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A new witness of the Greek New Testament in Holland

(*Amsterdam UL, J. A. Dortmund Collection, inv.-nr.*
140 = lectionary 1027)

During the course of 1976 two items were added to the Greek New Testament manuscripts in public libraries in the Netherlands. Both are now in the University library of Amsterdam. The first, MS. Gx 200, is the important leaf of I Corinthians in uncial script, dating from about 400.¹ The other was acquired as part of the J. A. Dortmund collection, in which it now has the inventory number 140, and consists of a large sheet of paper with passages from the Gospel according to St. John written on both sides. This sheet brings the total number of Greek N. T. witnesses in the Netherlands to fourteen.

The leaf in the Dortmund collection is of unusually large dimensions: 42.5 × 27.7 cm. Of this a surface measuring 26 × 16.5 cm is covered in a minuscule script, carefully written and intended to be calligraphy but giving the impression of being somewhat unnatural and stiff. (See illus. 1 and 2.) One would be inclined to date it as fifteenth-century were it not for the fact that — for reasons which will be elucidated below — it can be established with absolute certainty that it was written in 1610. Each page has a single column of twenty-nine lines. There is no watermark. The contents of the Greek text are as follows:

John 3:21 *erchetai pros — eirgasmena*

John 5:17 *ho patèr mou — 24 eis tèn zòèn*

John 5:24 *Amèn amèn (again!) — 28 en tois mnèmeiois.*

Although the first passage is deficient at the beginning and the third at the end, there is no doubt but that they are all pericopes for liturgical use. In their selection, order and length they correspond exactly to the Gospel readings in the ordinary Greek synaxarion² of the Byzantine

1 J. Smit Sibinga, 'A Fragment of Paul at Amsterdam (0270)', in: *Miscellanea Neotestamentica*, T. Baarda et al., eds., vol. i (Leiden 1978), pp. 23-44 [= *Supplements to Novum Testamentum* 47].

2 A synaxarion is a book containing the annually recurring Scripture readings for the liturgies of the movable ecclesiastical year from Easter Sunday until the Saturday before Easter.

ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸ φῶς, ἵνα φανερωθῇ αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα, ὅτι ἐν τῷ φῶσι οὐκ ἔστιν ἔργασίμω· πάλιν βέβαιον.

ἐκ τοῦ Κανάνιου·



ἵνα ἐμὸς πρὸς τοὺς ἑλληθότας πρὸς αὐτοῦ μου δαίμονος ἀρτίεργα· καθὼς ἐργάζομαι διὰ τοῦτο οὐ μόνον ἕνεκα τοῦ αὐτοῦ μου δαίμονος ἀποκτείνω, ὅτι οὐ μόνον ἐμεῖς τὸ σάββατον ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἰδιομέλητα τῶν ἰσομέλων ποιῶμεν· ἀπὸ κλήματος οὐροῦ καὶ ἰσχυρῶν ἀμνηστῶν ὑμῶν· ὁ δὲ αὐτοῦ οὐδὲν ποιῶμεν ἑαυτοῦ ὁ δὲ ἰαμὴ πάλιν ἵνα πᾶσι ποιῶμεν· ἀπὸ ἀμειβόμενος ποιῶμεν· τὰ πάντα καὶ ὁ λόγος οὕτως ποιῶμεν· ὁ γὰρ πᾶσι φιλεῖ τὸν λόγον· καὶ πάντα δείκνυσιν αὐτὸς αὐτὸς ποιῶμεν καὶ μὴ βόρῃ τούτου δείξει αὐτὸς ἑρῆ· ἵνα ὑμεῖς θαυμάζητε· ὡς περὶ γὰρ ὁ πᾶσι πείρει τοὺς μικροὺς ὅτι οὐ ποιῶμεν· οὕτω καὶ ὁ λόγος οὐ θέλει βόρῃ οὐ ποιῶμεν· ὁ δὲ γὰρ ὁ πᾶσι κλημῆ δαίμονα· ἀλλὰ τῆς κλημῆς πᾶσα μὲν δέδωκε τῷ φῶσι· ἵνα πᾶσι τιμωσῶσι τὸν λόγον· καθὼς πᾶσι

1. MS. Amsterdam, University Library, Dortmund 140, = lectionary 1027 of the Greek New Testament, recto. John 3:21 and 5:17-22

