

**RECONSTRUCTING THE TEXT OF THE CHURCH:
THE “CANONICAL TEXT” AND THE GOAL OF
NEW TESTAMENT TEXTUAL CRITICISM**

by

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ABSTRACT

Over the last several decades, a number of scholars have raised questions about the feasibility of achieving New Testament textual criticism's traditional goal of establishing the "original text" of the New Testament documents. In light of these questions, several alternative goals have been proposed. Among these is a proposal that was made by Brevard Childs, arguing that text critics should go about reconstructing the "canonical text" of the New Testament rather than the "original text." However, concepts of "canon" have generally been limited to discussions of which books were included or excluded from a list of authoritative writings, not necessarily the specific textual readings within those writings. Therefore, any proposal that seeks to apply notions of "canon" to the goals and methods of textual criticism warrants further investigation. This thesis evaluates Childs' proposal by asking two overarching questions. First, is there historical evidence that supports the existence of a "canonical text" of the New Testament as a lost artifact, and therefore a valid object of historical reconstruction? Second, if such evidence exists, should modern text critics and exegetes prefer this textform to more traditional reconstructions? This study concludes that there is little evidence to support the existence of a lost "canonical text" of the New Testament, and that even if one assumes the existence of such a text, there are good reasons for continuing to prefer more traditional reconstructions.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| ABSTRACT | 2 |
| ABBREVIATIONS | 5 |
| CHAPTER 1: ISSUES WITH “ORIGINAL TEXT” | 8 |
| 1.1. THE TRADITIONAL GOAL AND METHODS OF NEW TESTAMENT TEXTUAL CRITICISM | 10 |
| 1.2. PROBLEMS WITH CONCEPTIONS OF THE “ORIGINAL TEXT” | 12 |
| 1.2.1. <i>Focus is too Narrow</i> | 12 |
| 1.2.2. <i>Which Stage is “Original”?</i> | 14 |
| 1.2.3. <i>Eclectic Text is not the Church’s Text</i> | 18 |
| 1.2.3.1. Majority Text/Byzantine Textform | 18 |
| 1.2.3.2. Follow the Earliest Manuscripts | 20 |
| 1.2.3.3. Adopt a Single Manuscript | 22 |
| 1.2.3.4. Reconstruction of a “Canonical Text” | 25 |
| 1.3. CONCLUSIONS | 32 |
| CHAPTER 2: CANONICITY—AT WHAT LEVEL? BOOKS, READINGS, AND THE CHURCH FATHERS | 34 |
| 2.1. CHURCH FATHERS AND EARLY CHRISTIAN BOOKS | 35 |
| 2.2. TREATMENT OF VARIANTS BY THE CHURCH FATHERS | 40 |
| 2.2.1. <i>Types of Textual Data Referenced by the Fathers</i> | 41 |
| 2.2.1.1. Reading Supported by Greek Manuscripts | 41 |
| 2.2.1.2. Reading Supported by Numerous or the Majority of Manuscripts | 43 |
| 2.2.1.3. Reading Preferred Based on Meaning and/or Context | 44 |
| 2.2.1.4. Reading Supported by Latin Manuscripts | 45 |
| 2.2.1.5. Reading Supported by Earlier Manuscripts | 46 |
| 2.2.1.6. Reading Supported by “Accurate” Manuscripts | 46 |
| 2.2.1.7. Reading Supported by Specific Copies or Authors | 48 |
| 2.2.1.8. Reading Preferred Due to Non-Textual Evidence | 49 |
| 2.2.2. <i>The Fathers’ Response to Variation</i> | 50 |
| 2.2.2.1. Variant Mentioned | 51 |
| 2.2.2.2. Exegete Multiple Variant Readings | 52 |
| 2.2.2.3. Neither Reading Changes the Text’s Meaning | 54 |
| 2.2.2.4. Cause for the Introduction of a Reading Proposed | 55 |
| 2.2.2.5. Heretics/Orthodox at Fault for Variant | 56 |
| 2.2.3. <i>Potential Use of “Canonical” Terminology to Describe Variant Readings</i> | 58 |
| 2.2.3.1. Anastasius Abbot of Sinai, <i>Viae Dux</i> 22.3 | 58 |
| 2.2.3.2. Victor of Antioch, <i>Comm. Mark</i> 16:8-9 | 58 |
| 2.2.3.3. Eusebius, <i>Quaest. Marin.</i> 1.1-2 | 59 |
| 2.2.3.4. Epiphanius, <i>Anc.</i> 31.4-5 | 59 |
| 2.2.3.5. Pseudo-Athanasius, <i>De sancta trinitate</i> 3.20 [Didymus?] | 60 |
| 2.2.3.6. Basil, <i>Eun.</i> 2.19 | 61 |
| 2.2.4. <i>Canonical Terminology Applied to Variant Readings?</i> | 61 |
| 2.3. MULTIPLE COMMUNITIES—MULTIPLE CANONICAL TEXTS | 63 |
| 2.4. CONCLUSIONS | 64 |
| CHAPTER 3: IN SEARCH OF A CANONICAL TEXT: CANONICAL TEXTUAL CRITICISM AND THE MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE | 67 |
| 3.1. AN EXAMPLE OF THE CANONICAL METHOD OF TEXTUAL CRITICISM | 67 |
| 3.2. IS THERE A “CANONICAL TEXT”? MATT 26 AS A CASE STUDY | 76 |
| 3.2.1. <i>Choice of Text and Manuscripts</i> | 77 |
| 3.2.2. <i>Statistical Analysis</i> | 79 |
| 3.2.3. <i>Corrections</i> | 82 |
| 3.2.4. <i>Significant Variants</i> | 99 |
| 3.3. CONCLUSIONS | 120 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| CHAPTER 4: THE CANONICAL TEXT: PREFERABLE? | 126 |
| 4.1. THE NEED FOR A DIFFERENT QUESTION..... | 126 |
| 4.1.1. <i>Text-Critical Methodology</i> | 129 |
| 4.1.2. <i>New Testament Exegesis</i> | 134 |
| 4.1.3. <i>Broader Tasks of Textual Criticism</i> | 143 |
| 4.1.4. <i>Does a “Canonical” Text Best Serve the Church?</i> | 145 |
| 4.2. CONCLUSIONS | 148 |
| CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION | 152 |
| 5.1. A WINDOW AS TEXT | 152 |
| 5.2. A QUESTION OF WHAT SHOULD BE READ..... | 155 |
| 5.3. WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? | 157 |
| APPENDIX A CHURCH FATHERS VARIANT CATEGORIES | 159 |
| APPENDIX B MATT 26 IN PARALLEL LINES: CODICES \mathfrak{x}, A, B, D, W | 163 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 180 |

