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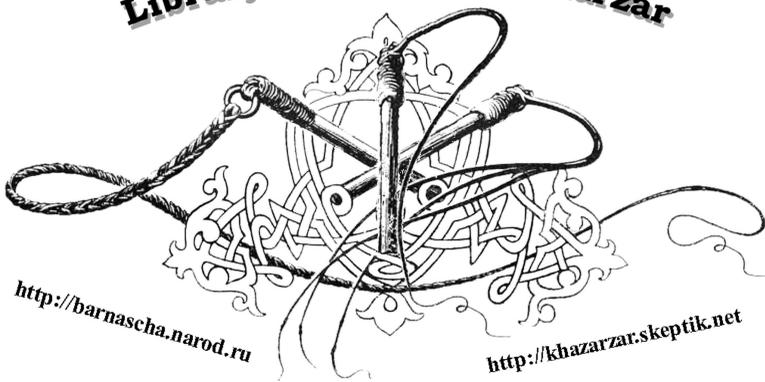
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MARCION AND THE TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

BY

GILLES QUIPEL

Two recent publications drew my attention to a topic upon which I published many years ago, namely, the New Testament text known to Marcion. It is quite remarkable that no comprehensive study of this topic has ever been published. Within the scope of this article, we can do no more than to offer some brief remarks and underscore some points which might otherwise remain unnoticed.

I. *Two recent investigations*

The first of the two publications which prompted me to return to Marcion was John J. Clabeaux's 1983 Harvard dissertation (published in 1989).¹ Clabeaux discussed a limited number of passages from Marcion's *Apostolikon*, as preserved in two later works: the dialogue of Adamantius, *de recta fide* and Epiphanius in *Panarion* 42, and Tertullian's citations in *Adversus Marcionem* book V. Clabeaux established that Marcion revised only lightly the authoritative, pre-Marcionite Greek text of Paul used and accepted by the ancient Catholic congregation of Rome. Clabeaux pointed out that the readings and variants of this early Roman text agreed as often as not with the *Vetus Latina* manuscripts of Paul—all of which seem to derive (directly or indirectly) from Rome. This was a very important observation, for it led Clabeaux to two important insights. First, it demonstrated that the variants in these secondary (*viz.* Tertullian) and tertiary (*viz.* Epiphanius) witnesses to Marcion's text were *not* variants which were "tendentious corruptions" of the text made by Marcion. How could they be, for the very same variants were often found in the manuscripts of the "orthodox" *Vetus Latina*? Second, since the text of the *Vetus Latina* found in Rome (the "Italic" and "European" sub-groups of the *Vetus Latina*) is regarded as belonging to the

¹ J.J. Clabeaux, *A Lost Edition of the Letters of Paul. A Reassessment of the Text of the Pauline Corpus attested by Marcion*, diss. Harvard 1983, CBQS 21 (Washington, D.C. 1989).

“Western” text-type, and Marcion’s text apparently shared the same variant readings as the *Vetus Latina*, Clabeaux concluded that the pre-Marcionite text of Paul in Rome had been of the “Western” text-type.²

The second publication which led me to reconsider this matter was Ulrich Schmid’s 1993 Münster dissertation (published in 1995) on Marcion’s text of Paul.³ Schmid followed in the footsteps of Clabeaux: he examined and discussed all of the variants attributed to Marcion by the Catholic heresy-hunters. He too concluded that Tertullian consulted a *Greek* (not a Latin) text of Marcion’s *Apostolikon*.⁴ Contrary to the received opinion, Schmid also concluded that Marcion’s interventions in the text to remove the so-called “Judaistic” interpolations were much less numerous than one would suppose. Schmid based his conclusion on the fact that most of the variants in Marcion’s text which depart from the now-accepted text of the Pauline epistles are also attested elsewhere, notably in *Catholic* sources, and are—upon examination—*not* tendentious. The influence of Marcion on the Biblical manuscripts of the Catholic Church is, therefore, minimal, and has often been overrated in the past. In fact, Schmid concluded that the text which Marcion used was essentially the text of Paul as read in the Catholic Church in Rome in Marcion’s time. The manuscripts in use in Rome in the 140s cannot have differed much from other manuscripts else-

² The idea that the most ancient text in the church was the “Western” text-type is not new (see the collection of scholars’ statements in W.L. Petersen, *Tatian’s Diatessaron, Its Creation, Dissemination, Significance, and History in Scholarship*, Suppl. to *VigChr*. 25 [Leiden 1994], 11-12), but it has been shunned because of the obvious problems such a different text (when compared with the Byzantine text-type) presents for both Protestants (*sola scriptura*, but the *scriptura* is not static) or Catholics (the *magisterium* becomes nothing more than the quirks of a particular time, place, and text-type).

