

CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW TESTAMENT GREEK (Pt. 4).

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IV

BEFORE we begin to examine the conditions of Hellenistic syntax, which must obviously hold the first place for the student of New Testament exegesis, it will be well to spend some time upon the forms, which give us the surest evidence as to the position occupied by the sacred writers between the literary and the illiterate Greek of their time. The question naturally arises, how far we can be sure that we possess the exact forms that were used by the writers themselves. May not our best MSS. have conformed the orthography to the popular style, just as those of the "Syrian" text conformed it in some respects to the literary standards? We cannot give a universal answer to the question, for, as we have seen already, the rise of an artificial orthography undoubtedly left the door open for not a few uncertainties. But there are some suggestive signs that the great uncials, in this respect as in others, are not far away from the autographs. A very instructive phenomenon is the curious substitution of $\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu$ for $\acute{\alpha}\nu$ after $\omicron\varsigma$, $\omicron\pi\omicron\nu$, etc., which W.H. have faithfully reproduced in numberless places from the MSS. This was so little recognized as a genuine feature of vernacular Greek that the editors of the volumes of papyri began by gravely subscribing "1. $\acute{\alpha}\nu$ " wherever this abnormal form showed itself. They were soon compelled to save themselves the trouble. Deissmann (p. 204) gave a considerable list from the papyri, which abundantly proved the genuineness of this $\epsilon\acute{\alpha}\nu$; and four years later (1901) the material had grown so much that it was possible to determine the time-limits of the peculiarity with fair certainty. If my count is right,¹ the

¹ *Class. Rev.* xv. 32. I have not brought the count up to date in the two subsequent articles (xv. 434, xviii. 106), but the results would not be weakened if this were done.

proportion of ἑάνν to ἑάν is 1:2 in papyri dated B.C. But the estimate was based on only 12 occurrences. The proportion was soon reversed, being 25:7 in the first century A.D., 76:9 in the second, 9:3 in the third, 4:8 in the fourth. e]a<n occurs last in a sixth century papyrus. It will be seen that the construction itself was specially common in the first two centuries A.D., when ἑάνν greatly predominated, and that the fashion had almost died away before the great uncials were written. It seems to follow that in this small point the uncials faithfully reproduce originals written under conditions which had passed away in their time.¹ This particular example affords us a very good test, but we may reinforce it with a variety of cases where the MSS. accurately reproduce the spelling of the first century. I will follow the order of the material in W.H. *App.* 141 ff. (“Notes on Orthography”): it will not be necessary to give detailed references for the papyrus evidence, which will be found fully stated in the three *Classical Review* papers already cited. We must bear in mind from the first Hort's caution (p. 141) that “all our MSS. have to a greater or less extent suffered from the effacement of unclassical forms of words,” and his statement that the Western MSS. show the reverse tendency. “The orthography of common life, which to a certain extent was used

¹ The case of ἑάν, *if*, is separate. In the New Testament it is confined apparently to the Fourth Gospel, where it occurs six times. In the papyri it is decidedly a symptom of illiteracy. With this agrees what Meisterhans³ 255 f. says: “Only six times is ἑάν found from the 5th to the 3rd cent. B.C. The form ἑάν, is entirely foreign to the Attic inscriptions, though it is often found in the Ionicising literary prose of the 5th cent. (Thucydides, cf. the tragedians).” Since ἑάν is the modern form, we may perhaps regard it as a dialect variant which ultimately ousted the Attic ἑάνν, but it is hard to say why the Gospel has it and why the Apocalypse has not. There is some difficulty in determining the dialect to which it is to be assigned. Against Meisterhans' suggestion of Ionic stands the opinion of H. W. Smyth (*Ionic Dialect*, p. 609) that its occasional appearances in Ionic are due to Atticising! Certainly ἑάνν is the ordinary Ionic form, but ἑάν may have been Ionic as well, though rarer. (So Mr. P. Giles.)

by all the writers of the New Testament, though in unequal degrees, would naturally be introduced more freely in texts affected by an instinct of popular adaptation." He would be a bold man who would claim that even Hort had said the last word on the problem of the Western Text; but with our new knowledge of the essentially popular character of New Testament Greek as a whole, we shall naturally pay special attention to documents which desert the classical spelling for that which we find prevailing in papyri written by men of education approximately parallel with that of the apostolic writers.