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| ACT | Ancient Christian Texts |
| <i>AJT</i> | <i>American Journal of Theology</i> |
| <i>ANF</i> | <i>Ante-Nicene Fathers</i> |
| <i>AThR</i> | Anglican Theological Review |
| <i>BBR</i> | <i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i> |
| BDAG | Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. |
| BECNT | Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament |
| BIS | Biblical Interpretation Series |
| <i>BSac</i> | <i>Bibliotheca sacra</i> |
| CJA | Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity |
| CSEL | Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum |
| FC | Fathers of the Church. Washington, D.C., 1947– |
| GCS | Die griechische christliche Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte |
| <i>GTJ</i> | <i>Grace Theological Journal</i> |
| HNT | Handbuch zum Neuen Testament |
| <i>HTR</i> | <i>Harvard Theological Review</i> |
| ICC | International Critical Commentary |
| <i>Int</i> | <i>Interpretation</i> |
| IVP | InterVarsity Press |
| IVPNTC | InterVarsity Press New Testament Commentary Series |
| <i>JBL</i> | <i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i> |
| <i>JETS</i> | <i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i> |
| <i>JPT</i> | <i>Journal of Pentecostal Theology</i> |
| <i>JR</i> | <i>Journal of Religion</i> |
| JSJSup | Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism |
| JSNTSup | Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series |
| JSOT | Journal for the Study of the Old Testament |
| <i>JTS</i> | <i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> |
| <i>JTSA</i> | <i>Journey of Theology for Southern Africa</i> |
| LSJ | Liddell, H. G., R. Scott, H. S. Jones, A Greek-English Lexicon. 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford, 1996. |
| NA, NA ²⁸ | Nestle, Eberhard, and Erwin Nestle. <i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> . Edited by Barbara Aland, Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, and Bruce M. Metzger. 28 th rev. ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012. |
| NAC | New American Commentary |
| NIBC | New International Biblical Commentary |

