

*Augustiniana* 66 (2016), 327-331

Zawadzki, Konrad F., *Der Kommentar Cyrills von Alexandrien zum 1. Korintherbrief. Einleitung, kritischer Text, Übersetzung, Einzelanalyse*, (Traditio Exegetica Graeca, 16), Peeters, Leuven – Paris – Bristol 2015, ISBN 978-90-429-3045-2, XXVIII + 615 pp.

Any scholar who is interested in Cyril of Alexandria's commentaries on Paul's epistles to the Romans, the Corinthians, and the epistle to the Hebrews (considered Pauline in ancient Christianity), is aware that the existing editions of the extant catena fragments are seriously in need of improvement. Therefore it is gratifying that Konrad Zawadzki undertook this task for Cyril's fragments on the first epistle to the Corinthians. His study first served as PhD thesis at the theological faculty of Trier, Germany, and has now been published in a beautiful edition, including an introduction, a German translation, comments, and indices. For these fragments we have until today had to rely on John Anthony Cramer's edition of the NT catenae (Oxford 1841), based on the inferior Codex Parisinus Graecus 227, on Angelo Mai's edition of the Codex Vaticanus 762 (Rome 1845 and in PG 74), and on Philip E. Pusey's edition of – predominantly – Codex Parisinus Graecus 227 and Codex Athous Pantokratoros 28 (Oxford 1872). Zawadzki's edition is based on Codex Vaticanus Graecus 762, Codex Athous Pantokratoros 28, and a few other fragments. When the texts of his two main codices overlap, the divergences are often considerable, for which reason they have rightly been printed in two parallel columns, without any attempt to create a harmonized text. Such cases of double transmission demonstrate to which extent the catenists freely

excerpted and reworked Cyril's commentary. As the syntax of the manuscripts is regularly puzzling or simply wrong, Zawadzki was induced to propose many emendations, which are accounted for in the critical apparatus (which includes the divergences from the previous editions) and the comments. The result is an admirable critical edition of the Greek texts. In the introduction to this work Zawadzki carefully estimates ('mit vorsichtiger Zurückhaltung', p. 20) that the remaining fragments represent circa one third of Cyril's original commentary. Given Cyril's elaborate style in other commentaries my impression is, however, that this estimation is too optimistic. Since the commentary clearly contains anti-Nestorian polemics, Zawadzki argues that it is to be dated after the Nestorian crisis that started in 428 AD. On additional grounds he concludes that it was written between 433 and 438. As in Cyril's other works, his style is not easy and strongly tends to Attic Greek with many rare, poetic words and neologisms. Zawadzki shows that Cyril does not write a pure Attic and was also influenced by the spoken language of his days. Zawadzki's translations are not slavish but elegant. Sometimes one may wonder whether he translated all terms, but apparently he considered it more important to render the meaning of a sentence than to give a literal translation of all the Greek words.

The comments on the edited and translated texts are elaborate; they roughly comprise the second half of the book, which counts xxviii + 615 pages. Since these fragments on 1 Corinthians have never been researched intensively, these comments are most welcome and valuable. Zawadzki regularly compares Cyril's interpretations both with other patristic and with modern commentaries. Sometimes he tends to defend Cyril's explanations because they give relevant actualizations, but if they are untenable in a modern view, he is not afraid of distancing himself from the Alexandrian bishop. Zawadzki often refers to Wolfgang Schrage's four-volume commentary on 1 Corinthians (EKK VII, 1-4) with appreciation, but he also criticizes and corrects passages in it that are devoted to the reception history of the epistle, either because, in his view, Schrage misunderstood Cyril's comments, or because he used a defective Greek text.

Valuable and relevant though Zawadzki's comments on Cyril's interpretations are, they also give occasion for a scholarly debate that, admittedly, is possible only thanks to this critical edition. I note some of my points.

Like other Church Fathers, Cyril interpreted Paul's exposition of participation in pagan sacrificial worship (1 Cor 8 and 10) in the sense of a severe prohibition to Christians, which is confirmed by many

present-day exegetes. Zawadzki, however, was apparently influenced by older commentators, for he holds that Cyril stretches ('gewissermaßen Gewalt antut', p. 397) Paul's enunciations in 1 Cor 8 and interprets the text according to the circumstances of the fifth-century church in Alexandria. I would maintain that the patristic guidelines not to participate in pagan worship are closer to the purport of Paul's chapters – even of 1 Cor 8 – than Zawadzki assumes.

According to Codex Athous Pantokratoros 28 Cyril interprets the spiritual gift of the discernment of spirits (1 Cor 12:10) as the ability to distinguish between heresy and orthodoxy (p. 180, 1-5). Codex Vaticanus Graecus 762 does not have this interpretation, but it preserves Cyril's observation that he already explained which spirits are meant (p. 180, 22-25). Zawadzki considers these words incomprehensible (p. 442, n. 317), but in my view Cyril clearly refers to the authority to exorcize unclean spirits that he mentioned some lines before (p. 180, 3-8), in his discussion of the 'gifts of healing' (1 Cor 12:9). This implies that in Cyril's view an exorcist is in need of the gift of the discernment of spirits.

