

## "QUEEN ANNE" REVISITED: A REJOINDER

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An evaluation of a work that supports a position to which one does not personally subscribe should be characterized by two considerations above all. First, it should accurately portray the position of the author; and second, it should deal fairly with the material. Unfortunately, Wilbur Pickering has rated my review of his book low on both counts (see my "Queen Anne Resurrected? A Review Article," *JETS* 20/4 [December, 1977] 377-381). The following are my reflections on his response that appears in this issue of the *Journal*.

(1) Pickering points out that he and Zane Hodges are not calling for a return to the TR as such; rather, they "are advocating what Kurt Aland has called the majority text." That is exactly what I was trying to express in the paragraph that Pickering quotes from my review. I said: "True progress can be made, Pickering feels, only when scholarship returns to the 'majority' Greek text as (*usually*) represented by the printed TR" (p. 377; italics added). I fully recognize that Pickering is not completely satisfied with the traditional printed representation(s) of the majority text, and on p. 381 of my review I point out the need for "an improved TR" that would reflect more accurately the readings of the majority text. (Hodges and his associates reportedly have such a project underway.) I also stated in the review (p. 381) that "the identity of the NT text, in [Pickering's] opinion, is to be sought in the mass of relatively late Greek manuscripts."

Perhaps some misunderstanding occurred in my review because of the other authors I mentioned in the paragraph cited by Pickering. But it was not my purpose to imply that those referred to were entirely congruent with one another in the details of their presentations. Nor did I mean to imply that Pickering would necessarily agree with their positions *in toto*. I was simply suggesting that there is a growing interest in an interpretation of the textual data that is at least similar to Pickering's.

(2) The author reports that I was "quite unfair" in suggesting that "to Mr. Pickering the scribes were all demons." Two points may be mentioned in reply. First, he has not really left my comment in its context. To the end of the portion which he cites should be added the words "as far as theology was concerned." I was trying to compare Pickering's evaluation of theological variation in the text to Hort's minimization of this factor. Second, I find very satisfactory Pickering's view (expressed in his rejoinder) that "it was a small minority that engaged in deliberate alteration of the text." I am puzzled by that

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comment, however, in light of some of the statements that appear in the book. For example, Pickering quotes—apparently with approval—Colwell's view that "most variations . . . were made deliberately" (p. 42). Colwell is also quoted as saying that "the majority of the variant readings in the New Testament were created for theological or dogmatic reasons" (p. 42). Referring to these and other comments Pickering states, "Colwell has done an instructive about-face" (p. 42). Pickering himself speaks of "deliberate, and apparently numerous, alterations in the early years of textual history" (p. 43).

(3) It appears that in Pickering's evaluation of Codex D (p. 61) he had in mind only Luke 24 when he speaks of this manuscript's "inveterate propensity for omission." It is not clear to me from the book, however, that he is speaking only of Luke 24; rather, the statement at least appears to be a more general evaluation of Codex D.

(4) I continue to feel that to maintain that simply because early Christians accepted the authority of Scripture they must have been capable of a discriminating evaluation of variant forms of the text is a *non sequitur*. Presumably many early Christians would have been very anxious to possess a copy of the NT (or a portion thereof) who might have been somewhat forgiving toward or even unaware of relatively minor textual blemishes. Does a conservative view toward the authority of Scripture at the grass-roots level today, for example, carry any guarantees of accuracy of choice in, say, the selection of an English version?

(5) With regard to Pickering's clarification of his view toward 7Q5 et al., I find no problem in my reporting of his position. The expression "tend to confirm" gives a certain amount of reservation to his position, and I see no necessity for my having included the words "it seems to me." So far as our lack of early Byzantine manuscripts is concerned, Pickering wonders how I might account for this. It depends on how early we are talking about. Is it possible that our lack of very early Byzantine manuscripts might be interpreted to imply the nonexistence of that text-type at an early date?

(6) With regard to the Mark 1:40 reference, it is true that I understood Pickering to be referring to the apparently conflated reading early in the verse, as cited by the *UBSGNT*. I appreciate his clarification on this point.

(7) Finally, Pickering says that he is "still waiting to see a review that really deals with the issues and evidence." But I wonder if in the final analysis this is really the purpose of a review. To deal adequately with all of the issues and evidence is going to require a volume or more. I understand the purpose of a review to be that of calling attention to a work and of offering brief evaluations of its inherent strengths and weaknesses. I doubt if Pickering's expectations will be (or should be) fully realized in the space of any review.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation for Pickering's attempts to interpret the textual data within the framework of a conser-

vative and believing attitude toward Scripture. If I cannot agree with his conclusions, I do nonetheless congratulate his efforts. Let us welcome all fresh attempts to evaluate the evidence in the hope that new insight may be gained and that the interests of NT scholarship may continue to advance.