

GARRICK V. ALLEN, *Words Are Not Enough: Paratexts, Manuscripts, and the Real New Testament*. Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans 2024. xviii, 198 pp. – ISBN 978-0-8028-8335-3

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Since MARC LAUXTERMANN introduced Byzantinists to GERARD GENETTE's concept of paratext,¹ intensive study of Greek paratexts has furnished two vast sets of data: the DBBE and PTB. Nobody was better suited for presenting their riches to a wide audience than GARRICK ALLEN, whose own TiNT project required inspection of countless biblical codices. Clear, witty, and informative, ALLEN's latest monograph is popular in the best sense of the word.

'The Real New Testament' of the subtitle is not a solid entity but a constellation formed of *all* the books in which biblical text has come down to us. No two such 'witnesses' (as philologists call them) are exactly alike, and none contains the Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and/or Apocalypse in a pure, 'liquid' state – as a modern electronic file does. Titles, rubrics, headings, and colophons segment the text; gloss, prefaces, and afterwords frame and interpret it; chapter lists, cross-references, and concordance tables structure it in different ways. These are the primary paratexts that have drawn scholarly attention over the past decade. Unlike them, various 'secondary marks of use' – doodles, scribbles, 'trials of the pen', and so on – have seldom been noted, yet ALLEN mentions them, too (pp. 145–160).

The field of study is clearly vast and, one must admit, outlandish. ALLEN views it first of all through the lens of memory: little Garrick's mom reading him a childrens' book, ten-year-old Garrick leafing through his grandparents' Bible, young Garrick attending a Baptist summer school. He then discusses the Scofield (1909/1917) and Green (2008) editions of the Bible in English. Against this modern backdrop, six Greek manuscripts of the tenth, eleventh, and early sixteenth centuries are presented as illustrating, in each case, a certain type of paratext: titles,² canons (CPG 3465), Euthaliana (CPG 3460–3462), corrections, doodles. ALLEN stresses that such

1. MARC D. LAUXTERMANN, *The Perils of Travel: Mark the Monk and Bodl. E. D. Clark 15*. In: FLORIS BERNARD – KRISTOFFEL DEMOEN (eds), *Poetry and Its Contexts in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*. Farnham 2012, pp. 195–206.

2. Two pedantic remarks: On p. 52, the Greek word for 'Brother of the Lord' should be in the nominative rather than the genitive case (as ALLEN has it), i.e. Ἀδελφότητος, not

additions ('additional' in the sense of not having originated with the evangelist or apostle who authored the biblical content proper) can 'change what readers focus on, the questions they bring to the text, and the way they navigate the narrative' (p. 121).

ALLEN's best-documented specimen is Diktyon 13584, many of whose past readers are actually known by name: Francis Frowyk OFM (fl. 1505–1517), Henry Williams (fl. 1519–1536), Desiderius Erasmus († 1536), John Clement († 1572), James Usher (1581–1656). It is discouraging that none of them can be credited with the scribal interventions which ALLEN lists, by way of example, for the first nine chapters of the Gospel of Matthew in that manuscript (pp. 138–142). If 'corrections show in the most tangible way that the biblical text is a living thing, created in each instance by discerning people' (p. 144), it matters who those people were, when and where they lived, why they read a particular book, and what they made of it. The biblical text does not 'live' on its own. Reading does not take place in a void. We need a *history* as well as a phenomenology of paratexts.

Christian treatises written specially for women include one that proffers advice *To a Virgin* (CPG 2248): 'In church, keep silent and say nothing, but heed only the lection' (Ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ σιώπα, καὶ μηδὲν λάλει, ἀλλὰ τῇ ἀναγνώσει μόνον πρόσεχε), 'if you pray, if you recite psalms, or if you read, sit alone – let no one hear, except for yourself' (ἐὰν προσεύχῃ ἢ ψάλλῃς ἢ ἀναγινώσκῃς, κατ' ἰδίαν κάθου· μηδεὶς ἀκουέτω, εἰ μὴ σὺ μόνη), 'I beg of you, dearly beloved, heed and hear these commandments written in this book, and observe the writing not just with [your] bodily eyes but also with [your] inner ones' (παρακαλῶ σε, ἀγαπητή, πρόσεχε καὶ ἄκουε τῶν ἐντολῶν τούτων τῶν γεγραμμένων ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ καὶ μὴ μόνον τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς τοῖς φαινομένοις κατανόει τὰ γεγραμμένα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἔνδοθεν).³ We do not know if this text was really authored by the man to whom manuscripts attribute it, we do not know the name of the nun to whom it was addressed, and we consequently do not know its place and

ἀδελφοθέοιο (a poetic form) or ἀδελφοθέου. On p. 53, what ALLEN treats as a single title are actually two separate ones, the first in prose (Ἰακώβου ἐπιστολὴ καθολικὴ), the second in verse (DBBE 5827: Γράμμα πρὸς Ἑβραίους Ἰακώβου ἀδελφοθέοιο).

3. For a couple of other examples see ALEXEY STAMBOLOV, Chrysostomic or Ephremian? Tracing the Origins of a Saying Attributed to Chrysostom in the *Apotheismata Patrum*. In: DORU COSTACHE – MARIO BAGHOS (eds), John Chrysostom: Past, Present, Future. Sydney 2017, pp. 87–106; GIUSEPPE SIMONE ASSEMANI (ed.), Ephraem Syri Opera Omnia, vol. 2. Rome 1743, pp. 128–129 (§ 34); GEORGI PARPULOV, Toward a History of Byzantine Psalters. Plovdiv 2014, p. 280 (lines 118–130).

date of production. Such are the scattered blocks out of which the history of reading in Byzantium needs to be reconstructed.⁴ ALLEN cannot be reproached for avoiding this hard task, because the purpose of his book was different: he just meant to highlight the richness of a manuscript tradition that preserves more than the bare text of the Greek New Testament. In this, he has succeeded admirably.

Keywords

Greek New Testament; Byzantine manuscripts; paratexts

4. Cf. GUGLIELMO CAVALLO, *Tracce per una storia della lettura a Bisanzio*. ByzZ 95 (2002) pp. 423–444.