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**A TENTATIVE SEARCH FOR CONFLATION IN THE EPISTLE TO
GALATIANS (2:5; 4:14)**

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The article presents a tentative search for conflation in the Epistle to Galatians (2:5; 4:14). The purpose of this article is paving the methodological way for further research into conflation by the tentative search for candidates for conflation in the Epistle to Galatians. The variant «οις ουδε» is not a conflation of «οις» and «ουδε», since it is the primary reading from which the two other variants originated. Nevertheless, taking into consideration probable scribal and patristic grammatical improvements or doctrinal alterations, the history of the transmission seems to exhibit the transmissional phenomenon of difflation. The variant «μου τον» is not a conflation of «μου» and «τον». In the tentative conclusion there have been indicated several factors to be considered on which the variant «υμων τον» can be supposed to be a conflation of the primary reading «υμων» and the variant «τον».

Key words: conflation, Epistle to Galatians, New Testament, Corpus Paulinum manuscript.

The issue of *conflation* was earnestly introduced into the field of New Testament textual criticism by Westcott and Hort in the late nineteenth century [1]. Thus, the purpose of the whole research project «The Phenomenon of *conflation* in the textual witnesses of the New Testament» is to systematically study all variant readings that *look like*

conflation collected from the critical apparatuses of *Novum Testamentum Graece* (here and after, NA) [2] and *The Greek New Testament* (here and after, UBS) [3]. It must be noted that more than 400 candidates for *conflation* in the New Testament have been collected from the critical apparatuses of NA and UBS, all of which are to be systematically studied. Conflation is always the longest variant that is tertiary in origin and consists of the primary (authentic reading) and secondary (secondary variant) *simplicia*.

The purpose of this article is paving the methodological way for further research into *conflation* by the tentative search for candidates for *conflation* in the Epistle to Galatians. Thus, the author intends to answer three main questions in the «Conclusion». (i) Are there variant readings which look like *conflation* in the textual witnesses of the Epistle to Galatians? (ii) If in fact there are such variants, did the longest variant readings actually originate as a consequence of *conflation* of two other shorter variants, or can another explanation for their origin be provided? (iii) Finally, if in actual fact after an analysis of external and internal evidence is performed it turns out that a phenomenon such as *conflation* has occurred in some textual witnesses of the Epistle to Galatians, then what kind of witnesses (papyri, uncials, minuscules, lectionaries, versions or early authors) and text types are characterized by *conflation*?

In order to give the answers to these three questions, six main steps will be undertaken, which are further explained in the section «Methodology of the research» below: (i) an identification of the longest variant reading which looks like *conflation* and the shorter variants which *prima facie* provide the parts for the longest variant reading; (ii) a compilation of the critical apparatus from the critical apparatuses of NA²⁷ and UBS⁴; (iii) an analysis of external evidence; (iv) a reconstruction of an *approximate* chronological sequence of the variants' emergence; (v) the analysis of

internal evidence; (vi) a tentative conclusion with regard to the longest variant reading which looks like *conflation*.

οις ουδε (Gal 2:5)

δια δε τους παρεισακτους ψευδαδελφους οιτινες παρεισηλθον κατασκοπησαι την ελευθεριαν ημων ην εχομεν εν Χριστω Ιησου ινα ημας καταδουλωσουσιν ᾗοις ουδεᾶ προς ωραν ειξαμεν τη υποταγη, ινα η αληθεια του ευαγγελιου διαμενη προς υμας (Gal 2:4-5)

NA and UBS follow the reading «οις ουδε». UBS provides information about witnesses for four variants: «οις», «ουδε», «οις ουδε» ({A}), and «omit οις ουδε». NA²⁷ has a negative apparatus with two evidences against «οις ουδε»: «ουδε», *omit* «οις ουδε».

Analysis of External Evidence

On the basis of external evidence, the variant «οις ουδε» is to be preferred since it has the earliest, strongest, and widest manuscript attestation. It is supported by the papyrus $\hat{\iota}$, along with other Alexandrian (Ϡ A B C Ψ), Western (F G) and Byzantine (K L) crucial uncials (plus the first corrector of the uncial D), important Alexandrian (6 33 81 104 1175 1739 1962 2127 2464) and Western (1912) minuscules, a wide range of versions, and at least five Greek and two Latin authors.

Three other variants have very weak manuscript support and are attested predominantly by witnesses of the Western type of text. Therefore, they are considered secondary. The variant «ουδε» is supported by Ambrose and Marcion (according to Tertullian), and by Ambrosiaster's witness to an anonymous Greek manuscript and Victorinus-Rome's witness to an anonymous Latin manuscript supporting «ουδε». The variant without «οις ουδε» is supported by Western witnesses such as D* it^b it^d (along with / 884), the Latin translation of Irenaeus, and four Latin authors. The variant «οις» is attested only by the second corrector_{IX} of the uncial D, along with

Jerome's witness about some other Greek and Latin manuscripts which support this variant, although Jerome himself attests «οις ουδε».