³ U. Schmid, *Marcion und sein Apostolos: Rekonstruktion und historische Einordnung der marcionitischen Paulusbriefausgabe*, ANTT 25 (Berlin/New York 1995).

⁴ Long ago, I argued that Tertullian had used a *Greek* copy of Marcion’s edition of Paul (cp. G. Quispel, *De bronnen van Tertullianus’ Adversus Marcionem*, diss. Utrecht 1943 [Leiden 1943]). My position was *contra* A. von Harnack (*Marcion. Das Evangelium vom fremden Gotte, Eine Monographie zur Geschichte der katholischen Kirche* [Leipzig 1923; 2nd edition 1924, photomechanical reprint: Darmstadt 1960]), and H. von Soden (“Der Lateinische Paulustext bei Marcion und Tertullian,” in *Festgabe für A. Jülicher* [Tübingen 1927], 229-281). My position received little support after publication: I was attacked by A.J.B. Higgins, “The Latin Text in Marcion and Tertullian,” *VigChr* 5 (1951), 1-42, and T.P. O’Malley, *Tertullian and the Bible. Language-Imagery, Exegesis*, diss. Nijmegen 1969. Now, however, the work of Clabeaux and Schmid would seem to tip the balance back in favour of the thesis that Tertullian knew and used a *Greek* Marcion.

where in the ancient church at that time; like them, they must have suffered from scribal errors (like haplography or dittography), and must have undergone redactional corrections. But they probably also preserved remarkable ancient readings which have been neglected by textual critics and editors of the New Testament, readings which might, in some cases, be part of the most ancient recoverable text of Paul. Many of these variants are also found in *Codex Bezae* (D) and the *Vetus Latina* manuscripts of Paul—that is, in the “Western” text. Other variants, however, are not found in the “Western” text; therefore, I will call this pre-Marcionite text of the Catholic congregation in Rome “pre-Western,” for it appears to antedate the creation of what we now call the “Western” text.

It is here that the significance of Marcion as a witness to the text of the New Testament becomes apparent. If, as both Clabeaux and Schmid have independently found, Marcionite revisions of the New Testament text were very minor, then Marcion’s text would be a valuable witness to the text of the New Testament as known in Rome, prior to 144 (the date of Marcion’s expulsion from the Roman church). Marcion’s text of the New Testament must be the text known in Rome prior to 144. This means that the manuscript Marcion used is even older than what is usually regarded as the “oldest” extant manuscript of Paul’s writings: \wp^{46} (± 200 , from Egypt). However, a timely warning is necessary now. The results of Clabeaux and Schmid should not be overrated, as if the text of Marcion did not contain any tendentious readings at all.

Tertullian does not mention any variant of Marcion’s text in Galatians 1:1: “Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father (καὶ θεοῦ πατρός), who raised him from the dead.”

However, in his *Commentary on Galatians*, Jerome writes:

sciendum quoque in Marcionis apostolo non esse scriptum “et per deum patrem” volentis exponere Christum non a deo patre sed per semetipsum suscitatum.

—*In Gal.*, ad loc.⁵

One should know that in the Pauline corpus of Marcion the words “and through God the Father” have not been written, because he wanted to stress his point that Christ has not been raised by God the Father, but arose spontaneously through his own strength.

⁵ Migne, PL 26, 313A, lines 4-7 (also cited in Schmid, 240).

This is a very trustworthy tradition. As a Christo-monistic thinker, Marcion wanted to underline that Jesus rose from the dead without any help from the inferior demiurge.

We may be sure that Marcion intentionally omitted the words καὶ θεοῦ πατρός from his text of Paul's Letter to the Galatians.

On the other hand, it is not *a priori* completely impossible that even at this early date (before 144 C.E.), doctrinal corrections had been introduced into this pre-Western text of Paul's letters.

In his Epistle to the Galatians (2:9), the apostle declares that James, the brother of the Lord, and Peter (Ἰάκωβος καὶ Κηφᾶς), and also John, agreed with Paul and Barnabas that the Antiochenes should go unto the Gentiles, and "they" (the Jerusalemites) should go to the Jews.