τομ περ̄ ᾱ Ομητιμο̄ρτομ ῡιομ
 ουτιμο̄ τομ περ̄ ᾱ τομ πειψαμταῡ ᾱυτ̄
 ᾱμηρ̄ ᾱμηρ̄ λδ̄ω̄ ῡμηρ̄ ο̄τι ο̄τομ λ̄ο̄
 λο̄γομμοῡ ᾱχο̄ῡ ᾱωρ̄ καῑ πῑγεῑ ᾱωρ̄ το̄ πῑ
 ψαμ̄ τῑ με̄ ε̄χεῑ β̄ω̄ η̄ ᾱ ᾱο̄ρῑομ
 καῑ εῑς̄ κ̄εῑσῑρ̄ ε̄κ̄ ε̄ρχ̄ε̄ταῑ ᾱμ̄ ᾱ
 με̄τᾱ με̄ κ̄ε̄ρ̄ε̄κ̄ το̄ ῡθᾱμᾱ το̄ ῡεῑς̄ τη̄ρ̄ ζ̄ω̄η̄



ῑπῑε̄ ο̄ κ̄ε̄ πε̄ρ̄ ο̄ το̄ ῑ ε̄ λ̄η̄ λ̄ῡ
 θ̄ο̄τᾱ πε̄ρ̄ ο̄ ᾱῡ το̄ ρ̄ῑοῡ Δ̄ᾱῑ
 ᾱμηρ̄ ᾱμηρ̄ λδ̄ω̄ ῡμηρ̄ ο̄τι ο̄τομ λ̄ο̄
 λο̄γομμοῡ ᾱχο̄ῡ ᾱωρ̄ καῑ πῑγεῑ ᾱωρ̄ το̄ πῑ
 ψαμ̄ τῑ με̄ ε̄χεῑ β̄ω̄ η̄ ᾱ ᾱο̄ρῑομ
 καῑ εῑς̄ κ̄εῑσῑρ̄ ε̄κ̄ ε̄ρχ̄ε̄ταῑ ᾱμ̄ ᾱ
 με̄τᾱ με̄ κ̄ε̄ρ̄ε̄κ̄ το̄ ῡθᾱμᾱ το̄ ῡεῑς̄ τη̄ρ̄

β̄ω̄ η̄ ᾱ ᾱο̄ρῑομ ᾱμηρ̄ ᾱμηρ̄ λδ̄ω̄ ῡμηρ̄
 ο̄τῑ ε̄ρχ̄ε̄ταῑ ε̄ν̄ ε̄ω̄ καῑ ρ̄ῡ ρ̄ε̄σῑρ̄ ο̄τῑ
 ο̄ῑ ρ̄ε̄ο̄ῑ ᾱχο̄ῡ σο̄ν̄ τᾱ τη̄ς̄ Φ̄ω̄ η̄ς̄ το̄ ῡ
 ῡλο̄ῡ το̄ ῡ ρ̄ο̄ῡ θ̄ο̄ῑ ᾱχο̄ῡ σᾱμ̄ τ̄ ε̄
 β̄η̄ σο̄ν̄ τᾱ ε̄ν̄ ε̄ω̄ πε̄ρ̄ γ̄ᾱρ̄ ο̄ πᾱτη̄ρ̄
 ε̄χεῑ β̄ω̄ η̄ ρ̄ε̄ῑ ᾱῡ το̄ ο̄ῡ το̄ σ̄ῑ Δ̄ᾱο̄
 κ̄ε̄ καῑ το̄ ῡ ο̄ β̄ω̄ η̄ ρ̄ε̄ῑ ρ̄ε̄ῑ ᾱῡ το̄
 καῑ β̄ο̄ῑ σᾱ μ̄ῑ Δ̄ᾱο̄ κ̄ε̄ ᾱῡ το̄ καῑ κ̄εῑσῑρ̄
 πο̄ῑε̄ῑμ̄ ο̄τῑ ῡλο̄ς̄ ᾱμ̄ ο̄ ῡ ε̄ῑ μ̄η̄
 θᾱμᾱ β̄ω̄ η̄ το̄ῡτο̄ ο̄τῑ ε̄ρχ̄ε̄ταῑ
 ε̄ν̄ ε̄ω̄ ε̄ν̄ η̄ πᾱμ̄ τῑς̄ ο̄ῑ ε̄μ̄ το̄ῑς̄ μ̄η̄ κ̄εῑο̄ῑς̄

2. MS. Amsterdam, University Library, Dortmund 140, = lectionary 1027 of the Greek New Testament, verso. John 5:22-4 and 24-8

Church for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of the second week after Easter.³ Indeed, written in gold ink above the second passage we read: 'For the fourth day of the second week, from the Gospel according to John', and above the third passage: 'For the fifth day of the second week, from the Gospel according to John'. In passing it may be mentioned that full stops and commas in the Gospel text are also written in gold.

