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0521541085 - The Sentences of Sextus: A Contribution to the History of Early
Christian Ethics

Henry Chadwick

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PART I

TEXTS

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1. THE MANUSCRIPT TRADITION AND THE VERSIONS OF SEXTUS

(1) The Greek text is contained only in the two manuscripts, Patmiensis 263 (Π), saec. x, foll. 213–26 (description in Sakkelion's *Catalogue of the Patmos Manuscripts* (1890), pp. 127–30), and Vaticanus Graecus 742 (Υ), saec. xiv, foll. 2–23 (description in Devreesse's *Codices Vaticani Graeci*, III (1950), p. 256). In Υ the maxims form a continuous text with punctuation but no paragraphing; from time to time the copyist gives to certain initial letters the dignity of red ink and capitals, beginning at fol. 6^v with the τ of ταῦτα in 121b. Prior to this he leaves blank spaces, no doubt originally intending to add the red capitals later, though in fact he unaccountably omitted to do so, so that several words are left acephalous. Frequently the scribe fails to find the correct beginning and end of his aphorisms, and thus divides them wrongly (121b is a good instance). But I have not burdened the apparatus by noting these blunders unless there is some doubt about the true text. Iota subscript is often omitted in Υ.

Υ has been freshly collated by me both at the Vatican Library and with the help of microfilms. For collations of Π Elter used a copy of Π made by a monk of Patmos for H. Schenkl. For this edition Π has been collated by Mr Lloyd-Jones, and in many places Elter's statements have been silently corrected. Subscript or adscript iota is rare, itacism common.

Π and Υ differ profoundly in their order, and it is evident that an ancestor of Π suffered serious disarrangement, for Υ's order is normally supported by Rufinus and the Syriac versions. Π's order is 1–235 (with occasional minor omissions): thereafter the first half of 262, the end of 379, 380–405, 236–61, 428–30 (431–43 are omitted), 444–50, 569, 579, 578, 583, 585–6, 591, 593, 594, 610, 452–4, 406–27, 455–88, second half of 262–379, 489–555. At 413Π has a meaningless Ἀρχῆ which might conceivably be the remnant of someone's attempt to restore order to the leaves of the con-

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fused ancestral codex, a hypothesis which derives some plausibility from the fact that, in all MSS. of the fuller of the two Syriac versions (X), 359–412 fall in the middle of 413, and 413 ff. follow 356.

On the other hand, apart from the question of order, Π is a little nearer to Rufinus' version (R) than Y, which is not infrequently supported by the Syriac (X). Elter is, I think, inclined to exaggerate the degree to which ΠR stand together over against YX, and he founds upon the fact that the ending of 262, where Π has a dislocation, is corrupt in R the theory that Rufinus had before him a codex in which the order had already become confused, though a corrector had been carefully through it marking the necessary transpositions. Rufinus, he holds, followed the corrector's directions, whereas the copyist of Π's ancestor did not. This elaborate theory may be possible, but I can find nothing to suggest that it is probable. See p. 175, n. on 262.

(2) The Latin version of Rufinus (R) was first critically edited by Gildemeister from fourteen manuscripts (to which Elter added a fifteenth from Arras). These are as follows:

A = Salmasianus, Paris. 10318, saec. vii–viii.

Q = Paris. lat. 2676, saec. ix, foll. 123–6 (deficient after 84).

W = Würzburg, Mp. Th. f. 33, saec. ix, foll. 2–12.

O = Paris. lat. 113, saec. xi, foll. 61^v–65^v (this manuscript was once the property of Diane de Poitiers).

P = Paris. lat. 3784, saec. xi, foll. 47–50^v.

V = Vienna, Bibl. Palat. 575, saec. xi.

B = Basiliensis, B.X. 35, saec. xiii (from the Carthusian house at Basle, and before that in South Germany).

G = Wolfenbüttel, 2767 (78 Aug. fol.), saec. xv, foll. 192–6.¹

L = Lambeth 237, saec. x, foll. 203–8 (deficient after 218).