Thus, the variant «οις ουδε» is accepted as the authentic reading, because it is (i) attested by the oldest manuscripts, (ii) witnessed to in different geographical areas, and (iii) supported by the best representatives of the Alexandrian and Byzantine text types, and partially supported by the Western text type. Therefore, three other variants are secondary in origin, which for the most part are supported by witnesses of the Western text type. This latter fact suggests that *in this particular instance* the appearance of different variants constitutes a problem primarily among witnesses of the Western text type.

Chronological Sequence of the Variants

On the basis of the earlier witnesses (presented in the critical apparatuses of NA and UBS), an *approximate* reconstruction of the chronological sequence of the variants' emergence is as follows. Taking into account the witness of Tertullian about Marcion, «ουδε» is considered the variant that is second in sequence, which originated from «οις ουδε». Since the variant «omit οις ουδε» is attested in the third century by Tertullian and the Latin translation_{IV} of Irenaeus, it is regarded as third in sequence. As regards the variant «οις», its existence in some other Greek and Latin manuscripts is witnessed to by Jerome in the fifth century, and is therefore considered to be the variant that is fourth in sequence.

Analysis of Internal Evidence

Thus there are two variants with the negative «ουδε» which reflect the meaning that Paul did not submit for a moment either to the false brothers alone («οις ουδε»), or to both the false brothers and the apostles («ουδε»). Two other variants without the negative «ουδε» reflect the meaning that Paul did yield briefly by submitting to the false brothers («οις») or to both the false brothers and the apostles («omit οις ουδε»).

The variants rA, rB and rD might be the result of accidental *omission* of «ουδε» in rA, of «οις» in rB, and of «οις ουδε» in rD, yet in view of the external evidence such a supposition seems to be dubious.

Bearing in mind that «οις» is clearly supported only by the second corrector of the uncial D, and «ουδε» only by such authors as Marcion and Ambrose, it is difficult to believe that these two variants appeared as the result of the accidental omission of «ουδε» or «οις» respectively. The variant «*omit* οις ουδε» can also hardly be explained by unintentional omission since it is mostly supported by authors prior to the uncial D*, such as Tertullian (probably), Ambrosiaster, the Latin translation of Irenaeus, Marius Victorinus, and Pelagius. And even if such accidental omission did happen, was it simultaneous or consecutive omission of «οις» and «ουδε» during the different stages of the text's transmission?

It seems more plausible that these three variants appeared as a result of *intentional* (scribal, editorial, or patristic) attempts to make *grammatical improvement* or *doctrinal alteration*, most likely in view of the issue of Titus' possible circumcision.

Therefore, there are two possible reasons for the appearance of the variant «ουδε», which still reflects the general sense of «οις ουδε» but without the anacoluthic «οις». Since it is witnessed to as early as Marcion_{II} (according to Tertullian_{III}), it could be his intentional attempt to make a *grammatical improvement* in order to avoid *anacoluthon* in the sentence «δια δε τους παρεισακτους ψευδαδελφους ... [*omit* "οις"] ουδε προς ωραν ειξαμεν τη υποταγη». Another possible reason (which reflects different views on the relations between Gentile and Jewish Christians as well as on the possible circumcision of Titus) could be Marcion's intentional *doctrinal alteration* so as to present Paul as one who did not yield even for a moment to the false brothers or to the apostles.

Bacon mentions two other suppositions with regard to the origin of the variant «ουδε». It could be either (i) the result of *conflatio* of the variants «omit οις ουδε» and «οις ουδε», or (ii) the consequence of a series of consecutive scribal corrections where «οις ουδε» is the authentic reading, «ουδε» is a *grammatical correction*, and «omit οις ουδε» is a rectification in order to remove «Marcion's false representation of conflict between the apostles». However, such a supposition does not agree with the chronological sequence of the variants' emergence.

The variants without «ουδε» appear to be intentional *doctrinal changes* or *harmonizations*, which try to resolve possible tensions between Gal 2:3 and Acts 16:3, and which reflect the view that Paul in actual fact yielded briefly to the false brothers (and to the apostles?) in the possible circumcision of Titus. That is, it looks as if scribes or editors try to portray Paul «as a reasonable man, capable of compromise» [4, p. 197].

If either of these two variants is assumed to be primary, then: «How the circumcision of a Gentile Christian could have been supposed by any one, especially by Paul, to help to maintain the gospel of free grace for Gentile Christians in general, passes understanding?» [5, p. 113]. In other words, how could submitting to the false brothers help the Galatians maintain the truth of the Gospel?

