; substitutes 2,121, transposes 3,471 and modifies 1,772.<sup>48</sup>

## 2. The Alexandrian Text

The present similarity between modern critical editions of the New Testament lies primarily in the fact that most editors accept the priority of the Alexandrian family of manuscripts, first established by Westcott and Hort. Codex Vaticanus was the cornerstone of their critical edition of the New Testament which was published in 1881. They used the term "Neutral" to describe Vaticanus and its allies because they felt that these manuscripts were direct and pure descendants of the original autographs.<sup>49</sup> "Western" non-interpolations seem to have been the only serious doubts that they had about the priority of B readings, and they generally placed them in brackets in their text. Quotations from the Alexandrian text are first found in Origen, though it must be stated that his quotations exhibit an extremely mixed character and are found belonging to at least three manuscript

families. The Coptic versions show great affinity with this text family, although they cannot with certainty be dated earlier than Origen himself. While the "Western" text can definitely be traced back as far as the middle of the second century, the Alexandrian cannot be traced back farther than the third century. Robertson, while holding to the priority of the Alexandrian family, was convinced that the "Western" and Alexandrian families represented two distinct lines of descent from the original.<sup>50</sup> Present developments in criticism renders this view untenable. Despite changes in New Testament textual theory, the Alexandrian text of Luke-Acts still shows superiority to other manuscript traditions.

### 3. The Caesarean Text

The discovery of the Caesarean family by Lake and Streeter was probably one of the most significant developments of New Testament textual criticism in the first half of the Twentieth Century.<sup>51</sup> The text of Luke-Acts in the Caesarean family has yet to be adequately investigated. Up to the present time most investigation has concerned the Gospel of Mark, which shows the most marked Caesarean characteristics. Mark has always been the least popular of the Gospels, largely because of its brevity and the fact that most of its material was incorporated into Matthew and Luke. For this reason it escaped a more thorough-going correction from later Byzantine manuscripts, and the original Caesarean text is more easily recoverable. Streeter, whose theory will be discussed at greater length later, finds that the Caesarean text occupies a point midway between the Alexandrian and the "Western" text, with leanings toward the Alexandrian.

### 4. The Byzantine Text

It has been generally agreed among critical scholars that the Byzantine family, which is substantially represented by the Textus Receptus of the third Elzevir edition of the Greek Testament, was a definite recension of the early fourth century at Antioch. In no part of the Christian world is there any evidence for the existence of this text earlier than the first half of the fourth century, John Chrysostom being the first father to use the text in his biblical quotations.<sup>52</sup> While disagreement still persists,<sup>53</sup> it has been fashionable to attribute this recension to the work of Lucian of Antioch (d. A.D. 312), before A.D. 310.<sup>54</sup> Critical editions up to the time of Lachmann were based on the Textus Receptus, he being the first scholar to totally reject the Byzantine family in favor of older manuscripts.<sup>55</sup> Though Lachmann was greatly indebted to Griesbach, the latter had not rejected the Textus Receptus in his critical editions of the Greek New Testament, though he had in theory.<sup>56</sup> This recension was evidently an attempt on the part of Antiochene scholars to provide Christians with copies of Scripture which would best represent the intention of the original writers. Unfortunately, the critical principles which they employed—if indeed they can be called such—were such that the text they produced was largely a conflation of previously existing readings based on an older Greek base which was most likely the traditional Antiochene text, though it is virtually irrecoverable now.<sup>57</sup> The text of Acts in the Byzantine recension is to be found in more than four hundred minuscule manuscripts, which belong generally to two of von Soden's three groups.<sup>58</sup> A typical example of the numerous conflations of the Byzantine text may be found in Luke 24.53, where the Alexandrian family supports the reading *eulogountes ton theon*, the "Western" family has the reading *ainountes ton theon*, while some members of the Byzantine family combine the two with the phrase *ainountes kai eulogountes ton theon*. It is with readings of this type that the canon "lectio brevior preferenda est" can be applied with confidence. It is quite possible that in spite of the corrupt state of the Byzantine family generally some readings



have been preserved from its ancient Greek base, most notably Acts 4.17.<sup>59</sup> In that verse the Byzantine witnesses generally read *apeilēi apeilēsómetha*, while all other texts omit *apeilēi*. The Byzantine reading is a strong reflection of the Semetic idiom which places emphasis upon a finite verb by placing an infinitive absolute before, and for that reason it may be genuine. Blass on this basis includes *apeilēi* in his critical edition of Acts, Clark brackets the word, and it is omitted by Westcott and Hort, Souter and Nestle in their respective editions of the New Testament.