The case of λήμψομαι, comes first (p. 142). The intrusion of the *m* from the present stem of λαμβάνω into various parts of the verb, and into derivative nouns, is well set after the Ptolemaic period, in which there is still some lingering of the older forms. It is therefore unnecessary to show that the late uncials, in restoring the classical forms, are deserting the unquestioned pronunciation of the first century. The "unusual aspirated forms" (p. 143) ε'φ' ἐλπίδι, καθ' ἰδίαν, ᾧφιδε, etc., and οὐχ ὀλίγος are supported by a large body of evidence from papyri. It is rather strange that καθ' ἔτος does not appear in the MSS.; as in the other cases, there is a struggle between the two types, but the modern ἐφέτος shows that the aspirate here triumphed. It is of course impossible to set this phenomenon down to the defunct digamma: it doubtless originates from analogy processes within the Κοινή itself (so Thumb), which accounts for the uncertain tradition. We cannot prove either one or the other for the New Testament autographs, but we have already seen good reason for trusting the uncial tradition in places where we have the means of checking it. Occasional deaspiration (p. 144) is part of the general tendency towards psilosis which started from Ionic influences and became universal, as Modern Greek shows. The mention of ταμεῖον (p. 146—add πεῖν from p. 170)

brings up a universal sound-change of Hellenistic, the coalescence of two following *i* sounds. Ταμῆιον πῆιν and ὑγεία are overwhelmingly attested by the papyri, where there are only rare examples of a curious reversion like that in Matthew xx. 22. In the form ἀλεεῖς (Mark i. 17 *al.*) we have dissimilation instead of contraction. Three isolated spellings on p. 148 are instructive. Ἀβραβών “seems to be only Western.” In the papyri I counted 11 exx. of this against 12 of pp, a curious modification of the results of Deissmann (p. 183), which were obtained from the Berlin and Rainer papyri only. The word will serve as evidence of the inaccessibility of the autographs’ spelling except where the papyri are unanimous: cf. Deissmann’s observations, p. 181. Next comes σφυρίς, which is invariable in the papyri after the Ptolemaic period. Ζμύρνα is regarded by W.H. as Western; but though the papyri and inscriptions waver (Deissmann, 185), it surely ought to be transferred from margin to text on the evidence of the first century Smyrnaean coins. The next cases of importance appear on p. 150. Ἐραυνάω is certain for the first century and after. Hort’s account of τέσσαρες and τεσσαράκοντα gives us our first example of dissonance between the papyri and the uncials. The forms with *e* are in the papyri relatively few, and distinctly illiterate, in the first centuries A.D. Indeed the evidence for forms of τέσσερες is virtually *nil* before the Byzantine age, and there is not the smallest probability that the Apostles wrote anything but the Attic form. For τεσσεράκοντα the case is a little better, but it is hopelessly outnumbered by the -αρ- form in documents which antedate the uncials; the modern σεράντα, side by side with σαράντα, shows that the strife continued. No doubt before the fourth century τέσσερες -α (not τεσσέρων) had begun to establish themselves in the place they hold to-day. Finally might be mentioned one or two notable matters of pronunciation to which Hort does not refer. The less

educated papyrus writers very frequently use \bar{a} for au , from the first century B.C. onwards. Its frequent appearance in Attic inscriptions after 74 B.C. is noted by Meisterhans (*Gramm. d. Att. Inschr.*³ 154). In Luke ii. 1 (Ἀγούστου) this pronunciation shows itself, according to $\times C^* D$; but we do not seem to find $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$, $\epsilon\alpha\tau\acute{o}\nu$, etc., in the MSS., as we should have expected.¹