J = St John's College, Cambridge, 168, saec. xiii, foll. 71^v–80^v (from the Carthusian house of Witham, Somerset).

S = Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, 94, saec. xiv, foll. 121–3 (from the York Franciscans).

U = Cambridge University Library, Add. 684, saec. xv, foll. 65–73.

¹ The Wolfenbüttel library also possesses a twelfth-century manuscript (3380) containing Sextus which Gildemeister did not use.

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C = Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, 351, saec. xiv, foll. 94–6 (only 1–299).

M = British Museum, Royal Library, 2 F.II, saec. xiii, foll. 98–102.

T = the Arras manuscript of the tenth century collated by Elter.

In addition to these manuscripts Gildemeister used three editions of the printed text, all independent of one another, which used manuscripts now lost:

c = the edition published at Lyons, 1507.

w = that published at Wittenberg, 1514.

r = that published at Basle, 1516 (by Beatus Rhenanus).

Almost all the manuscripts treat the collection as by Sixtus, bishop of Rome. But JMc head the text with the quotation from Jerome's commentary on Ezekiel given below, p. 119 n. 3 (cf. also p. 124). In U a sixteenth-century hand warns the reader (at fol. 3^r) that 'the Enchiridion is by the philosopher Sixtus, and is falsely ascribed by Rufinus to St Sixtus the pope'.

Among these manuscripts Gildemeister distinguished two families, A Q on one side, and the rest on the other, A Q being much superior. Unhappily Q stops at 84. A, on the other hand, lacks Rufinus' prologue.

Gildemeister's edition rendered all earlier editions antiquated. He also showed that the printed editions divided into two categories: a full version of the sentences is given by the early editions of the sixteenth century, but an abbreviated version became current which, since de la Bigne's *Bibliotheca veterum patrum*, tom. III (1575), succeeded in becoming reprinted as standard, e.g. by Thomas Gale (Cambridge, 1671), Orelli (1819), and Mullach (*Fragmenta Philos. Graec.* I, 1860).

Gildemeister's text is reproduced, slightly modified, by Elter, and, in view of the importance of Rufinus as a witness to the text considerably earlier than the two surviving Greek manuscripts, the Latin version is again given in the present volume, opposite the Greek text, with a skeleton apparatus. Rufinus has translated with more literalness than is his usual habit, and on occasion he can be used to restore the original where Π and Υ are both corrupt

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(e.g. 342). Not infrequently he reshapes the Greek (e.g. 107) and sometimes fails to understand it (e.g. 281).

(3) The Syriac translations are two separate and distinct versions in origin, which have become merged in the manuscript tradition. The collection is contained in many manuscripts, mainly in the British Museum, two being of the mid sixth century.¹ Lagarde's printed edition (*Analecta Syriaca*, 1858) shows that the tradition gives the text in three sections:

1. An epitome (here abbreviated x) under the title 'Select sayings of St Xystus bishop of Rome', containing 131 selected sentences, in roughly the same order as Rufinus, as far as 555 (which also marks the end of the collection in Π—see above). (Lagarde, up to p. 10, 21.)

2. A much more complete translation (abbreviated X) under the title 'Of the same St Xystus', but omitting 36–77. Two passages have suffered serious disarrangement and omissions: (a) 231–58 appear in the order 231, 239–43, 253, 254, 256, 234, 240, 243–52, 255, 258, and the remaining sentences of this section do not appear at all; (b) 350–412 has suffered severely, the first five (350–4) being wholly lacking; after 349 appears 356 followed by some foreign matter not from Sextus at all. 355, 359, 364–6, 370–412 (everything else between 350 and 412 being omitted) are inserted in the middle of 483.

3. The third part is unimportant; it gives two short supplements (Lagarde, pp. 30, 10–31, 1 and 31, 1–10) and is probably from the same translator as the second section.