### Applications of Developing Textual Theory to Luke-Acts

The genealogical theory, as we have just sketched it, with minor variations, was the theory upon which Westcott and Hort edited the Greek New Testament of 1881, bringing an apparently victorious climax to the long battle with the Textus Receptus. Since Westcott and Hort the major advances in criticism have centered about the discovery of the Caesarean text and the realization that the "Neutral" text is in reality a recension or development of the third century. Another major step forward was taken with the appearance of B. H. Streeter's book *The Four Gospels* in 1924, in which he advanced his theory of local texts. Streeter emphasized the study of the text of the New Testament in the various early Christian centers such as Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, Caesarea, Carthage and Italy-Gaul which became the "home-bases" of missionary operations after the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.<sup>60</sup> The key to Streeter's theory lies in the thesis that in this circle of cities surrounding the Mediterranean, the text of an individual locality bore a greater resemblance to the localities on either side than it did to one farther away.<sup>61</sup>

Another facet of Streeter's theory, which concerns our study more directly, is his emphasis on the locality where each of the Gospels is assumed to have originated. Whether modern scholarship accepts it or not, tradition had some very specific views on the localities where the various Gospels and Acts were first published. Mark is assigned to Rome, John to Ephesus, Luke to Achaia and Matthew to Palestine.<sup>62</sup> Luke-Acts was undoubtedly completed either in Rome or Corinth. Copies of each would have been made in the area of origin, and though copies would eventually be carried to all parts of the empire, a concentration of manuscripts would exist for a time in the place of origin. The growing ecclesiasticism of the second century would result in the more accurate and authoritative copies being located in the major centers. Smaller churches would obtain copies of the Scriptures from the large Sees resulting in a gradual assimilation and homogeneity of texts in a given geographical area. The final stage, of course, would be for the great churches to compare their texts and attempt to reach a standard text which would be universally accepted.<sup>63</sup> On the basis of this hypothetical reconstruction, Streeter puts forth an additional canon of criticism:

Accidental omissions are most likely to be made good in the place where a book was first given to the world; for there more than one copy made from the autograph will be in circulation. On the other hand, in a city far removed from the place of publication the higher the local standard of textual purity, the greater the likelihood than an accidental omission in the earliest copy which had arrived there would remain unrepaired.<sup>64</sup>

The wording of this canon betrays the fact that Streeter is thinking specifically of the differences between the "Western" and Alexandrian texts of Luke-Acts. He would, therefore, apparently give priority to the "Western" text of Luke-Acts.

In 1926, J. H. Ropes published a volume entitled *The Text of Acts* which contains some 764 pages of printed text dealing with the manuscript evidence for Acts. Rather than print his own critical edition of Acts, which he felt would be

premature, he printed the Greek text of codices Vaticanus and Bezae on facing pages with a fairly extensive apparatus showing their relationship to the principal manuscripts, versions, fathers and other editors. Ropes was a staunch follower of the theory of Westcott and Hort, and steadfastly maintained the neutral character of the main representatives of the Alexandrian (or Old Uncial, as he termed it) family. The "Western" text, according to Ropes, was a very real entity which came into being at a definite place and time, and had its own confused and corrupting line of descent, having a wide influence upon other manuscript traditions. Rather than grace the text family with the word "recension," he preferred to call it an "ancient rewriting," which made no particular attempt to select the best among competing variants for the true text.<sup>65</sup> He concluded that the "Western" text was made before A.D. 150 (perhaps long before), by a Greek-speaking Christian who was familiar with Hebrew, and knew Syrian and Palestine quite well.<sup>66</sup>