Concerning the gift of glossolalia discussed in 1 Cor 14, Cyril shares the view of other Church Fathers that it enabled Jesus' disciples to proclaim the Gospel in every language and to every nation. Of course, this is not what Paul means, for in this chapter he discusses the worship meeting of the Corinthian congregation and recommends that in its gatherings the words spoken 'in tongues' should be interpreted because otherwise they are not understandable. Cyril comments that it does not make sense to speak the language of the Medes or the Elamites to the Greeks or the Jews, which was not the problem that Paul addressed in 1 Cor 14. Concerning 1 Cor 14:13-15, a text on the believer's glossolalic prayer during which his mind is unproductive, which does not fit with Cyril's understanding of glossolalia, he admits that it is difficult to interpret. Concerning the phenomenon of prophecy that Paul discusses in this chapter, Cyril understands this gift – as other Church Fathers do – as the ability to expound the words of the biblical prophets. Strikingly, in his analyses of Cyril's fragments on these gifts Zawadzki tends to defend the bishop's distorted interpretations as reader response exegesis instead of pointing to the reasons of his difficulties and misunderstandings. He even completely passes over Cyril's explicit remark on the difficulty of 1 Cor 14:13-15. In his footnotes he often refers to the interpretations of other Church Fathers, but regrettably he did not benefit from the papers published by Martin F.G. Parmentier, 'Das Zungenreden bei den Kirchenvätern', *Bijdragen* 55 (1994), 376-398 and Caroline P. Hammond Bammel, 'Prophetie in

der patristischen Exegese zum ersten Korintherbrief', *Augustinianum* 29 (1989), 157-169.

In 1 Cor 14:16 Paul asks how an uninitiated person (ιδιώτης) can say Amen in response 'to your thanksgiving' (ἐπὶ τῇ σῆ εὐχαριστίᾳ) if it is said 'in the spirit', which means here 'in tongues'. According to the two codices Cyril explains this text with reference to the liturgical habit that the prayers of the priests and those of the congregation are concluded with a common Amen. He assumes that Paul instructs the priest that it does not make sense to pray 'in a tongue', for how could someone who does not understand it then say Amen ἐπὶ τῇ ἰδίᾳ εὐχαριστίᾳ; – 'to *his own* thanksgiving' (Codex Athous Pantokratoros 28, pp. 200, 30 - 202, 1). For Zawadzki it is almost unthinkable that, either consciously or unconsciously, Cyril distorted Paul's words, although he reluctantly leaves this possibility open as an *ultima ratio*. Since, moreover, in the beginning of both fragments Cyril writes about the layman saying τὸ ἀμὴν [ἐν – only in Vaticanus Graecus 762] ταῖς ἰδίαις εὐχαριστίαις (p. 200, 9), 'the Amen to *his own* thanksgivings', Zawadzki assumes that Cyril found the elsewhere unattested reading ἐπὶ τῇ ἰδίᾳ εὐχαριστίᾳ in the manuscript he used. I find it far more likely that Cyril carelessly adopted and adapted John Chrysostom's interpretation that also refers to the liturgy in which the layman cannot say the Amen if the prayer is spoken in a language that he does not understand (PG 61, 300). Chrysostom clearly means the priest's prayer – although this remains implicit – but apparently Cyril misunderstood it as the layman's prayer. Even a dedicated bishop and experienced exegete can commit a *lapsus*.

The book is concluded by a survey of the most important themes discussed and by an analysis of Cyril's hermeneutics and exegetical methods in the edited fragments. The Alexandrian bishop has sometimes been suspected of a mono- or miaphysite Christology, but the present fragments testify to his persuasion that Christ had a divine and a human nature. Zawadzki is critical of previous scholars, namely Alexander Kerrigan, Robert L. Wilken, Bertrand de Margerie, Lars Koen, and Lois M. Farag, because they researched only limited parts of Cyril's exegetical works from which they drew too general conclusions which, in any case, do not hold true for the fragments on 1 Corinthians. In a short chapter on the reception of Cyril's commentary he lists some Syriac manuscripts that contain quotations from this work.

I saw only a few printing errors. On p. 511 the *Silbentrennung* 'Mis-sachtung' is incorrect. On p. 384, the first line of footnote 218 seems muddled; on p. 398, line 24, after 'später' a term like 'den Weg'

seems missing; on p. 425 καὶ is missing after θεῶν (cf. p. 164, 28) and the accent on περᾶ differs from πέρα on p. 164, 28.

There is no doubt that my overall assessment of this work is most positive. It gives a new access to the extant Greek fragments of Cyril's commentary on 1 Corinthians and enables further research on a solid, critical basis. Hopefully Zawadzki and other scholars will undertake the editions of Cyril's other commentaries on the Pauline epistles with the same precision.

Riemer Roukema