The two Syriac translators are much more free and paraphrastic than Rufinus, and reveal a stronger tendency to import into the maxims a more explicitly Christian slant. They therefore have to be used with caution for the emendation of the Greek text. Elter used the Latin translation of the Syriac made by Gildemeister for his recension of Rufinus. A corrected translation of the Syriac, with competent textual notes, was published by V. Ryssel, 'Die syrische Übersetzung der Sextussentenzen', in *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie* xxxviii (1895), pp. 617–30; xxxix (1896), pp. 568–624; xl (1897), pp. 131–48.

¹ A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn, 1922), p. 170 n. 6, gives a list.

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The Syriac volume is mentioned in the Catalogue of Ebedjesu (Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* III (1725), p. 48): ‘Xystus edidit librum sermonum et illum qui est de amantibus deum.’

(4) A selection from Sextus appears in Armenian (abbreviated \mathfrak{A}) mingled in the tradition of Evagrius Ponticus (edited by Sarkisian, Venice, 1907). A valuable English translation was included by F. C. Conybeare in his version of the collection published in 1910 (*The Ring of Pope Xystus*, pp. 131–8), and he suggested that probably Evagrius himself might have been responsible for incorporating them. Except for Conybeare’s little book no attention was paid to the Armenian text until 1938 when R. Hermann published a short study¹ showing that this Armenian version was made not as one might expect from the Syriac, but directly from the Greek, and that it is often more faithful than the Syriac. The Armenian text contains three sections:

1. Sarkisian, pp. 54, 10–59, 22. A hundred sentences, drawn entirely from 1–451, thus showing that this circulated in Greek as a coherent corpus; the Armenian offers independent testimony to the fact that the collection existed in Greek in the form known to Rufinus.² The list is as follows: 4, 9, 10, 15, 16, 18, 21, 37, 38, 41, 42, 51, 57a, 58b, 59, 64, 67–9, 70, 71a, 73, 153, 74, 75a, 75b, 76–8, 88, 90–3, 97–100, 108a, 109, 108b, 115, 117, 120, 121a, 125, 136, 137, 138, 141, 142, 151–4, 161, 162a, 162b, 163, 164, 165a, 171, 171a, 177, 178, 187, 198, 199, 200, 213, 230a, 216, 245, 253, 262, 264b, 266, 270, 272, 274a, 280a, 281, 285, 289, 290, 298, 299, 301, 362a, 345, 353, 383, 390, 411, 413, 414, 426, 428, 430, 433, 449 (Hermann, p. 221).

In this section 153 appears twice, before 74 as well as in its proper place. The fact that exactly 100 sentences are selected shows that there was an intention to give a parallel to the centuries of Evagrius.

2. Sarkisian, pp. 59, 6–60, 6. A supplementary group of sentences, none of which duplicates any in the first series: 156, 157, 385, 278, 279, 262, 165f, 174, 190, Clit. 50, 182, 194, 196, 199, 209, 360, 531, 541, 545, 550, 542, 331, 606, Clit. 6, 607.

¹ ‘Die armenische Überlieferung der Sextussentenzen’, *Z.K.G.* LVII (1938), pp. 217–26. Hermann corrects Conybeare in important details.

² It is relevant also that the sequence in Π has one of its numerous disarrangements after 450, 451 being lacking.

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3. Sarkisian, pp. 60, 3–62, 2. A miscellany: 153, 80, 91a, 94, 121b, 112, 129, 388, 180, 547, 206, 219, 226, 291, 292, 253a, 227, 294, 265, 366, 427, 578, 453, 465, 455, 456, 457, 488, 490, 493, 494.

Thereafter the compiler adds fifteen sentences selected from the Pythagorean list, thirteen of them appearing in the alphabetical collection (below, pp. 84ff.), namely, Py. 2a, 9, 12, 23, 33, 34, 46, 47, 52, 89, 113, 119, 121, and the remaining two coming from Isocrates, *Ad Demonicum* 25 and 30.