In 1933, A. C. Clark published a critical edition of the Acts of the Apostles which is the most recent attempt at the reconstruction of the original text of Acts.<sup>67</sup> Clark's theory of the history of the text of Acts is quite in total opposition to that of Ropes. Clark held, in essence, that the "Western" text was the original text of Acts, while the Alexandrian family represented a revision or condensation of that more original text.<sup>68</sup> His argument, as stated in his edition of Acts, as well as in his earlier book *The Descent of Manuscripts* (1918), is based on one of the outstanding peculiarities of codex Bezae. Unlike most Greek uncials, the extant leaves of Bezae are written in uneven *stichoi* or "sense-lines" which, according to Clark, probably go back to remote antiquity.<sup>69</sup> In the Bezan text of Acts, many of the "omissions" of the Alexandrian family (as Clark would call them), seem to correspond to the line-division of Bezae. In his critical edition, therefore, Clark has printed the text of Acts in the Bezan *stichoi*, with so-called Alexandrian omissions printed in boldface type.<sup>70</sup> Clark's theory of the origin of the two main text-traditions of Acts, then, is based on his rejection of the principal of preferring the shorter reading. His volume entitled *The Descent of Manuscripts* is given over to the discussion of the invalidity of this canon of criticism based on minute examination of many classical manuscripts. While it cannot be said that his theories have met with general acceptance, it would be a mistake to reject them without a thorough consideration of his arguments.

In 1946, G. Zuntz delivered his Schweich Lectures to the British Academy on *The Text of the Epistles*. Zuntz's work was based on a minute investigation of P46, the Chester Beatty biblical papyrus of the Pauline Epistles. His entire work is based on the evaluation of this "oldest manuscript" and its relationship to the general concept of New Testament families as well as the enigmatical history of the text during the second century. His work is relevant for our discussion both methodologically (since Clark's edition of Acts was essentially the last important contribution to our subject), and by virtue of the fact that P46 is extant in large portions of Luke and Acts.

The main problem as Zuntz envisions it is not that of an antithetical opposition of the two main manuscript families—the "Western" and the Eastern (Alexandrian-Byzantine)—but rather the problem centers about the interaction of the two main groups which focuses on the fact that "Western" characteristics, including errors, occur in the Eastern branch.<sup>71</sup> In essence, Zuntz holds that there never has been a homogeneous "Western" text, nor for that matter an Alexandrian or Caesarean text of the New Testament. Each of these main "Families" were rather gradual developments due to the temper of the area in which these texts evolved. The Alexandrian text, in his view, is the result of a particular agent which saw the

emergence of a peculiar type of text from the "wild" text of the second century. This "agent" in his view, was the Christian community at Alexandria.<sup>72</sup> All this was done in a general milieu of a lack of exactness, and a propensity for alteration and interpolation, which makes its appearance all the more amazing. Zuntz's discussion has particular relevance for our discussion in his descriptions of the characteristics and tendencies of the Beatty corpus.

The evaluation of the papyrus finds has been largely responsible for more recent progress in New Testament textual theory. The fragmentary papyrus finds which were common earlier in the century have been supplemented by large bodies of texts in the Beatty and Bodmer collections, the proper evaluation of which has come after 1940. The problem centering about the papyrus finds lies in the fact that most fragments are very difficult of classification within the framework of the older genealogical theory. Many seem to lie at a midpoint between the Alexandrian and "Western" families with some leaning toward one or the other. As early as 1919 Grenfell and Hunt, in their evaluation of Oxyrhynchus fragment 1597 (the only fragment of Luke-Acts in that particular collection), could say:

In ch. xxvi [of Acts] D (Codex Bezae), the principal rival of the current text, is defective; but in 11.3 and 8 there are strong indications of agreements between 1597 and some of the variants preserved in the Old Latin MSS., so that the fragment seems to represent a very ancient Greek text akin to the "Western" apparently avoiding some of the difficulties of construction and sense presented by the current text in this chapter.<sup>73</sup>

Herein lies the importance of the discovery of the Caesarean family, which itself seems to lie at a midpoint between the "Western" and the Alexandrian families. While many of the papyri have been classed as either "Western" or Alexandrian, they will have to be placed with some approximation in either the Caesarean family, or in what has come to be known as the Old Egyptian family.

Because of a certain amount of disagreement among critics, a re-evaluation of the quotations of some of the fathers was necessary. Hort and F. C. Burkitt, for example, held directly contrary views regarding the biblical quotations of Clement of Alexandria. Hort claimed that Clement was a witness to the "Neutral" family, while Burkitt claimed him for the "Western" text. According to Zuntz:

Clement's text is "neutral"—in a way; namely in so far as it belongs to that earlier stage of the "Alexandrian" tradition of which codex B was the best witness known in Dr. Hort's days. It is also "Western"—in the sense that it contains a number of readings recurring in Western witnesses but absent from all, or most of, the "Alexandrian." The opposing views are not reconciled by mere combination but by the realization that the admixture of such readings is one of the very characteristics of the "proto-Alexandrian" group and that it is due to its nearness to the common second-century basis.<sup>74</sup>

