

CHAPTER NINE

BEZA AS EDITOR OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

... enfin son Commentaire est tout autre chose qu'un ouvrage de critique—Samuel Berger¹

When the Greek text was incorporated into Beza's second edition of 1565, Stephanus' fourth edition of 1551 was used. The Greek text was changed according to the decisions Beza had taken during the preparation of his first edition, though not consistently.² In order to have a background against which to place Beza's involvement in conjectural emendation, Beza's use of manuscripts and the characteristics of his editorial changes will be analysed briefly in this chapter. Beza's view and use of the famous 'Codex Bezae' will also be discussed.

9.1 THE USE OF MANUSCRIPTS IN THE EDITIONS OF 1556 AND 1565

Though his editions have no critical apparatus, not even a rudimentary one, Beza regularly mentions manuscript readings in his annotations, the sources for which are relatively easy to identify. When manuscripts are cited individually, Beza refers to them, at least in a large part of his first edition, with ordinal numbers. These numbers generally coincide with the Greek numbers used as sigla in the marginal apparatus of Stephanus' third edition, and in most cases the information provided by Beza agrees exactly with Stephanus' critical apparatus.³ This obvious connection be

¹ Berger, *La Bible au seizième siècle*, p. 134.

² For some examples, see above, p. 206 n. 32.

³ The 1556 annotation on Matt 27:46 *λαμά* alone suffices as proof that Stephanus' marginal apparatus and Beza's annotations are related: Beza gives exactly the same information as Stephanus, on ten manuscripts distributed over three variant readings. He even faithfully reproduces Stephanus' errors, both the obvious one (η/L is mentioned twice) and the hidden one (β/D actually supports *λαμά*, not *λιμά*). Backus's lengthy demonstration that Beza relies on the manuscripts that are also indicated in Stephanus' edition (*Reformed Roots*, pp. 1–7)

tween Beza's annotations and Stephanus' apparatus is confirmed by some annotations, in which mention is made of "our Stephanus' manuscripts"⁴ and indirectly by the printer's note in the 1556 edition.⁵ In the 1556 preface, Beza himself actually states that he used Stephanus' collations directly, that is, the information on which Stephanus drew for his critical apparatus. In a 1565 addition to the preface, Beza informs us that the collations were actually Henri Stephanus',⁶ who was probably asked to do them by his father.⁷ Some readings mentioned by Beza in the same way as the others are not found in Stephanus' editions; they are probably derived from the collations.⁸ Perhaps Beza simply used the printed sources (Stephanus' third edition etc.) and the book of collations in addition, but since the latter has been lost

would have been greatly facilitated had she also consulted Beza's first edition. Somewhat surprisingly as well, Backus nowhere refers to Wettstein's discussion as found in his *NTG* 1, especially p. 148.

⁴ At Mark 1:11 Beza gives the reading ἐν σοι as found "in vetustis Roberti exemplaribus 3.4, et 8" (in 1556 only); at John 7:53 Beza speaks about "the seventeen manuscripts of our Stephanus" ("vetustis Stephani nostri codicibus septemdecim") (in 1556 only; in 1565, 'Stephani nostri' is changed into 'nostris'); at John 1:14 πλήρης "all manuscript copies of our Stephanus" are mentioned ("omnia ... manuscripta Stephani nostri exemplaria ..."—1556 only). Cf. the annotation at Matt 10:12 (1556 only). In general, references to Robert Stephanus were edited out of the second edition (e.g. in the annotation on Matt 1:23), except for the letter-preface.

⁵ In this printer's note, Robert Stephanus writes on the Greek manuscripts that "it concerns both others and all those that are present in the French King's library" ("sunt autem cum alia, tum ea omnia quae in Regis Gallorum bibliotheca extant"; 1556 edition, p. 335). These same two categories of manuscripts are mentioned in the preface of Stephanus' third edition of the Greek New Testament (1550).

⁶ There are actually only two sources indicating that the collations used by Robert Stephanus for his third edition are his son's: Henri Stephanus' own words in the preface to his 1587 New Testament, and the remark added by Beza in the preface to his second edition.

⁷ For the old discussion on the collations used by Robert Stephanus on whether they made by himself or by his son Henri, see Wettstein, *NTG* 1, pp. 143–145.

⁸ E.g. τρέψον in Matt 5:39 (1556: "In uno codice ..."); the omission of πρῶτον in Matt 8:21 (1556: "Vetustum quoddam exemplar ..."); the reading κωφοῦς ἀκούοντας, ἀλάλους λαλοῦντας in Matt 15:31 (1556: "in uno vetere codice"). For instances which involve Codex Bezae, see below, p. 227 n. 62. Cf. Wettstein, *NTG* 1, p. 36. James Rendel Harris (*Codex Bezae*, pp. 3–6) contests that Beza had access to the collations, but he does so after consultation of Beza's fifth edition only.