The denial theme that «stretches all the way from 1:12 to 2:6» also does not speak in favour of the variants without «ουδε», because they do not fit well into this form of the denial. The variant «οις ουδε», on the other hand, proceeds with «the motif of the denial. Just as Paul will deny in v 6 that the leaders of the Jerusalem church provided an addendum to his gospel, so he now denies that he and Barnabas gave in to the False Brothers even momentarily» [4, p. 197].

As to the absence of the negative in rD and rA, Lightfoot makes the observation that «the expedient of dropping the negative, as a means of

simplifying the sense, is characteristic of the Latin copies» [6, p. 122]. In support of this supposition he provides three clear examples from the Pauline epistles where the negative is omitted in some Western witnesses. However, such a general assumption needs to be thoroughly examined in the light of discoveries in New Testament textual criticism since Lightfoot's time.

Thus, internal evidence may speak in favour of the variant «οις ουδε» as well (though not so objectively as the external evidence does), since (i) syntactically it is the more difficult reading, because it is highly unlikely that anyone would introduce the anacoluthic «οις» into the sentence; (ii) it best fits Paul's theology that he did not yield to the false brothers, so as to have the truth of the Gospel remain with the Galatians; (iii) considering possible doctrinal harmonization in rA and rD, «οις ουδε» would seem to be the reading, since it is less in harmony with Gal 2:3 and Acts 16:3.

As for the other three variants, (i) «ουδε» seems to be an *improvement* (grammatically or doctrinally) of «οις ουδε»; (ii) «omit οις ουδε» and (iii) «οις» are most likely scribal *doctrinal improvements* of «οις ουδε». It regards, especially, the variant «οις» which is supported by the second corrector of the uncial D.

μου τον, υμων τον (Gal 4:14)

οιδατε δε οτι δι' ασθeneian της σαρκος ευηγγελισαμην υμιν το προτερον, και τον πειρασμον υμων εν τη σαρκι μου ουκ εξουθενησατε ουδε εξεπτυσσατε, αλλα ως αγγελον θεου εδεξασθε με, ως Χριστον Ιησουν (Gal 4:13-14)

NA and UBS ({A}) follow the variant «υμων» with four evidences against it: «μου», «τον», «μου τον», «υμων τον».

There are a few difficulties with respect to the apparatuses of NA and UBS. The first problem regards the minuscule 1241 under the variant «τον»: 1241^s in NA (a reading is in the supplemental part of the

manuscript), and 1241 in UBS (a reading is in the original part of the manuscript). In this case, the critical apparatus of NA is followed.

The second difficulty concerns the correctors of the uncial D (D¹ in NA, and D² in UBS⁴) in support of the variant «μου τοῦ». In the compiled critical apparatus both sigla D⁽¹⁾ and D² are used since the critical apparatuses of UBS^{1, 2, 3} (including UBS^{3cor}) provide the first corrector as well (D^(b), that is, a variant with minor differences).

The third problem regards the siglum a in support of the variant «μου τοῦ». It might be similar to the Gal 4:7 problem, where the siglum ar should be listed instead of the siglum a. However, UBS lists it^{ar} under the variant «μου». Therefore, the siglum a in support of «μου τοῦ» is ignored.

Analysis of External Evidence

Among five variant readings, «υμων» has the strongest attestation by the earlier and better Alexandrian manuscripts (☩* A B, but not î and C^{*vid}) and Western manuscripts (D* F G). Additionally, it is supported by other Alexandrian witnesses (33 cop^{bo}) and Western witnesses (it^b it^d it^f it^g it^o vg Victorinus-Rome Ambrosiaster Jerome^{1/2} Pelagius Augustine), along with the second corrector of the uncial C, and it^f.

While the reading «μου» is witnessed to by î_{ca.200}, it has no further *manuscript* support other than a few later versions (it^{ar} vg^{ms} slav). Therefore, it is considered a secondary variant, as is the reading «τοῦ», which is supported only by the second corrector_{VII} of the uncial ☩ along with ninth century uncial 0278, three versions, Basil and such late witnesses as one lectionary and seven minuscules.

As to the variants rD and rE (where «μου» and «υμων» are followed by «τοῦ», resulting in «μου τοῦ» and «υμων τοῦ», respectively), they are also regarded as secondary because of weak and late *manuscript* support. Although the variant rD is attested by the witnesses of three text types, it is not as strongly witnessed to by the better Alexandrian and Western

manuscripts as the variant rC. Moreover, in the uncial D*, «υμων» later was changed by the first or the second corrector to «μου τον».