When discussing the text of Marcion in the fifth book of *adversus Marcionem*, Tertullian writes:

bene igitur, quod et dexteram dederunt Petrus et Jacobus et Johannes. . .
—*adv. Marc.* V,3,6

Therefore it is good that Peter and James and John gave the right hands. . .

The sequence of the names has been inverted: instead of James, it is Peter who is mentioned in the first place. As Schmid observes, elsewhere Tertullian enumerates: Peter and John and James (*adv. Marc.* IV,3,3; *Praesc.* 15,2). That was obviously the reading Tertullian preferred, the text of his own Latin Bible, the *Afra*. The same variant is transmitted by Marius Victorinus.

We may be sure that the sequence "Peter and James" was the variant of Marcion himself. At the same time, it was a typically Western reading, evidenced by the Western manuscripts D F G, the *Itala* manuscripts *a b*, several manuscripts of the Vulgate, the minuscules 629 and 1175, and Latin authors like Ambrosiaster and Pelagius.

Here we face a conundrum: Marcion was no friend of Peter, a "Judaist"; why, then, should he have changed this text in order to give primacy to Peter? Could it be that Marcion simply transmitted the variant reading which he found in the *Corpus Paulinum* at that time and used in Rome, the city where he composed his revision of the "New Testament"? And is it possible that this correction is due to the pen of somebody who wanted to stress that Peter was the primate? At the same time, about 140 C.E., or even before, the Judaic Church affirmed the primacy of James, the brother of the Lord, the Righteous One, for whose sake heaven and earth came into being (*Gospel of Thomas*, log. 12).

II. *Marcion's text of Paul*

Marcion's pre-144 manuscript of Paul (what I shall call the "pre-Marcionite text of Rome") must have contained a number of marginal glosses, for one of them is signaled by Tertullian, when discussing Paul's interpretation (Gal. 4:24-25) of Abraham's sons Ishmael (whose mother was a slave) and Isaac (whose mother was freeborn) as symbols of the Old Covenant with Israel and the New Covenant with the Christian Church. Tertullian writes:

quae sunt allegorica, id est aliud portendentia: haec enim sunt duo testamenta (sive duo *ostensiones*, sicut invenimus interpretatum)

—Tert., *adv. Marc.* IV,4

Von Harnack supposed that *interpretari* here meant "to translate," and supposed a tendentious elimination of the covenant with Israel as well as the decisive proof that Tertullian read a Latin translation of Marcion's *Apostolicum*, the oldest Christian Latin text known to us.

But *διαθήκη* can also mean "declaration of God's will," which comes rather nearer to *ἀπόδειξις*, Latin "ostensio": "proof of God's intervention." That the one word in this context of Galatians could evoke the other is clear from the commentary of Tyconius on the same passage in Galatians:

Sed quod perspicue duo procreati sunt, *ostensio* est duorum populorum.

But that clearly two children were born, is *proof* that two peoples are meant.

—*Liber regularum* (Burkitt, 28)

Moreover, *interpretari* does not necessarily mean "to translate." It usually means "to explain, to give a special interpretation of something." Therefore, Tertullian, in the passage just cited from *adv. Marc.* IV,4, should be translated as follows:

These words are typological, that is: pointing to something else; for these are the two covenants (or, as we find it explained in the margin: two *proofs* of God's intervention).

One of the distinctive features of Marcion's *Apostolikon* was its arrangement of the Pauline letters. Tertullian suggests by his continuing commentary on these letters in Book V of *adv. Marc.*, which begins with Galatians (as well as Epiphanius, *Panarion* 42,9,4), that the following was the order of Marcion's Pauline corpus:

Galatians

1-2 Corinthians

Romans

1-2 Thessalonians
 Ephesians (called *Laodiceans* by Marcion)
 Colossians
 Philippians
 Philemon (no Hebrews, 1-2 Timothy, Titus)

A similar sequence is found in the *Kanon Sinaiticus*,⁶ a Syrian work:

Galatians
 1-2 Corinthians
 Romans
Hebrews
 Colossians
 Ephesians
 Philippians
 1-2 Thessalonians
 2 *Timothy*
Titus
 Philemon

In the course of the centuries some writings have obviously been added. But the “Marcionite” (we would call it: “original”) shape of the Pauline corpus has been preserved.

The foregoing suggests that there once was in use in Rome a “deviant” (i.e., deviating from our present text), pre-Marcionite collection of Paul’s epistles, and that this ancient, pre-Marcionite deviating text was once transported to Aramaic Christianity.