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| NICNT | New International Commentary on the New Testament |
| NIGTC | New International Greek Testament Commentary |
| <i>NovT</i> | <i>Novum Testamentum</i> |
| NovTSup | Supplements to Novum Testamentum |
| <i>NPNF</i> ¹ | Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 1 |
| <i>NPNF</i> ² | Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 2 |
| NTL | New Testament Library |
| NTTS | New Testament Tools and Studies |
| NTTSD | New Testament Tools, Studies and Documents |
| PG | Patrologia graeca. Edited by J.-P. Migne. 162 vols. Paris, 1857–1886 |
| RP | <i>The New Testament in the Original Greek: Byzantine Textform</i> . Compiled and Arranged by Maurice A. Robinson and William G. Pierpont. Southborough: Chilton, 2005. |
| SBL | Society of Biblical Literature |
| SBLGNT | <i>The Greek New Testament: SBL Edition</i> . Edited by Michael W. Holmes. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010. |
| SBLSP | Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers |
| SBLTCS | Society of Biblical Literature Text-Critical Studies |
| SC | Sources chrétiennes |
| SCS | Septuagint and Cognate Studies |
| SD | Studies and Documents |
| SDSS | Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature |
| <i>SE</i> | <i>Studia evangelica</i> |
| SHS | Scripture and Hermeneutics Series |
| SNTSMS | Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series |
| StPatr | Studia patristica |
| <i>TJ</i> | Trinity Journal |
| TNTC | Tyndale New Testament Commentaries |
| TS | Texts and Studies |
| TTH | Translated Texts for Historians |
| <i>TZ</i> | <i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i> |
| WBC | Word Biblical Commentary |
| UBS, UBS ⁵ | <i>The Greek New Testament</i> . Edited by Barbara Aland, Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, and Bruce M. Metzger. 5 th rev. ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2014. |
| <i>USQR</i> | <i>Union Seminary Quarterly Review</i> |
| WH | Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort, <i>The New Testament in the Original Greek</i> . 2 vols.; Cambridge: Macmillan, 1881-82. |
| WUNT | Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament |

ZNW

Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche

CHAPTER 1:

ISSUES WITH “ORIGINAL TEXT”

One of the most often memorized portions of the New Testament is Matt 6:9-13, commonly referred to simply as the Lord’s Prayer. One need only begin with the words “Our Father, who art in heaven . . .” amongst a group of believers for this prayer to be recalled, and perhaps recited, by others present. However, an impromptu recitation of this prayer from memory may reveal several “hiccups” in how it is worded. Some of these may be a result of varying translation decisions. Should we say “thy,” as reads the KJV and NASB; or “your,” as reads the NRSV and NIV? Should the terms *ὀφειλήματα/ὀφειλέταις* be rendered as “debts/debtors” or “trespasses/ones who trespass;” and should we translate the article in *τοῦ πονηροῦ* (“evil” vs. “the evil one”)? Any unpracticed group recitation may result in a variety of “readings” being posited by the group based on the translation that each individual is most familiar with, resulting in uncertainty at some points.

While these translation differences are important and worthy of study, the more fundamental textual problems are of another kind because they concern variations in the wording of the Greek text underlying any translation. Thus, before one can decide on how to translate a text, a decision must be made as to the words that will be translated. This is precisely the problem with the Lord’s Prayer as represented in the manuscript tradition of the Greek New Testament. This prayer has come down to us in at least three distinct textual forms, each of which differs from the other.¹ The most striking difference is the inclusion or exclusion of the doxology, most likely added at a later time in order to provide a more fitting close for use in

¹ David C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 49-74. Parker identifies a total of eight different textual forms, though five of these concern variants of the doxology, making these five each a type of “sub-form” that falls within the general doxology form.

liturgical settings.² Yet, this doxology is present in many manuscripts, exhibiting variation even within the doxology itself. So, we are faced with the question of what is *the* Lord's Prayer? Which reading should we translate? From which reading should we quote? Which form should constitute the basis of exegesis and teaching? Most fundamentally, what should be the New Testament text critic's role in examining, evaluating and presenting the textual data to both the academic and ecclesial communities for this passage and others like it? To put it another way, what text should the discipline of New Testament textual criticism be producing?

Generally speaking, for New Testament textual criticism as traditionally conceived, the answer to this question has been relatively simple: the original text. Most introductory manuals to New Testament textual criticism will identify this as the goal of the discipline, presenting such a task as virtually self-evident.³ However, not all text critics and exegetes of the New Testament are satisfied with such a definition of the discipline's goal, or even the concept of an "original" text to be restored through criticism. Recent questions concerning the concept of "original" text and the goal of New Testament textual criticism generally fall into two categories: (1) Does the evidence from the manuscript tradition of the New Testament support conceptually the existence

² Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2d ed.; Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1994), 14.

³ Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort, *Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1882; repr., Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988), 1; Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (4th ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), xv; Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism* (trans. E. Rhodes; 2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 280; Kirsopp Lake, *The Text of the New Testament* (6th ed.; London: Rivingtons, 1943), 1-2; J. Harold Greenlee, *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 11; J. Harold Greenlee, *The Text of the New Testament: From Manuscript to Modern Edition* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2008), 2; Eberhard Nestle, *Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the Greek New Testament* (trans. W. Edie, pref. A. Menzies; London: Williams & Norgate, 1901), 156; Léon Vaganay and Christian-Bernard Amphoux, *An Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism* (2d ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 1-2. Benjamin B. Warfield, *An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (5th ed.; London: Hooper and Stoughton, 1896), 1-15, considered reconstruction of the original text of the author to be the task of textual criticism, though "original" did not merely refer to what was inscribed when composing the autograph, but rather the text that the author "intended" to write, which may have differed from what was actually written. Though not a New Testament textual criticism manual, Paul Maas' introduction to textual criticism of classical texts simply defines textual criticism as "produc[ing] a text as close as possible to the original." Paul Maas, *Textual Criticism* (trans. B. Flower; Oxford: Clarendon, 1958), 1.

of a single “original” text; and (2) Should we prefer readings of a proposed “original” text over other ecclesial/canonical/received textual forms? Thus what has been seen in the past as a relatively simple and well-defined task has been thoroughly problematized. This chapter will briefly lay out New Testament textual criticism’s traditional goals and methods, and will also describe the ways in which scholars have questioned the traditional conception of the text critic’s task and have proposed different goals or methods in light of those questions.

1.1. The Traditional Goal and Methods of New Testament Textual Criticism

New Testament text critics have generally approached their task with a singular goal in mind, that of reconstructing or restoring the “original text” of the New Testament writings.⁴ This text is most often associated with the autographic textform of any given New Testament document, thus Westcott and Hort state that textual criticism moves “towards recovering an exact copy of what was actually written on parchment or papyrus by the author of the book or his amanuensis.”⁵ This task of recovery is considered necessary because of two factors: “(a) none of the original documents of the Bible is extant today, and (b) the existing copies differ from one another.”⁶ Furthermore, in any given variation-unit that attests multiple readings, only one reading can claim to be “original.” Westcott and Hort explicitly claim that “where there is variation, there must be error in at least all variants but one.”⁷ Kurt and Barbara Aland make a similar claim, insisting that “only *one* reading can be original, however many variant readings there may be.”⁸ Since a single, original document cannot vary from itself (with the exception of corrections within that document), we must choose from the available readings the one which is

⁴ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, 1.

⁵ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, 3.

⁶ Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 1.

⁷ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, 3.

⁸ Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 280, italics original.

believed to be original, determining that all other forms are late and in some way derivative of that original reading.

Judgments on readings are made by applying certain criteria to the manuscript data in order to elevate one reading above the others as the “original” or most closely conforming to the “original” text. Though text critics differ on what constitutes valid criteria and which of the decided criteria should be afforded the greater weight when making decisions, most would agree that both external and internal evidence should be incorporated. External evidence includes factors such as manuscript date, provenance, geographical dispersion, and text type. Internal evidence includes factors such as what reading best conforms to the author’s style and usage (thus indicating what they were likely to have written), and what reading a scribe would be most likely to introduce (either intentionally or unintentionally).⁹ These various criteria do not always point to a single reading as original, thus removing the possibility of the mechanical application of criteria that yields purely objective results. Instances of divided criteria require the critic to weigh the evidence with extra care since the evidence does not overwhelmingly support one decision. Despite the occasions that textual decisions are especially difficult to make, not readily yielding one reading as “original,” almost all text critics of the New Testament are agreed that proposing a reading that is not found in the manuscript tradition by conjectural emendation is unnecessary due to the quantity of available manuscripts.¹⁰

⁹ An extensive discussion of critical criteria (or the “canons of criticism,” as they are frequently called) is not essential for the present discussion. For detailed treatments of criteria, see Eldon Jay Epp, “Traditional ‘Canons’ of New Testament Textual Criticism: Their Value, Validity, and Viability—Or Lack Thereof,” in *The Textual History of the Greek New Testament: Changing Views in Contemporary Research* (ed. K. Wachtel and M. W. Holmes; SBLTCS 8; Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 79-127; Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 300-305; and Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 280-282. For an introduction to “thoroughgoing eclecticism” and the criteria advocated by that method, with several examples, see J. K. Elliott, “The Case for Thoroughgoing Eclecticism,” in *Rethinking New Testament Textual Criticism* (ed. D. A. Black; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 101-24.