THE APPENDICES

Rufinus translates only 451 maxims, and no doubt he reproduces the complete collection available to him. But the two Greek manuscripts and both Syriac versions continue without a break, so that the total collection attested in the Greek tradition extends to 610. Y is considerably larger than Π. Of the additions after 451 many are likewise attested in the Syriac, X being more extensive than x, and in the Armenian (see above). The general plan may be represented schematically thus:

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Sextus: 1–451 | ΠΥXxR \mathfrak{A} . |
| Appendix 1: 452–555 | ΠΥXx (X omits 486–535; some in \mathfrak{A}). |
| Appendix 2a: 556–77 | YX (Π has only 569; none in \mathfrak{A}). |
| Appendix 2b: 578–87 | YX (Π has half of these: 578–9, 583, 585–6; only 578 in \mathfrak{A}). |
| Appendix 3: 588–610 | Y (Π has 593, 594, 610; \mathfrak{A} has 606, 607). |

In the present volume little has been done to provide more than the essential minimum of commentary upon the appendices, and in that section the parallels have usually been noted as briefly as possible in the apparatus.

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2. THE GREEK TEXT OF SEXTUS AND RUFINUS' TRANSLATION

PRAEFATIO RUFINI PRAESBYTERI

Scio quia, sicut grex ad vocem proprii pastoris accurrit, ita et religiosus auditor vernaculi doctoris commonitionibus gaudet. quia ergo, karissime fili Aproniane, religiosa filia mea, soror iam in Christo tua, poposcerat me ut ei aliquid quod legeret tale
 5 componerem, ubi neque laboraret in intellegendo et tamen proficeret in legendo, aperto et satis plano sermone: Sextum in Latinum verti, quem Sextum ipsum esse tradunt qui apud vos id est in urbe Roma Xystus vocatur, episcopi et martyris gloria decoratus. hunc ergo cum legerit, inveniet tam brevem ut videat singulis
 10 versiculis ingentes explicare sensus, tam vehementem ut unius versus sententia ad totius possit perfectionem vitae sufficere, tam manifestum ut ne absens quidem legenti puella expertem se intellectus esse causetur. omne autem opus ita breve est, ut de manu eius nunquam possit recedere totus liber, unius pristini alicuius
 15 pretiosi anuli optinens locum. et revera aequum videtur ut, cui pro verbo dei terrena ornamenta sorduerunt, nunc a nobis ad

For the sigla see p. 4. z = all (or most) other mss.

The preface is omitted entirely in A W w.

- 1 proprii om. QP occurrit U. 2 admonitionibus LBMJ.
 3 Aproniana L*OPBJSCG religiosa filia mea om. Jc religiosa
 om. LOPSBCM soror tua in Christo Q.
 4 poposceras B me Q a me z.
 6 satis om. PSc 7 ipsum om. OPSC.
 8 Xystus QO Syxtus LPVBJSM Sixtus CGU.
 10 versibus LOPBJSCM explicari JSCUMcr ut unius Q
 ut ut C ut (om. unius) z.
 12 absens Q assistens LOPSCGU assis (sic) JM puella
 QG puellae z.
 13 est om. PVBG.
 14 liber Q hic liber z unius pristini Q ibi pristini Vr unius B
 om. z 15 pretiosi om. GU.
 16 sorduerunt Q sorduerant z.

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vicem verbi et sapientiae monilibus adornetur. nunc ergo interim habeatur in manibus pro anulo liber, paulo post vero in thesaurum proficiens totius servetur disciplinae bonorum actuum commonitiones de intimo suggesturus arcano. addidi praeterea et electa
 20 quaedam religiosi parentis ad filium, sed breve totum, ut merito omne opusculum vel enchiridion si Graece vel anulus si Latine appelletur.

19 disciplinae bonorum actuum commonitiones Q disciplinis et bonorum actuum communionibus MJc sermo disciplinae et bonorum actuum communio PSC.

20 *After arcano Q ends: Explicit prologus feliciter (probably noticing that the sentences mentioned in the final sentence are not included in the text).* praeterea om. LMJ.

21 totum] id tamen U.

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ΣΕΞΤΟΥ ΓΝΩΜΑΙ

ENCHIRIDION SEXTI