Perhaps there is still more evidence which points to this fact. The *Cologne Mani Codex*, a biography of Mani (*216-†277) contains many quotations from Paul by Mani and his pupil Baraies. Mani turns out to be a seasoned Paulinist, and proves that a gnostic interpretation of the apostle is quite possible. Hans Dieter Betz has observed, in an excellent article, that these quotations show a strong preference for Galatians and Corinthians.⁷ I quote only one:

So we also know about the apostle Paul that he was caught up to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2), as he writes in his Epistle to the Galatians: by Jesus Christ and God the Father (καὶ θεοῦ πατρὸς).

—*C.M.C.* 60,16 (Koenen-Römer 40)

⁶ See the “Stichenverzeichnis” of the books of the Old and New Testament, in *Studia Sinaitica*, ed. A.S. Lewis (London 1894), 11-14 (cited by Schmid, 288).

⁷ Hans Dieter Betz, “Paul in the Mani Biography (Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis),” in *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis*, *Atti del Simposio Internazionale 3-7 Settembre 1984* (Cosenza 1986), 215ff.

Betz (234) assumes that Mani relied on the canon of Marcion, which began with Galatians and the epistles to the Corinthians, that perhaps he learned his Pauline theology (which is such an important part of his Christian religion) from the Marcionites, and that his close relationship to the apostle Paul was probably due to the influence of Marcion.

However, we have argued in the foregoing pages that the omission of the words *καὶ θεοῦ πατρός* in Galatians 1:1 was, in fact, a tendentious elimination by Marcion himself. Now we see that the *Cologne Mani Codex* explicitly contains these words. That would seem to indicate that Mani and the Manichaeans did *not* use Marcion's *Apostolos*.

Moreover, up till this date, not a single tendentious reading of Marcionite origin has been found among the many quotations from Paul in Manichaean sources. One would rather suppose that Mani used a collection of Pauline letters beginning with Galatians, as was used by the Aramaic Church of the East.

Someone may have brought this Roman text to the East. That someone could have been Tatian, the pupil of Justin Martyr in Rome, who left him and returned to his homeland in the East. From quotations in the third book of the *Stromates* of Clement of Alexandria, it is clear that Tatian knew the letters of Paul and gave an Encratite, anti-marriage interpretation of them. We know that the influence of Encratism on Mani was enormous: no meat, no wine, no sex for him. The Diatessaron of Tatian was his Gospel. Mani may have been familiar with Tatian's *Corpus Paulinum* too.

Schmid also discusses the relationship between the pre-Marcionite text of Rome and the "Western" text. He thinks that the ancient, pre-Marcionite Roman text was constituted in the first decades of the second century or even at the end of the first century. The "Western" text of Paul, known through the bilingual *codices* F G H and D/d, and the *Vetus Latina* of Paul, seems to have originated from a revision (or several revisions) of the pre-Western, pre-Marcionite text of Paul. Its author accomplished three tasks: (1) he removed the glosses so characteristic of Marcion's text; (2) he consulted other manuscripts of Paul's epistles to constitute his text, and (3) he added the fourteenth chapter of Romans as well as the Pastoral Letters to Timothy and Titus. When and where this happened is left uncertain.

Whether this is so uncertain is open to question, for if the pre-Marcionite text of Paul were written in Rome before 144, it seems plausible that these later redactions of it occurred in the same place.

This suggests a "where": Rome.

III. Rome and the "Western" text

All text-types of the New Testament radiated from a city. Constantinople is the centre from which the so-called "Koine" text spread over the Greek and Slavic world for more than a thousand years. It is rightly called the Byzantine text because Byzantium is the old name for Constantinople.

The "Egyptian" text, represented by *Codex Sinaiticus* (S) and *Codex Vaticanus* (B), on which our modern editions of the New Testament are based, is derived from the text of Alexandria, transmitted by the Bodmer Papyrus ρ^{64} of Luke and John, and ρ^{75} of John, which show the fingerprints of experienced scribes, who were familiar with the *Editionstechnik* developed in Alexandria during the previous centuries for the publication of critical editions of Homer and other classics; hence, it is sometimes also called the "Alexandrian" text.

Perhaps there existed also in the Early Church a "Caesarean" text, localized in the beautiful and large city of Caesarea in Palestine, to which *Codex Koridethi* (Θ) and some families of texts written in minuscules, family 1 and 13 (f^1 and f^{13}) are said to belong.

The *Vetus Syra*—with its many distinctive readings and harmonizations—originated in Mesopotamian Edessa, the centre of Aramaic Christianity.