¹⁰ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, 72. In his recently published dissertation, Ryan Wettlaufer defines conjectural emendation as “the act of restoring a given text at points where all extant manuscript evidence appears to be

1.2. Problems with Conceptions of the “Original Text”

As the discipline of New Testament textual criticism continues to develop, the conception of the text’s transmission throughout the centuries has become increasingly complex. The complexity has been the result new manuscript discoveries, more extensive study of extant manuscript evidence, new methodological approaches, and incorporation of findings from other disciplines within biblical studies that have a bearing on the text’s transmission and development. A number of critiques have been posed in relation to New Testament textual criticism’s pursuit of reconstructing an “original text” from known witnesses. What follows is a summary of the most prominent objections.

1.2.1. *Focus is too Narrow*

One critique has been that the traditional text-critical goal is myopic, unnecessarily limiting the ways in which the evidence of the manuscript tradition can be used to inform our understanding of the New Testament text. Westcott and Hort are often quoted as saying that textual criticism consists of “distinguishing and setting aside those readings which have originated at some link in the chain of transmission,”¹¹ and that “the primary work of textual criticism is merely to discriminate the erroneous variants from the true.”¹² If the critic is only concerned with restoring the original wording of the text, then textual variation is merely an obstacle standing in the path of achieving the goal. Once these obstacles are overcome, the obstacle itself holds no value and can be discarded and forgotten.

corrupt.” Ryan Wettlaufer, *No Longer Written: The Use of Conjectural Emendation in the Restoration of the Text of the New Testament, the Epistle of James as a Case Study* (NTTSD 44; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 3.

¹¹ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, 1.

¹² Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, 3.

However, several scholars have identified ways in which textual variants can tell us something about the communities and scribes that produced a manuscript. Donald W. Riddle emphasized the historical nature of textual criticism:

The legitimate task of textual criticism is not limited to the recovery of approximately the original form of the documents, to the establishment of the “best” text, nor to the “elimination of spurious readings.” It must be recognized that every significant variant records a religious experience which brought it into being. This means that there are no “spurious readings”: the various forms of the text are sources for the study of the history of Christianity.¹³

Similarly, Kenneth W. Clark has argued for the dual nature of text critical concerns, stating that “it is important to know what the *original* text and the *original* meaning were, but it is also important to recognize the *subsequent* revision of text and thought in the course of the church's history.”¹⁴

Though Westcott and Hort downplayed the existence of theologically motivated alterations to the text, investigations specifically geared toward exposing such variation have turned up multiple examples.¹⁵ Bart Ehrman's study entitled *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture* has provided many examples of ways in which scribes altered their copies in order to prevent theological opponents from using particular “proof texts” to support their positions. Unlike the common assertion that heretics altered texts in support of their beliefs, Ehrman argues that it was most frequently “proto-orthodox” scribes that introduced variants in order to make

¹³ Donald W. Riddle, “Textual Criticism as a Historical Discipline,” *ATHR* 18 (1936): 221.

¹⁴ Kenneth W. Clark, “The Theological Relevance of Textual Variation in Current Criticism of the Greek New Testament,” *JBL* 85 (1966): 2, italics original.

¹⁵ Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, 282. “[E]ven among the numerous unquestionably spurious readings of the New Testament there are no signs of deliberate falsification of the text for dogmatic purposes.” To be fair, Westcott and Hort did qualify this by allowing for paraphrastic tendencies that clarified the meaning of a text or disallowed its misconstrual, phenomena which Bart Ehrman has labeled theologically motivated alterations used to support proto-orthodox positions during early Christian controversies. Bart D. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). Though such instances may not represent “falsification,” they may still intentionally alter the meaning of the text, even if only by means of clarification.

texts say what they knew them to mean.¹⁶ Textual variation therefore becomes a way to look back into the church's history, allowing for variation to bear witness to the theological concerns that the church was wrestling with.

