CHAPTER THREE

ROME, GAUL AND NORTH AFRICA

From the textbooks it appears that no unanimity exist with regard to the Old Latin version. Taylor divides the manuscripts into an African (e k), an European (a b) and an Italian (f q) text 1. Greenlee calls the Old Latin "Itala" and speaks about the uncertainty as to whether the "Itala" represents one or several translations 2. Metzger gives some more information and says that the Latin text has its origin in North Africa and that not long afterwards translations were made in Italy, Gaul and elsewhere 3. All of them agree that the Old Latin version shows a Western Text. Nobody, however, goes into the questions how to explain the relation of this text to the Old Syriac. It seems as if most of the important studies which appeared before 1949 have been forgotten 4.

The best survey we know, of what happened before 1949 is by Metzger 5. The burning question regarding the agreement between the Old Latin and the Old Syriac is clearly expounded. Some have supposed that the Old Latin version originated in Antioch and that this accounts for the agreement between the Old Latin and the Old Syriac. Others have accepted the idea that Tatian composed his Diatessaron in Rome and that this Diatessaron in its turn influenced the Syriac tetraevangelium. Finally some scholars have supposed that the Syriac Diatessaron was translated into Latin and that in this way the Latin text was influenced by genuine Syriac readings.

In the same article Metzger deals with the name "Itala". It comes from Augustine, De Doctrina Christiana II 15 22. Augustine speaks about a particular text of the Latin Bible, but it is absolute impossible to understand what kind of version he is referring to. For this reason we had better abandon this expression. Finally

1 Taylor, o.c., p. 27-28.
3 Metzger, Text, p. 72-75.
4 Klijn, Survey, p. 152-161.
Metzger points to the difficulty of dividing the Latin version into an European and an African text, since the representatives of the two texts show as many glaring disagreements as striking agreements among themselves.

This survey shows how many questions have yet to be solved. Therefore, it is to be regretted that during the last twenty years not many articles and books have been published on the Old Latin text of the Gospels\(^1\). We may be sure, however, that there will be a change in the near future. The *Vetus Latina Institut der Erzabtei Beuron* has published so many important editions of the text of the Pauline Epistles and the General Epistles and they have been accompanied by so many important studies on the text of the Epistles that we look forward with the greatest expectation to the publication of the work on the Gospels and Acts\(^2\).

Meanwhile we cannot do more than go into what has been published on the text in the Western part of the early Christian world.

Whoever wishes to study the text of the Latin version, has also to go into the Greek text right at the beginnings of Christianity in the West. Undoubtedly the Church of Rome, Gaul and North Africa was a Greek speaking community at the beginning. This appears from such authors and writings as I Clement, Justin Martyr, Marcion and Irenaeus. Of these the text of I Clement can be left out of consideration. This means that we have to deal with the three remaining authors. Inquiry into their texts is, however, seriously hampered because all of them come from the East. Therefore, we do not know whether they show a genuine Roman text. With this reservation we must now go into recent investigations into their texts.

The text of Justin has been thoroughly investigated by Bellinzoni\(^3\). In his study, however, special attention has been paid to the question whether Justin used other sources apart from the canonical Gospels. Hardly anything is said about the manuscripts used by

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\(^2\) See *Vetus Latina Institut der Erzabtei Beuron, Bericht* I, Beuron/Hohenzollern 1967; *Bericht* 2 1968, and *Bericht* 3 1969, with a survey of publications on p. 4-6.

\(^3\) Bellinzoni, *o.e.*, p. 000.