We pass on to the noun flexion (p. 156). Nouns in $-\rho\bar{a}$ and participles in $-\upsilon\bar{\alpha}$ in the papyri regularly form genitive and dative in $-\eta\varsigma$ $-\eta$, except that $-\upsilon\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ $-\upsilon\acute{\alpha}$ are still found in the Ptolemaic period. Here again the oldest uncials alone—and even they are not without lapses—support the unmistakable verdict of the contemporary documents of the Κοινή. It seems best on the whole to regard this as the analogical assimilation of $-\rho\bar{a}$ nouns (and—somewhat later and less markedly— $-\upsilon\bar{\alpha}$ participles) to the other $-\bar{a}$ flexions of the 1st declension, rather than as Ionic survivals.² It may be added that as $\mu\acute{\alpha}\chi\alpha\iota\rho\alpha$ produced $\mu\alpha\chi\alpha\acute{\iota}\rho\eta\varsigma$ on the model of $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$ and $\delta\acute{o}\xi\eta\varsigma$, so $\text{Νύμφη}\varsigma$ as a proper name produced what is best read as $\text{Νύμφ}\bar{a}$ $\text{Νύμφ}\bar{\alpha}\nu$ in nom. and acc. (Col. iv. 15): it is quite feasible to keep the best reading here without postulating a Doric $\text{Νύμφ}\bar{\alpha}\nu$, the improbability of which decides Lightfoot for the alternative. The heteroclite proper names, which fluctuate between 1st and 3rd decl., are paralleled by Egyptian place-names in papyri. In contracted nouns and adjectives we have abundant parallels for forms like $\delta\acute{o}\sigma\tau\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$, $\chi\rho\upsilon\sigma\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu$, and for $\chi\rho\upsilon\varsigma\bar{\alpha}\nu$ (formed by analogy of

¹ In Modern Greek (see Thumb, *Grammatik*, p. 59) we find $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ (pronounced *aftós*) side by side with $\acute{\alpha}\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ (obsolete except in Pontos), whence the short form $\tau\acute{o}$, etc. There was therefore a dialectic difference in the Κοινή itself.

² In connexion with this I might mention an Ionic Κοινή feature which I expected to find more often in New Testament MSS., the spelling $\kappa\iota\theta\acute{\omega}\eta$, which (like $\lambda'\theta\upsilon\iota\rho\alpha$ and $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\theta\alpha\upsilon\tau\alpha$) occurs not infrequently in papyri. I can only find in Tischendorf's apparatus $\chi\epsilon\iota\theta\acute{\omega}\nu\alpha\varsigma$ D^* (Matt. x. 10) and $\text{Κιτ}\acute{\omega}\nu\alpha\varsigma$ B^* (Mark xiv. 63—“ut alibi κ ,” says the editor, but not stating where).

ἀργυρᾶν). The fact that we do not find short forms of nouns in -ιος -ιον (e.g. κύρις, παιδίν) is a noteworthy test of the educational standard of the writers, for the papyri show them even as early as the third century B.C., and always in company with other indications of comparative illiteracy. These forms, the origin of which is as dark as ever, despite the various efforts of Hatzidakis, Brugmann and others to unravel it, ultimately won a monopoly, as modern Greek shows everywhere. Passing lightly over the exact correspondence between uncials and papyri in the accusatives of κλείς and χάρις (p. 157), we may note the case of χεῖραν in John xx. 25 \aleph^* AB. The great frequency of this formation in uneducated papyri, which adequately foreshadows its victory in modern Greek,¹ naturally produced sporadic examples in the MSS., but it is not at all likely that the autographs showed it, unless possibly in the Apocalypse. Gregory (Tisch.-Gregory, 118 f.) adds notes of forms like ἀσφαλῆν and ποδήρην, which have also papyrus parallels, but could be explained more easily from the analogy of 1st decl. nouns. Μείζων acc. (John v. 36 ABEGMD) is a good example of the irrational addition of n, which seems to have been added after long vowels almost as freely as the equally unpronounced i.² Before leaving the nouns and adjectives we must mention the indeclinable πλήρης, which should be read in Mark iv. 28 (C*, Hort) and Acts vi. 5 (\aleph AC* DEHP al.), and is probably to be recognized in John i. 14. Cf. 2 John 8 (L), Mark viii. 19 (AFGM al.), Acts vi. 3 (AEHP al.), xix. 28 (AEL 13), which show that in every New Testament occurrence of an oblique case of this word we find the indeclinable form recognized in good uncials.