The incorporation of theological considerations into text-critical inquiry is what provided the impetus for Eldon Epp's study of Codex Bezae's text of the Acts of the Apostles. At the outset, Epp establishes that "the investigation will be, then, within the broad context of a theological approach to textual criticism, rather than within the older framework of assessing variants with respect to their claims for greater or less originality and/or accuracy."¹⁷ Epp does not deny the legitimacy of searching for an original text, just that this cannot be the sole text-critical task.¹⁸ In fact, Epp's study (and Ehrman's) would not be possible without first having identified an original form (however approximate its wording might be) against which to compare peculiarities of readings and manuscripts. Therefore, these studies do not deny the validity of searching for an original text, they simply wish to "remove the blinders" that the overemphasis of this task can create, thus not allowing the textual data to be applied to a more diverse set of questions.¹⁹

1.2.2. Which Stage is "Original"?

Given the various stages of development that are now recognized for both traditions and texts, what stage one chooses as "original" now requires greater thought and specificity. Such a choice will necessarily determine which of the stages the critic seeks to reconstruct. The

¹⁶ Ehrman, *Orthodox Corruption*, 275-6.

¹⁷ Eldon Jay Epp, *The Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis in Acts* (SNTSMS 3; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 21.

¹⁸ Epp most enthusiastically objects to Westcott and Hort's claim that if the autographs of the New Testament documents existed, there would be no need for textual criticism, citing tracing the development of texts by means of variation as a legitimate endeavor even if the autographs had survived. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, 13.

¹⁹ Ehrman, *Orthodox Corruption*, 277.

categories of “literary” and “textual” development are not considered as distinct as once thought, with the boundaries of both blurring into each other.

Epp has articulated four potential “levels” of meaning for the term “original text.” The first is that of a predecessor textform, which is defined as “a form of text (or more than one) discoverable behind a New Testament writing that played a role in the composition of that writing.”²⁰ This category might describe a source for a gospel, and even extend to Mark’s gospel in relation to Matthew and Luke. The second is an autographic textform, which is “the textual form as it left the desk of Paul or a secretary, or of other writers of portions of what became our New Testament.”²¹ The third is a canonical textform, which is “the textual form of a book (or a collection of books) at the time it acquired consensual authority or when its canonicity was (perhaps more formally) sought or established.”²² The fourth and final category is that of an interpretive textform, which is “any and each interpretive iteration or reformulation of a writing—as it was used in the life, worship, and teaching of the church—or of individual variants so created and used.”²³ This interpretive textform can be readily found in any of the extant New Testament manuscripts since each is recognized as having been used by the church at some point in its history.

Epp’s categories should not be imagined to function in linear fashion, progressing from one to the next stage until reaching some final form in the last stage. He himself recognizes that not all of these categories will apply to every text, and that it may be difficult to situate a given text within any one of these textforms. However, despite the difficulties in applying Epp’s

²⁰ Eldon Jay Epp, “The Multivalence of the Term ‘Original Text’ in New Testament Textual Criticism,” *HTR* 92 (1999): 276.

²¹ Epp, “Multivalence,” 276.

²² Epp, “Multivalence,” 276. As will be shown, however, conceiving of a singular textual form at the time a book’s canonicity was established is highly problematic, thus calling into question the legitimacy of this “level” of meaning to the term “original text.”

²³ Epp, “Multivalence,” 277.

classification system, his categories nonetheless expose ways in which the text may have changed over time in the life of the church.

Helmut Koester has argued that the overall textual forms of the New Testament documents as are preserved in all of our extant manuscripts may not approximate the text as it left the hands of its author as closely as text critics have generally believed. Against the belief that New Testament textual critics are privileged to have such numerous and early copies of the New Testament books, thus ensuring that the “original text” can be found among at least one of the surviving manuscripts, Koester argues that textual alteration at the earliest stage has modified the New Testament works such that all known witnesses may only lead back to a revised form of the New Testament.²⁴ Focusing specifically on agreements between Matthew and Luke against Mark, as well as early patristic testimony, Koester argues that the form of Mark as we have it now is actually a revised version Mark.²⁵ He argues that this early form of Mark’s gospel is what served as the source for Matthew and Luke, thus allowing for Matthew and Luke to agree in

²⁴ Helmut Koester, “The Text of the Synoptic Gospels in the Second Century,” in *Gospel Traditions in the Second Century* (ed. William L. Petersen; CJA 3; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 19. “The assumption that the reconstruction of the best archetype for the manuscript tradition is more or less identical with the assumed autograph is precarious. The oldest known manuscript archetypes are separated from the autographs by more than a century. Textual critics of classical texts know that the first century of their transmission is the period in which the most serious corruptions occur. Textual critics of the New Testament writings have been surprisingly naïve in this respect.”