In conformity with customary usage in Greek lectionaries the two passages whose beginnings are present on the page are introduced with a sentence calculated to enable the audience quickly to place themselves in the situation in which the words of the Gospels are supposed to have been spoken. In each case this sentence is: 'The Lord said to the Jews who had come to him: . . .'

All in all the evidence points to the new Amsterdam leaf being part of an evangelion (often, but less correctly called evangeliary), a book containing the readings from the Gospels for the liturgies of the movable ecclesiastical year from Easter Sunday until the Saturday before Easter.

In order, in the event that the manuscript to which the leaf originally belonged still existed and had already been accorded a siglum, to ensure that the Amsterdam leaf would not be given a new and misleading number, it was necessary to establish whether the rest of the manuscript could be identified. Researches to this end proved successful: of the more than two thousand lectionaries recorded in the *Kurzgefasste Liste der griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments* by K. Aland and its supplement, there is only one which corresponds to the Amsterdam leaf in format and number of columns and lines. This is lectionary 1027, of which 279 folios are in Jerusalem (Library of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, MS. Anastaseos 2)⁴ and fourteen in Dublin (Beatty Museum, MS. W 143).

Dr. K. Junack of the Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung at Münster has confirmed, after comparing reproductions of the Amsterdam leaf with a microfilm of lectionary 1027, that Dortmund 140 was originally part of the manuscript now dispersed over Jerusalem and Dublin, and was in fact the tenth leaf. Its text matches exactly, at either end, that of folios 9 and 11, both of which are in Dublin. The distribution of

3 C.R. Gregory, *Textkritik des N. T.* (Leipzig 1900), p. 345; F.H.A. Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the N. T.*, 3rd edn. (Cambridge 1883), p. 78.

4 K.W. Clark, *Checklist of Manuscripts in the Libraries in the Greek and Armenian Patriarchates in Jerusalem . . .* (Washington 1953), p. 15. In 1897, when Papadopoulos-Kerameus (see below, n. 5) described the MS., it had still 294 folios. In 1953 Clark counted only 279 folios. Of the fifteen folios which had disappeared, fourteen turned up in Dublin and the fifteenth is the one now in Amsterdam.

the first twelve folios is as follows:

- 1-3 Dublin
- 4-8 Jerusalem
- 9 Dublin
- 10 Amsterdam
- 11-12 Dublin.

One gratifying consequence of the fact that it has been possible to identify the Amsterdam leaf as part of lectionary 1027 is that it is now also possible to establish with certainty when, where, and even by whom the leaf was written. The part of the manuscript that is in Jerusalem, which has been excellently described,⁵ contains a colophon which reads as follows: 'This divine and holy evangelion was written by Matthew, humble metropolitan of Myra in Lycia, at the instigation, expense and fervent desire of her eminence and venerableness Lady Catalina, grand-banesa [a title?] of Craiova. The manuscript was consecrated in the great holy and royal monastery of our holy, divine [*theophorou*] and sainted father Sabas near Jerusalem, to her memory and that of her parents, to the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, and for love of Saint Sabas. — In the year 7118, the 8th indiction, 24 January. In the holy monastery of Talos.'

The year 7118 in the Byzantine calendar is our 1610. In that year Matthew completed the manuscript. Matthew, a scribe at the monastery of Talos,⁶ made something of a name for himself in Greek palaeography, ecclesiastical history and literature.⁷ Born in about 1550 in Pogoniani in Epirus, he became a monk in the famous Lavra on Mt. Athos, reached the exalted position of protosyncellus to the patriarch of Constantinople, and in that post spent some time in Moscow (c. 1595-7). In 1606 he was appointed archbishop of Myra in Asia Minor, a dignity which he was able to fulfil only in a titular sense. In 1610 he was placed at the head of the monastery of Talos in Hungrovlachia, the western part of Wallachia,

5 A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Hierosolymitikè bibliothèkè*, vol. iii (Petersburg 1897), pp. 196-7.

6 In Greek the monastery is called 'tou Talou' in lectionary 1027, 'tou Dalou' in lect. 1047 (see Gregory), and 'tou Ntalou' in the modern Greek encyclopedias referred to in n. 7 below, in the articles on Matthew mentioned there.

