

Mt VI, 13 and a peculiar Augustinian reading

THE early Latin versions present the following not insignificant crop of various readings for Mt vi. 13 *ne eisenegkeis hemas*: ne nos inducas *a b f*. ne passus nos fueris induci *c*. ne passus fueris induci nos *k*. ne passus fueris nos induci *Cyp cod. V (de Dom. orat. c. 7)*, ne patiaris nos induci *g² gat D R Dimma Wurz J Cyp Ambr Arnob Hil.* ne nos inducas... id est ne nos patiaris induci *Tert (de Orat. c. 8)*. ne inducas nos *aur ff¹ g¹ h l q vg.* ne nos inferas *Aug fere semper*. Augustine, however, did not ignore the other two renderings: "Nonnulli codices habent, *inducas*... Multi autem precando ita dicunt, *Ne nos patiaris induci in tentationem*" (*de Serm Dom.* ii, 30)¹.

Ne nos inferas, Augustine's familiar reading, is unsupported by any Latin authority. Burkitt, followed on this point by De Bruyne², thinks that it is Augustine's own rendering: "He disliked a rendering which seemed to assert in the Lord's Prayer that our Father *leads* us into temptation, and he knew that the customary African paraphrase ('do not suffer us to be led') had no authority, so in his exposition of the Sermon on the Mount (ii, 30) he uses *ne nos inferas*, quoting the Greek word *eisenegkeis*"³. This opinion calls for some comment.

The idea of God's leading us into temptation conveyed by *inducas* is undoubtedly very perplexing and it was from early times felt to be a difficulty⁴. In order to tone it down there seems to have been introduced, since at least the time of Tertullian, the gloss *ne nos patiaris induci* which found its way into the text of the Prayer itself and thence into the older Latin versions of the Gospels. Tertullian (*ne nos inducas*... id est *ne nos patiaris induci*) and St Augustine (Multi autem precando ita dicunt, *Ne nos patiaris induci in tentationem*, exponentes videlicet quomodo dictum sit, *inducas*) clearly point to this process. The reading

(1) P.L. xxxiv, 1282.

(2) D. DE BRUYNE, *Saint Augustin reviseur de la Bible* in *Miscellanea Agostiniana* (Roma 1931), Vol. II, p. 596.

(3) *The Journal of Theological Studies*, xxviii (1926) p. 103.

(4) For the meaning of the Greek word *eisenegkeis*, it may not be out of place to quote one of the latest works on New Testament philology: MAX ZERWICK S. I., *Analysis Philologica Novi Testamenti Graeci* (Romae 1953) ad loc *eis-enegkeis con(i) unctivus* aor (istus)² 'eis-pherō in-duco; etiam permissivē; sino intrare; fac ne intremus.

inducas which gave rise to the gloss and which can be traced as far back as the time of Tertullian (+ post 222) is obviously the primitive, original Latin rendering. It survives to this day. St Augustine does not find any fault with it either on philological or on theological grounds, as Burkitt suggests: "Nonnulli codices habent, *inducas*, quod tantundem *valere arbitror*: nam ex uno graeco quod dictum est, *eisenegkeis* utrumque (i.e. *inferas* and *inducas*) translatum est" (*de Serm. Dom.* ij, 30). Why then does he use *ne nos inferas*? We would propose as a tentative reason that it was the reading of the liturgy at Hippo. In the African Church the Lord's Prayer was recited aloud during the Eucharistic Sacrifice: *Oratio quotidie dicenda est vobis, cum baptizati fueritis. In Ecclesia enim ad altare Dei quotidie dicitur ista Dominica oratio, et audiunt illam fideles. Non ergo timemus ne minus diligenter eam tenetis: quia et si quis vestrum non poterit tenere perfecte, audiendo quotidie tenebit*⁵. The clergy and the faithful certainly knew it by heart according to the liturgical text recited daily in the Church. Augustine's words leave no doubt about it. Would the African Doctor, on his appointment to the See of Hippo, have dared to break with tradition? It does not seem probable. By the end of the IVth century when Augustine became bishop, the liturgy in Africa as well as elsewhere in the Western Church had long settled down and crystallized into a definite shape⁶. The bishop was not free to alter or modify it. Once a particular reading had struck root in the liturgy and in the memory of the clergy and faithful, it was difficult to replace.

The conservative spirit of the early Church was too strong to suffer without protest any departure from the traditional text. It is enough to recall the well-known incident related by Augustine in one of his letters to St Jerome of that African bishop who by substituting the word *hedera* for the established *cucurbita* in Jonah iv roused such a storm that had he persisted he would have been left without a congregation⁷.

(5) *Serm.* LVIII, 12 (P.L. xxxviii, 399).

(6) For information about the African liturgy Cfr. W. C. BISHOP, *The African rite in The Journal of Theological Studies* iii (1912) pp. 250-277.

(7) *Ep.* 71, 5 (inter *Hier.* 104, 5): *Nam quidam frater noster episcopus, cum lectitari instituisset in ecclesia, cui praest, interpretationem suam, morit quiddam longe aliter abs te positum apud Jonam prophetam, quam erat omnium sensibus memoriaeque inveteratum, et*

If the reading *ne nos inferas* were found exclusively in the Saint's theological and exegetical works in which he was free from the shackles of custom and tradition, Burkitt's opinion would have been acceptable. But it is Augustine's habitual reading in his sermons. In these, more than in any other work, he was obliged to conform exactly to the liturgy and to tradition (Cfr. Serm LVI, 18; LVII, 9, 10; LVIII, 9, 11, 12; LIX, 8; CLII, 2; CCLVI, 1; CCCIV, 2; Guelf. XXXIII, 3, Wilm. V. 1). And the liturgy was not Augustine's own making. He found it already crystallized in its structure and formulae and well established in the memory of both clergy and faithful (*omnium sensibus memoriaeque inveterata, et tot aetatum successionibus decantata*).

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tot aetatum successionibus decantatum. Factus est tantus tumultus in plebe... ut cogeretur episcopus... Judaeorum testimonium flagitare... Quid plura? Coactus est homo velut mendositatem corrigere volens, post magnum periculum, non remanere sine plebe.