The *Afra*—perhaps the oldest translation of the Bible into Latin—originated in Carthage, the second city of the West.

Was Rome—a literary centre, the capital of the world, a cradle of culture and literature, where a host of *grammatici* in numerous *scriptoria* copied not just classics like Vergil but also lawyers like Gaius (± 150 , the author of the important and influential *Institutiones*, who lived in Rome)—was Rome an exception to this rule?⁸ I think not. The *codex* had recently been invented there⁹ and enthusiastically accepted by the Christians, because a *codex* (book) was so much easier to use than a scroll when looking up a verse or confounding a heretic quoting Scripture to his purpose. The Catholics of Rome must have had their own *scriptorium*.¹⁰ The pre-Marcionite text of Paul's epistles proves it; it shows all the signs of having been written by a professional scribe, with all the scribal errors, emendations and marginal glosses of a normal manuscript. And most likely it was in the form of a *codex*.

⁸ H.L. Nelson, *Ueberlieferung, Aufbau und Stil von Gai Institutiones* (Leiden 1981).

⁹ Colin H. Roberts, *The Codex*, in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. 60 (London 1955).

¹⁰ For a different opinion, see: Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament* (Leiden/Grand Rapids 1987), 54.

Such a *scriptorium* could also produce the “Western” text of Paul’s Epistles, as it is transmitted by the bilingual manuscripts F G H, *Codex Claromontanus* (D^p), and the different versions of the *Vetus Latina*. But there is also a Western Text for the four canonical gospels, contained in the copies of the Latin *Itala* and *Afra*, as well as in *Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis* (D) and the Syriac (Aramaic) Codices Sinaiticus (Syr^{sin}) and Curetonianus (Syr^{cur}). The text of Luke’s Acts of the Apostles was so heavily edited that its Western revision amounts to a second, revised edition. Only the Apocalypse of John and the so-called Pastoral Letters of James, Peter, and John escaped the hands of Western correctors, which all must have done their work after Marcion (± 144 C.E.), and before the end of the second century, when I suppose that all these writings must have been available. This thorough revision, which amounts almost to a second, definitive edition seems to presuppose the conscious effort of a whole school of *grammatici* to establish a complete and authoritative edition of the Holy Writings. It would seem that all these conditions were present in the Catholic Church of Rome in the second century of our era. The Catholic congregation there could easily produce an authoritative text of Holy Writ during and after the gnostic crisis. The Western Text is a post-Marcionite text. I want to stress the point that the constitution of this text-type was not only a philological, but also a *theological* achievement.

An example of this theological colouring is found in the Pastoral Letters. These were absent from the pre-Marcionite *corpus* of Paul in Rome, but apparently the letters of “Paul” to Timothy and to Titus were added to the canon in this post-Marcionite, “Western Text” canon. The author of Timothy rejects heretics, who pretend that the resurrection has already taken place (2 Timothy 2:13). But this was what Valentinus (or one of his disciples?) was teaching in his *Epistle to Rheginos* on the resurrection:

... come away from the divisions and the bonds and *already thou hast the resurrection.*

—*Ep. ad Rheg.* 49.13-15

The “Paul” of 1 Timothy also warns against dissidents who forbid marriage and command abstinence from meats which God has created (1 Timothy 4:3). That was certainly a timely warning welcomed by Catholics in Rome when the Encratite Tatian (“no wine, no meat, no sex”) was present in Rome or had just left!

And what a God-sent gift for a true believer to read in his (new) “authoritative” Bible that the apostle Paul himself had warned against the oppositions

(ἀντιθέσεις) of the Gnosis falsely called so (1 Tim. 6:20): remember that Marcion had just published, after 144 in Rome, his *Antitheseis* about the contradictions between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Thus Paul was “defended” against his best friends, vindicated for orthodoxy and encapsulated in Catholicism, all in and by the authors of the Western Text.

All of these features in the post-Marcionite canon of the “Western” Text answer or solve problems which were acute in Rome in the middle of the second century. The Western Text is, therefore, likely a Roman creation, because it is clearly responding to the challenges of Valentinus and Marcion and others who had such impact there in the mid-second century: this would appear to be one case where the oft-dangerous dictum *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* would seem to hold true.

The origin of the Western Text in Rome becomes more plausible when seen against the background of the grand design of Catholic Rome to throw up three dikes in order to protect the true religion:

- 1) an Apostolic Confession of Faith, written by the disciples of Jesus, which was once a simple baptismal creed in Rome;
- 2) an Apostolic Canon of inspired and authentic writings about Jesus Christ, linked with the Septuagint;
- 3) the Apostolic Succession of the bishops, which guaranteed the truth of tradition and a correct interpretation of the Bible.