7 See the *Thrèskèutikè kai èthikè egkyklopaideia*, vol. viii (Athens 1966), cols. 835-7; *Megalè hellènikè egkyklopaideia*, second edn. (Athens 1960-3), vol. xvi, p. 772; K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Litteratur*, 2nd edn. (München 1897), vol. ii, p. 682. After the completion of this paper there appeared a special study of Matthew of Myra by L. Politis, 'Un copiste éminent du XVIIe siècle: Matthieu métropolitte de Myra', in: *Studia Codicologica*, K. Treu, ed. (Berlin 1977), pp. 375-94 [= *Texte und Untersuchungen* 124].

now south-west Roumania. Matthew was also the scribe of the N.T. lectionaries 1031 (dating from 1599), 1047 (1620), 1054 (1595), 1150 (1597) and 1168 (1624). As a writer of other codices he is recorded in *Die griechischen Schreiber* by M. Vogel and V. Gardthausen (p. 296). He also wrote various historical and theological works, some of which have been printed.⁸ He died sometime in or after 1624.

After Matthew had completed the writing of it, the evangelion ordered and paid for by Catalina was given punctuation and headings over the pericopes in gold ink. It was also richly decorated: the Amsterdam leaf, for example, has two formidable initials of eight and nine centimetres in height, composed of fantastic plant motifs (leaves, fruits and flowers) and executed in striking colours and gold. Finally the costly volume was sent to Jerusalem to be used for the daily reading from the Gospels in the services in St. Sabas's monastery, Mar Saba, to the east of the city.

The Greek text on the Amsterdam folio is Byzantine and corresponds exactly, except for one variant, with the *textus receptus* as published by Scrivener.⁹ The exception is the reading *en tōi theōi* in John 3:21, where both the *textus receptus* and all modern critical editions have *en theōi*, without the article. However, the variant with the article is known from the manuscripts of the Ferrar group (= family 13), a group of N.T. manuscripts identified by the Latinist W.H. Ferrar in 1868 as having closely related texts based on an archetype from southern Italy or Sicily.¹⁰

In the recension of the text which represents the Ferrar MSS., the addition of articles is a fairly widespread feature; it was H. von Soden who recognized it as a characteristic tendency of the Ferrar group.¹¹ Whether the article in question in Dortmund 140 must be attributed to influence from the Ferrar MSS. or whether some alteration independent of them is responsible is uncertain. In either case, however, the article cannot claim to belong to the earliest reconstructable text of the Gospel.

The Amsterdam folio contributes little to the history of the text of

8 Among them a *Historia tôn kata tèn Houggroblachian telesthentôn apo Serbanou boeboda mechri Michaël*. For bibliographical details, see the literature referred to in n. 7 above.

9 F.H.A. Scrivener, ed., *Novum Testamentum textûs Stephanici* A.D. 1550 (Cambridge 1891).

10 For precise details of the text in the Ferrar MSS., see: J. Geerlings, *Family 13 (The Ferrar Group). The Text According to John* (Salt Lake City 1962) [= *Studies and Documents* 21].

11 H. von Soden; *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, I. Teil, 2. Abt. (Göttingen 1911), p. 1104 under g: 'Besonders liebt J [= the Ferrar group] Artikelzusätze.' Von Soden also gives references to passages which he quotes in support of this assertion.

St. John's Gospel. It does, however, have much to offer the observer.¹² It shows how it was possible for the sacred text to look in Wallachia at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Its enormous format, the size of the letters and the clarity of the script are all reminders of the dimly lit churches in which the readings, in Matthew's own experience, took place. Wide spaces between the sentences, marked by shining gold punctuation, were designed to aid correct intonation. The large and multi-coloured initials suggest that for her gift to the great Lavra¹³ of St. Sabas in distant Palestine, under the yoke of the Turks, Catalina was prepared to spend lavishly. In 1610 printed evangelia were also available. But Catalina of Craiova, according to Matthew, wanted to demonstrate both her reverence for 'her God and Saviour' and her devotion to St. Sabas by making a gift of a copy hand-written in traditional style. Perhaps her generosity was not entirely unconnected with the fact that she herself was able to experience the oppression of the Turks. In any event, there is now in Amsterdam a leaf of an evangelion to uphold the memory of her piety and her reverence of St. Sabas.

¹² The leaf may be seen in the Schriftmuseum J.A. Dortmund in the University Library of Amsterdam, where it has been on display since 1976.

¹³ A lavra is a colony of anchorites subject to an abbot.