Since the emergence of new evidence, the once clearly defined "text-families," which we have summarily discussed above, must be re-evaluated. The general consensus of modern critics would find the confluence of the later text-families in the emerging fragments of second-century text. "We thus begin to discern, beyond the later "families," the second-century reservoir which also contained readings—again both faulty and genuine ones—which have vanished from the later tradition and are only now, thanks to the emergence of fresh evidence, beginning to come to the fore."<sup>75</sup> Especially in the last decade the development of families of manuscripts has been viewed as a gradual one, rather than a series of radical recensions belonging to a specific point in history.<sup>76</sup> Thus, with Zuntz, scholars are no longer

able to speak of *the* "Western" text, or *the* Alexandrian text, because they have never existed as definite entities. This view is particularly important in the evaluation of individual manuscripts. No single manuscript can be said to belong definitely to a particular family of texts. It only belongs to that family more or less, as the evidence of individual readings warrants.<sup>77</sup> Speaking of the older witnesses to the text of the New Testament, Zuntz says:

They cannot be arranged in a line of ancestors and descendants; they may rather be likened to samples of water drawn from a large stream at different places. But these samples (to remain in the metaphor) can be used as tests of the course and the composition of the stream.<sup>78</sup>

At this point, the importance of the Caesarean family of texts comes to the fore. They are apparently the descendants of Greek texts which exhibited a rather "wild" form, but were subject to no other external influences (e.g. harmonies, non-canonical writings, etc.).<sup>79</sup>

The present method which is used in the evaluation of the manuscript evidence of Luke-Acts must follow a two-fold course. First of all, it must be eclectic in nature. While no manuscript or family of manuscripts is to be made absolute in the determination of the original text, similarly no family may be rejected. Little is actually known about the Greek bases of many of the families, but genuine readings have been found in all of them, even in the much-maligned Byzantine family. Many Byzantine readings, especially when they are attested by the "Western" text must be ancient, and could possibly reach into the second century.<sup>80</sup> Klijn would place much of the more extreme variations in the text of the New Testament to the charge of the Syrian Christians, thinking that possibly only there was the text treated quite badly.<sup>81</sup> The briefer studies in Acts which have appeared during the last decade and a half have exhibited the eclectic method generally. Secondly, more attention is being paid to the "oldest manuscript" of a given document of the New Testament. In our particular case that would be the Bodmer papyrus of Luke and Acts, with the Beatty corpus as the second oldest.<sup>82</sup> These witnesses to the text must be seen in their proper relationship to other witness of the second and third centuries before a new edition of Luke-Acts finds its way into print.