It is necessary to say that during this period the most important decision was to link this New Testament with the Septuagint, a Hellenistic collection of Greek and originally Hebrew writings, which was neither identical with Jerome’s Vulgate and its *hebraica veritas*, nor with any modern Bible. Marcion, Valentinus, and Marcellina, the female teacher of the *Gnostikoi* (a specific sect), who had come to Rome under the episcopacy of Anicetus (155-166) and had converted many Christians there (Irenaeus, *adv. haer.* I.25.6); they all rejected the Old Testament in the form of the Septuagint.

To the three pillars above, one might add a fourth pillar to Roman Christianity: the creation of an authoritative redaction of the scriptures in the “Western” Text, a text which was specifically pointed at her opponents. Seen in this historical context, the Western Text appears to be both Roman (it answers the controversies so acute there) and Catholic (its answers/solutions are those which became “normative” in geographically western Christianity). The process of creating and introducing the “Western” Text was virtually complete about the year 200, for both Irenaeus and Tertullian have a typically “Western” Text.

IV. *Provisional Conclusions*

1) Marcion's non-doctrinal interventions in the text he took over from the ancient Roman Christian community were minor: he was a reformer, not a philologist. The Greek text of Luke and Paul, upon which Marcion performed his redaction, was the standard text in Rome at the time when he began his revisions (*e.g.*, circa 144, when he was excommunicated from the congregation in the capital). This text was, of course, pre-Marcionite; it was also pre-Western, and constituted before 144. It had been written down by an experienced Catholic *grammaticus*, who had, of course, his own *scriptorium*, and who made mistakes and scribal errors, like all scribes, but also opted for a better variant after having consulted another source: this scribe must have been familiar with all the methods of the classical techniques of edition, which flourished not only in Alexandria, but also in Rome.

2) It is quite possible that Tatian, when leaving Rome (*c.* 172 C.E.) after the death of Justin Martyr, took this pre-Marcionite, pre-Western text with him to the East, and used it for his great work of harmonization, the "one out of four"—the Diatessaron. This would explain why both Catholic and Manichaean authors of a later date *in the East* seem to have had a *Corpus Paulinum* beginning with the Epistle to the Galatians and the two Epistles to the Corinthians, *as in Rome*.

As Schmid (236) has shown, there is only one testimony for this sequence in the whole Greco-Roman world: the so-called *Marcionite Prologues* to the letters of Paul, which, perhaps, are not Marcionite at all, and which certainly reflect the order of the pre-Marcionite *Corpus Paulinum* then used in Rome.

Because they may reproduce the text known in Rome before 144 C.E., variant readings in the text of Marcion should be examined very carefully. To dismiss all of them, *a priori*, as "tendentious variants" introduced by Marcion himself, is an error of the most basic sort, for it means one has failed to attempt to separate the wheat from the chaff.

3) This pre-Marcionite, pre-Western text of Rome and, consequently, the "Western Text," which also originated in Rome, seem to have been influenced by a Judaic-Christian gospel tradition transmitted by a limited number of *logia* contained in the *Gospel of Thomas* and also by gospel quotations in the Pseudo-Clementine writings.¹¹ One may think of the many

¹¹ K.A. Credner, *Beiträge zur Einleitung in die biblischen Schriften* (Halle 1832). J. van Amersfoort, "The Gospel of Thomas and the Western Text. A Reappraisal," in G. Quispel, *Gnostic Studies*, Vol. 2, UNHAI 24,2 (Istanbul 1975).

Western interpolations in Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis (D), a representative of the Western Text. The most famous of them is probably Luke 6:5:

On the same day he saw a man working on the Sabbath. He said to him: "Man, if you know what you are doing, you are blessed; if you do not, you are cursed and a transgressor of the Law."

This extremely profound summary of a truly Christian ethic presupposes that the Law is still valid. Jewish Christians, who were Law abiding, had no reason to reject it. It was probably transmitted by a Jewish-Christian source.

The many Semitisms—or rather, Aramaisms—in the Western Text, which Matthew Black¹² identified long ago, with great learning, originality, and precision, often give one the impression that sometimes they are nearer to the source and represent a better tradition than their counterparts in the canonical gospels. Might this be because they come from the primitive, pre-Marcionite, pre-Western version of the scriptures current in Rome, pre-144?

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¹² M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (Oxford ³1967).