The variant «υμων τον» has even weaker support than «μου τον», being attested only by four minuscules and three early authors. Moreover, no papyrus or uncial witnesses to this variant.

Thus, on the basis of external evidence that fairly persuasively speaks in favour of rC, the variant «υμων» is regarded as the primary reading because it is (i) attested by the oldest manuscripts (except $\hat{\Gamma}^{46}$ and C*), (ii) supported by the better witnesses of the Alexandrian and Western text types, in spite of the fact that it is not supported by the Byzantine type of text. Consequently, the other four variants are considered secondary.

Relying on the earlier witnesses (presented by the critical apparatuses of NA²⁷ and UBS⁴), an *approximate* reconstruction of the chronological sequence of the variants' appearance would be as follows (see discussion in 2.4.4 below). The original reading is «υμων» after which in the second century the reading «μου» emerges. The variant «υμων τον» is attested as early as Origen^{185-253/254}. Then, at the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth century the variant «μου τον» shows up in cop^{sa} .[7, p. 200]. Finally, starting from the second half of the fourth century (Basil^{ca.330-379}) the reading «τον» appears.

Analysis of Internal Evidence

The presence of two readings («μου», «τον») and two variants («μου τον», «υμων τον») in addition to the reading «υμων», indicates that scribes, translators, and Church Fathers experienced difficulties with regard to *who* experienced «πειρασμον» — the Galatians or Paul — though the cause of «πειρασμον» remains the same in all variant readings, that is the sickness of Paul.

The reading which is considered authentic on the basis of external evidence emphasizes that *the Galatians* experienced temptation or trial:

«τον πειρασμον υμων». In the immediate context, Paul says that they, the Galatians, have done him no wrong, since they know that at first he preached the Gospel to them because of the sickness of his body, and they did not despise and reject *that which was* a temptation to them in his flesh, but they received him as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus (Gal 4:12-14). Though the phrase «τον πειρασμον υμων εν τη σαρκι μου ουκ εξουθενησατε ουδε εξεπτυσσατε» (literally, «you did not despise or reject your temptation in my flesh») is difficult to translate on account of its idiomatic language, the majority of those commentators who accept the reading «υμων» are yet inclined to think that it means the following: the bodily condition of Paul was a temptation for the Galatians. Or, in other words, «his sick body ... did indeed present a temptation to the Galatians» [4, p. 421].

Since the reading «μου» emphasizes *Paul* as one who experienced «τον πειρασμον» («my temptation» or «my trial»), it probably appeared as a consequence of altering the text so as to make it syntactically less difficult to comprehend, because the sickness in actual fact presented more troubles to Paul than to the Galatians.

As to the reading «τον πειρασμον τον», it could appear as a result of *simplification* (probably in order to remove the grammatical complexity that the reading with «υμων» involves), since it does not emphasize *who* exactly («υμων» or «μου») experienced «τον πειρασμον», though it is obvious from any of the variant readings that the sickness of Paul constituted the problem to Paul *as well as* to Galatians. Regarding the appearance of «τον» in rD and rE, it could be either «the insertion of a classicist» [6, p. 175], or the result of a possible *conflation* at least in the variant rE.

Thus, the variant «οις ουδε» is not a *conflation* of «οις» and «ουδε», since it is the primary reading from which the two other variants originated. Nevertheless, taking into consideration probable scribal

and patristic *grammatical improvements* or *doctrinal alterations*, the history of the transmission seems to exhibit the transmissional phenomenon of *diffflation*.

Therefore, the support of «*υμων*» by external evidence has a decisive significance for determining the primary reading, inasmuch as there is no other strong support from the internal evidence except that «*τον πειρασμον υμων*» is syntactically a harder reading than the other variants.

The variant «*μου τον*» is not a *conflation* of «*μου*» and «*τον*» on account of at least two factors. First, taking into account the *manuscripts* only, it is obvious that the variant «*μου*» appeared as early as ca. 200 in the papyrus $\hat{\iota}^{46}$, after which in the fifth century the variant «*μου τον*» emerged in the uncial C^{*vid} (although as the apparent, not certain, reading), being followed by the reading «*τον*» attested by the second corrector_{VII} of the uncial \aleph . The second factor is the issue with versions that regards the latter two variants in the same way: «*μου τον*» is already attested in the Coptic version prior to the fifth century, while «*τον*» appears in the Armenian, Syriac Peshitta and Georgian versions only from the fifth century. It should be also noted that these three variants also do not belong in the category «*addition and omission*», since the variants «*τον*» and «*μου τον*» are distinctly attested in the *manuscripts* as early as the ninth century. In the tentative conclusion there have been indicated several factors to be considered on which the variant «*υμων τον*» can be supposed to be a *conflation* of the primary reading «*υμων*» and the variant «*τον*».

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