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## FOOTNOTES

1. This sentence rightly, I believe, placed the emphasis on the lack of textual homogeneity in the New Testament considered as a whole.
2. Vincent Taylor, *The Text of the New Testament: A Short Introduction* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1961), p. 1.
3. G. Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles: A Disquisition Upon the Corpus Paulinum* (London: The British Academy, 1953), pp. 8-9.
4. P. Maas, *Textual Criticism* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 19.
5. Zuntz, p. 264.
6. In a number of familiar classical writings, when the addressee has been known but the authorship uncertain, the name of the addressee has proven to be an adequate title, e.g. "Ad Herennium" (Cornificius?), cf. "Ad Diognetum," which was circulated for a long time with the writings of Justin Martyr.
7. Henry J. Cadbury, *The Making of Luke-Acts* (London: S.P.C.K., 1958), p. 1.
8. With respect to Luke 21.20 and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 it would seem that the main features of the Olivet discourse—even the Lucan version—can be found in the Old Testament. According to C. C. Torrey: "When, for example, it can be said—and very recently it has been repeated with emphasis—that Lk. 21.20, 'When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies,' etc., shows that its author wrote after the year 70, it is time to enter a strong protest. Every Jew knew that the beginning of the end (Italica Torrey's) was to be the capture and devastation of the city by Gentile armies." *The Four Gospels: A New Translation* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1933), pp. 283-84.
9. Robert Morgenthaler, *Statistik des neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes* (Frankfurt am Main: Gotthelf-Verlag, 1958), p. 166.
10. George Milligan, *The New Testament Documents: Their Origin and Early History* (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1913), p. 15, cf. Taylor, p. 9.
11. Frederic G. Kenyon, *The Palaeography of Greek Papyri* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1899), p. 17. Longer papyri are known, e.g. 144 feet long, but these are de luxe editions not meant for general use.
12. Some later codices appear to have been made up from older rolls of individual textual history even as late as the fourth century. Codex Washingtoniensis, for example, is made up of four different text-families, though these families are not co-extensive with the length of individual gospels. In codex W, Matthew is Byzantine, as is Luke 8.13-24.53. Mark 1.1-5.30 is "Western," while in 5.31-16.20 it is Caesarean. Luke 1.1-8.12 is Alexandrian, as is John 5.12-21.25. John 1.1-5.11 exhibits the old Egyptian Greek text, (William Henry Paine Hatch, *The Principal Uncial Manuscripts of the New Testament* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939, plate XXI).
13. Milligan, pp. 177-78.
14. Zuntz, pp. 11-12.
15. Milligan, p. 176.
16. Apology 1. 66.
17. Marcion had previously adapted the Gospel of Luke to his own purposes (ca. A.D. 140), and familiarity with the four Gospels individually is the presupposition behind Tatian's Diatessaron, which may have been composed in Rome.
18. F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary*, 2nd edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), p. 30.
19. E. C. Blackman, *Marcion and His Influence* (London: S.P.C.K., 1948), p. 51.
20. C. S. C. Williams, *Alteration to the Text of the Synoptic Gospels and Acts* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1951), p. 12.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Burnett Hillman Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins*, Revised edition (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1936), pp. 9-10.
23. Arthur VooBUS, *Early Versions of the New Testament: Manuscript Studies* (Stockholm: Estonian Theological Society, 1954), p. 1.
24. Ecclesiastical History iv. 29.
25. VooBUS, p. 6.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 6015.
27. Taylor, p. 30.
28. Streeter, pp. 9-10, and VooBUS, p. 16.
29. VooBUS, p. 4.
30. A. F. J. Klijn, "A Survey of Researches into the Western Text of the Gospels and Acts," *Novum Testamentum*, III (1959), 13-14.
31. VooBUS, pp. 13-14.
32. Williams, pp. 20-21.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
35. See Joseph Schmid, "Zur Textkritik der Apokalypse," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft*, XLIII (1950/51), 112ff.
36. See, for example, F. F. Bruce, "The Text of Acts," *ibid.*, pp. 40-49, and C. S. C. Williams, "The Text of Acts," *ibid.*, pp. 54082.
37. So J. H. Ropes, *The Text of Acts*, Volume III of *The Beginnings of Christianity*, edited by F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake (London: Macmillan and Co., 1926), pp. ccxci-ccxcii.
38. Bruce, p. 43.
39. Western "non-interpolations" in Luke include: 5.39, 10.41f., 12.19, 21, 30, 22.19b-20, 62, 24.3, 6, 9, 12, 36, 40, 52 and 53. There seems to be no coherent explanation which accounts for the concentration of these omissions in the 24th chapter of Luke.
40. Ropes, p. xxxii.
41. Friderico Blass, *Acta Apostolorum: Sive Lucae ad Theophilum liber alter* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1895). See also his *Philology of the Gospels*, (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1898).
42. Albert C. Clark, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Critical Edition with Introduction and Notes on Selected Passages* (Oxford: the Clarendon Press, 1933), p. viii.
43. Ropes, pp. cxxxii-cxxxiii.
44. Bruce, p. 42.
45. James D. Yoder, "The Language of the Greek Variants of Codex Bezae," *Novum Testamentum*, III (1959), 246.
46. Charles Cutler Torrey, *Documents of the Primitive Church* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1941), pp. 112-48.
47. Frederic G. Kenyon, *Handbook to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, 2nd edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., n.d.), p. 343.
48. Torrey, p. 117.