¹ It seems most probable that the modern levelling of 1st and 3rd decl. started with this accusative : the v has vanished again now. See Thumb, *Grammatik*, pp. 28, 35.

² Thus ἄλωι is acc. sing., while ἦν (=ῆ) may be subjunctive. For exx. see *Class. Rev.* xviii. 108.

My papyrus citations for this¹ virtually begin, however, with the second century, and I should hardly credit the New Testament autographs with the form. This probably means that in John i. 14 an original πλήρη was corrupted to the vulgar πλήρης in an early copy. Weiss and others would make it depend in sense upon αὐτοῦ, but δόξαν seems more appropriate, from the whole trend of the sentence: the “glory” or “self-revelation” of the Saviour is “full of grace and truth.” One may doubt whether it would have occurred to any one to make a parenthesis of -καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα. . . πατρός, had it not been for the supposed necessity of construing πλήρης with a nominative. In fine, we regard the Codex Bezae as having either preserved or successfully restored the true reading.²

I might cite very many more noun forms in which the MSS. prove to have retained the genuine Hellenistic, as evidenced by the papyri; but these typical examples will serve. Verbs naturally produce yet more abundant material, but we need not cite it here, as our present purpose is only to show how such a text as Westcott and Hort's, scrupulously reflecting the best uncials, is in all important features, and in most of the minutiae, supported as genuinely Hellenistic by papyrus evidence published long after their text was made—a conclusion valuable because of the criteria it gives us for estimating the general grammatical condition of our texts. Pursuing the order of W.H. *app.*, we pause a moment on the dropped augments, etc., in pp. 161 f., which are well illustrated in papyri. The attachment of 1st

¹ See also C. Turner in *Journ. Theol. Stud.*, i. 120 fr. and 561 f.; Rademacher in *Rhein. Mus.*, lvii. 151; Reinhold *De Graecitate Patrum*, 53.

² Winer, p. 705, compares the “grammatically independent” plh<rhj clause with the nom. in Phil. iii. 19, and Mark xii. 40. Dr. Moulton makes no remark there, but in his joint commentary with Dr. Milligan he accepts the construction of John i. 14 found in the R.V., or permits his colleague to do so. Of course the case for the indeclinable πλήρης was. before him only in the LXX. (as Job xxi. 24 B&AC).

aorist endings to 2nd aorists is universal in our Κοινή documents, and the MSS. here undeniably reproduce in general the forms of the autographs. Whether the intrusion should be allowed in the imperfect (as εἶχαν Mark viii. 7) is more than doubtful, as the papyri give hardly any warrant. The imperfect and aorist 3rd pl. -οσαν receives little encouragement, and the 2nd sing. perf. -εξ still less: they are both marks of illiteracy. The 3rd pl. perf. -αν makes a much better show in the papyri, but though already common in Ptolemaic documents can hardly be regarded as established for the New Testament autographs: like the perf. -εξ, it might be allowed in the Apocalypse. Passing on to contract verbs, we note how the confusion between -αω) and -έω forms (p. 166) are supported by our external evidence, and by Modern Greek. Our first serious revolt from Westcott and Hort will be in the infinitive in -οῖν (and by analogy -ᾶν). The evidence for it is “small, but of good quality” (p. 166—cf. *Introd.* § 410): it is in fact confined to B*D in Matthew xiii. 32, B* in Mark iv. 32, κ* in 1 Peter ii. 15, BD* in Hebrews vii. 5 (where see Tischendorf’s note), and a lectionary in Luke ix. 31. This evidence might pass if the object is merely to reproduce the spelling of the scribe of B, but there is absolutely no corroboration that I know of earlier than the date of B itself, except a second century inscription cited in Hatzidakis’ *Einleitung*, p. 193.¹ Blass, *Gram.* 48, does not regard the form as established for the New Testament. I can quote against it from centuries 1-4 eleven examples of -οῖν in papyri. That -οῖν and -ᾶν (not -ᾷν) are the correct Attic forms may be seen from Meisterhans³ 175 f., which Hort’s hesitation as to -ᾶν prompts me to quote: for the reason of the apparent irregularity see Brugmann, *Griech. Gramm.*³ 61, or Winer-Schmiedel 42. Next may be named for -αω verbs the 2nd sing. pres. mid. in -ᾶσαι (καυχᾶσαι, ὁδυν-

