SOME REMARKS ON THE DIATESSARON HAARENSE

BY

G. QUISPEL

The Diatessaron Haarense, recently discovered at Haaren in the province of North Brabant (The Netherlands) and edited by C. C. de Bruin, was written about 1400 A.D. somewhere in Dutch Limburg in the local dialect.\(^1\) It is held to be almost identical with the text of the Stuttgart Diatessaron,\(^2\) a Flemish Gospel Harmony written in 1332 and based upon a vulgatized version of the first Dutch Bible translation. The latter was made probably in the abbey of Affligem (between Brussels and Gent) and a copy of it is contained in the famous Liège Diatessaron (St. Truyden \(\pm1325\)).\(^3\)

However, this Diatessaron Haarense (H) contains some very important variant readings not found in any Dutch Gospel harmony, neither in the Diatessaron Cantabriigne (C),\(^4\) written alternatively in the dialect of Brabant and of the Rhineland about 1325, nor in the Diatessaron Leodiense (L) nor in the Middle High German translation of the Dutch Diatessaron, the Diatessaron Theodiscum (Th),\(^5\) written in or near Cologne, nor for that matter in the Stuttgart Harmony (S) or the Diatessaron, on which the Heliand (between 821 and 840) is based.\(^6\)

I. The most conspicuous of these readings probably is the following: p. 114,5–7 (Luke 23,29):

The days shall come, in which you will say: Blessed are the barren and the wombs that did not bring forth children and the breasts that did not give suck.

(die daghe sellen comen in dien ghi selt segghen : Salich sijn die ondrachtighe ende die buken die niet en hebben ghebaert, ende die borsten die niet ghesoecht en hebben.)

\(^1\) C. C. de Bruin, Diatessaron Haarense, Leiden 1970.
\(^2\) J. Bergsma, De Levens van Jezus, Leiden 1898.
When we compare these words with the parallel passages in the other Dutch Diatessarons, we see that H has been vulgatized. The Liège Diatessaron and the Heliand (5523) presuppose the reading: *venient dies ut* instead of *venient dies in quibus*, as attested by H, the Codex Fuldensis of Boniface (F) and the Vulgate.

Moreover the Liège Diatessaron reads: the wombs that did not conceive (*ventres qui non conceperunt* 1. Vulg. *ventres qui non genuerunt*.).

If we suppose that all Dutch Diatessarons go back to one Latin Diatessaron, - which must have been present in the library of the abbey of Affligem in the course of the thirteenth century, if not earlier -, we may restore the Latin text of this Gospel harmony with some confidence, as follows:

\[
\text{quoniam venient dies ut dicatis: Beatae sterile et ventres qui non conceperunt et ubera quae non lactaverunt.}
\]

This surely is a remarkable text if we compare it with other Diatessarons and other translations or manuscripts of the Gospels:7

(a) om. ίδει: Ephrem, Commentary on the Diatessaron (T*), Persian Diatessaron (Tpers), Arabic Diatessaron (Tar), Venetian Diatessaron (Tven). The Codex Fuldensis (F), on the contrary, has: *ecce*. We conclude, therefore, that this reading goes back to the text of Tatian himself and has been eliminated from the Diatessaron by Victor of Capua, the author of the Codex Fuldensis, who vulgatized almost completely the text he copied. This is one of the numerous cases showing that the Latin codex in Affligem (A*) cannot possibly be identical with the Codex Fuldensis. The same omission is found in the representatives of the Western text, the Syrus Sinaiticus (S) and Syrus Curetonianus (C), the Codex Bezae (D) and the Old Latin codices a b d e ff2 l r1. This reading, moreover, is characteristic of the manuscripts of family 13 and can be found in the minuscule 476.

(b) διτι 1. εν ατις is found in Tc, both in Armenian and Syriac, and in Tpers. We are reminded of the Hebrew expression *jāmim bāʾim* we = the time shall come that...

(c) ἐρεῖτε 1. ἐροῦσιν: both the Syriac and the Armenian (ms. B) text of Ephrem’s commentary, the Persian and the Arabic Diatessaron. The *Diatessaron Haarense* is the only Gospel harmony in the West, in which

---