49. J. H. Ropes, a later exponent of the theory of Westcott and Hort, thought that the Old Uncial text (as he called it), could be validly called a neutral text for two reasons: (1) The Old Uncial text is substantially free from both "Western" and Byzantine readings, and (2) The text of the Old Uncials is generally characterized by the shorter reading, and the harder reading, in comparison with the "Western" and Byzantine families (*Ibid.*, pp. cclxxiv-cclxxv). H. C. Hoskier (a modern advocate of the Byzantine text), went to great trouble to show that Vaticanus was not a "neutral" text, and he seems to have gotten his point over with great force in his book *Codex B and Its Allies* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1914).
50. A. T. Robertson, *An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., 1928), p. 230.
51. The discovery of codex Washingtoniensis in 1907, together with the subsequent discovery of a group of related minuscules by K. Lake (subsequently named family 1), and another group of minuscules by Ferrar (subsequently named family 13), provides enough evidence for the designation of a new family of manuscripts which was dubbed the "Caesarean" text. The primary reason for connecting this text with Caesarea lies in the quotations of Origen and Eusebius. When Origen took up residence in Caesarea in 211-12, he began to use a different form of text than he had previously been using in Alexandria. Although Lake subsequently qualified his discovery by stating that a closer examination of the evidence showed that Origen used the Caesarean text in Egypt as well as Caesarea, subsequent investigation by other scholars has tended to limit Origen's use of the Alexandrian text to Alexandria and his use of the Caesarean text to Caesarea (Edward F. Hills, "A New Approach to the Old Egyptian Text," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXIX (1950), 350-51). The text, which is also found in the quotations of Eusebius, has subsequently been identified as an official text, possibly even a recension of Caesarea, most notably of Pamphilus and Eusebius, which was developed in opposition to a similar recension which was being promulgated by the church at Antioch (Ropes, p. ccxiv).
52. Ropes, p. cclxxi.
53. H. C. Hoskier, *Codex B and Its Allies: A Study and an Indictment*, 2 volumes (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1914).
54. Kenyon, p. 324ff.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 286.
56. In the words of Lachman: "As soon as I had surveyed the field of New Testament criticism, it was clear to me that if I wanted to work toward permanence, I could not allow Griesbach to be my guide. Not that I question Griesbach's immunity and accuracy or his great timely merit, but his criticism is defective, and, just because he wanted to be so careful, is careless. No one knew as well as he how haphazardly the comschaft uber L. Ausgabe des N.T.," *Kleinere Schriften zu Klassischen Philologie*, hrsg. K. Mullenhoff (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1876), p. 251).
57. Ropes, p. cclxxvi.
58. *Ibid.*, p. cclxxvii.
59. Bruce, pp. 41, 123-24, 320-21.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
61. In Streeter's own words: "If we look at the map we see at once that the Churches whose early texts we have attempted to identify stand in a circle round the Eastern Mediterranean—Alexandria, Caesarea, Antioch, (Ephesus), Italy-Gaul, and Carthage. The remarkable thing is that the texts we have examined form, as it were, a graded series. Each member of the series has many readings peculiar to itself, but each is related to its next-door neighbor far more closely than to remoter members of the series. Thus B (Alexandria) has much in common with fam. Theta (Caesarea); fam. Theta shares many striking readings with Syr. S. (Antioch); Syr. S. in turn has contacts with D b a (Italy-Gaul); and, following round the circle to the point from which we started, k (Carthage) is in a sense half-way house between D b a and B (Alexandria again)." (*Ibid.*, p. 106).
62. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
64. *Ibid.*, pp. 135-36.
65. Ropes, p. ccv.
66. *Ibid.*, pp. ccxlii-ccxlii.
67. Blass' edition of Acts in 1895 was the one immediately preceding that of Clark.
68. Clark, p. xxiv.
69. *Ibid.*, p. viii.
70. Kenyon has conjectured that one of the reasons for the existence of *stichoi* in Bezae may lie in the fact that it is a bilingual manuscript.
71. Zuntz, p. 265.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 267.
73. Bernard P. Grenfell and Arthur S. Hunt, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Part XIII (London: The Egyptian Exploration Fund, 1919), pp. 10-12.
74. Zuntz, p. 250.
75. *Ibid.*, p. 214.
76. Klijn, p. 4.
77. *Ibid.*
78. Zuntz, p. 264.
79. Klijn, p. 19.
80. Zuntz, pp. 150-51.
81. Klijn, p. 168.
82. The Beatty papyri of the Gospels and Acts have been published by Frederic G. Kenyon in *The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri: Descriptions and Texts of Twelve Manuscripts on Papyrus of the Greek Bible*, Fasc. II, Part 1: Plates, Part 2: Text (London: Emery Walker Limited, 1933). The Bodmer papyri of Luke-Acts has been more recently published: V. Martin and R. Kasser, *Papyrus Bodmer XIV XV: Evangiles de Luc et Jean* (1961), and R. Kasser, *Papyrus Bodmer XVII: Actes des Apotres, Epitres de Jacques, Pierre, Jean et Jude*, (1962).