¹ So Winer-Schmiedel, p. 116 (note). There are two other inscriptions cited by Hatzidakis, but without dates.

ᾶσαι), which has been formed afresh in the Κοινή with the help of the -σαι that answers to 3rd sing. -tai in the perfect.¹ It is well paralleled by the early Ptolemaic future χαριεῖσαι. I have, unfortunately, no examples of the subjunctive of -όω verbs, with which to attack the parsing of ἵνα ζηλοῦτε and the like (p. 167). Blass (Kühner³ i. 2. 587, and *New Testament Gram.* 48) accepts Hort's view that the subjunctive of these verbs became identical with the indicative, just as it always was in the -άω verbs. But he, rightly I think, rejects the supposition that εὐδοῶται, (1 Cor. xvi. 2) is anything but a pres. subj. To read εὐόδοται, as perf. indic., is possible, though the editors do not seem by their printing to have favoured that alternative. That it is a perfect subjunctive is extremely unlikely. The parallels on which Hort (p. 172) relies—set forth with important additions in Blass's Kühner, i. 2. 100 f.—do nothing to make it likely that the Κοινή had any perf. subj. apart from the ordinary periphrastic form.² It is hard, moreover, to see why the present subjunctive is not satisfactory here: see Dr. Findlay's note *in loc.*

The verbs in -μι, were naturally in Hellenistic pursuing the process of painless extinction which began even in Homeric Greek, and in modern Greek has eliminated everything outside the verb “be.” The papyri agree with the New Testament uncials in showing forms like δύνομαι, and -έδετο (as well as -έδοτο), and various derivatives from contract verb types. New verbs like ἰστάνω are formed, and new tenses like ἔστᾱκα, and the doubly augmented form

¹ To suppose this (or φάγεσαι, similarly formed from φάγεται) genuine survivals of the pre-Greek -esai, is a characteristic feat of the antediluvian philology which still frequently does duty in this country.

² To argue this would demand a very technical discussion. It is enough to say that the Attic κεκτῶμαι and μεμνῶμαι are not derivative verbs, and that the three derivative verbs which can be quoted, from Doric, Cretan, and Ionic respectively, are very small encouragement for a supposed Κοινή parallel.

ἀπεκατεστάθην is well attested. What is more important the subjunctives διδοῖ, and δοῖ, are set on a completely satisfactory basis, so that the idea that they are irregular optatives (as they may possibly be in late documents) need trouble us no more. From οἶδα we have as in New Testament the flexion as an ordinary perfect, but there are rarely found survivals of the old forms. Finally there is εἰμί which shows middle forms ἤμην, etc., and ἦτω parallel with ἔστω, just as in the New Testament.

With this we may leave spelling and inflexions and push on to the syntax, which will compensate the New Testament student, I hope, for the dry bones he has had to be satisfied with in this chapter of our subject. But though the minutiae of accident may be dull to those who are not professed philologists, it will be allowed that forms must be settled before we can start discussing their uses; and it is also very clear that they give us our surest criteria for localizing texts and for testing the detailed accuracy of our documents. With this plea I hope to be forgiven on promise of an effort to be more interesting next time.

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