²⁵ Koester identifies this previous form with the *Secret Gospel of Mark*, which is purportedly an early Christian gospel text related to the New Testament gospels of Mark and John, and is only evidenced by an eighteenth-century copy of a letter attributed to Clement of Alexandria, discovered by Morton Smith in 1958 at the Mar Saba monastery. However, the authenticity of such documents (both the letter of Clement and the gospel material quoted therein), as well as Smith’s discovery of it, is widely disputed. For Smith’s account of the discovery, see Morton Smith, *The Secret Gospel: The Discovery and Interpretation of the Secret Gospel According to Mark* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973). For arguments against authenticity, see Stephen C. Carlson, *The Gospel Hoax: Morton Smith’s Invention of Secret Mark* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005); and Francis Watson, “Beyond Suspicion: On the Authorship of the Mar Saba Letter and the Secret Gospel of Mark,” *JTS* 61 (2010): 128-70. For Smith’s evaluation of academia’s response to his account and theories, see Morton Smith, “Clement of Alexandria and Secret Mark: The Score at the End of the First Decade,” *HTR* 75 (1982): 449-61. Koester assumes that the *Secret Gospel of Mark* is authentic (though he concedes that Clement’s letter may be an ancient forgery) and associates it with a redacted form of Mark that predates the “canonical” (his term) form as we know it. Even so, his analysis draws primarily upon biblical and patristic evidence to argue for the existence of a predecessor form of Mark that is no longer directly evidenced by extant manuscripts of Mark. Therefore, the central thrust of his arguments does not ultimately stand or fall with conclusions about the authenticity of the *Secret Gospel of Mark*.

readings against the later, revised edition of Mark that is represented in our extant manuscripts. Such findings cause Koester to conclude that “New Testament textual critics have been deluded by the hypothesis that the archetypes of the textual tradition which were fixed ca. 200 CE . . . are (almost) identical with the autographs.”²⁶

If Koester is right, what do we mean when speak of the “original text” of Mark’s gospel? Do we mean the textual form that has ultimately served as the (revised) archetype for the manuscript tradition as it has come down to us; or do we mean that textual form that preceded this revised form? Furthermore, on what grounds can we even claim that this earlier form of Mark itself approximates the “original” form as it came from the author? If it can be demonstrated that the Gospels, or any other portion of the New Testament, has undergone revision since its initial composition, how should this affect the task of textual criticism? Should agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark be seen as textual evidence for Mark’s text in the same way that variation among manuscripts of Mark’s text are considered?

Beyond difficulties presented by complex relationships between written texts and manuscripts, scholars have also called attention to the ongoing influence of an extensive oral tradition, especially with respect to the Gospels. If the biblical authors modified these traditions, does this mean that the oral tradition was the “original” and the written account is a secondary witness, introducing “variants” into the account? Perhaps more difficult is the issue of oral traditions being imposed upon written texts, serving as a type of “second exemplar” that alters the written text.²⁷ Early Christians would have valued both the written and oral means of

²⁶ Koester, “Synoptic Gospels,” 37.

²⁷ Kim Haines-Eitzen, *Guardians of Letters: Literacy, Power, and the Transmitters of Early Christian Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 107 (following D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* [Panizzi Lectures 1985; London: British Library, 1986; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999], 13), contends that “[w]hat early Christian manuscripts preserve, in effect, is a palimpsestic testimony to the overlay of oral/verbal ‘texts’ upon written ‘texts.’”

communicating and preserving traditions, and would quite naturally see the two as having a reciprocal relationship, allowing for mutual influence.²⁸ Therefore, if both were considered legitimate forms of tradition, is it at all desirable to “purify” the written tradition of the oral tradition’s influence? We can see that even what is meant by “original” is not as straightforward as might be thought at first glance.

1.2.3. Eclectic Text is not the Church’s Text

Another criticism of reconstructing an alleged “original text” is that the eclectic method used to construct such a text yields a text that when taken as a whole cannot be found among any extant manuscript. Therefore it is said that this text is a novel text which has never before existed and has never been incorporated into the life of the church; it is merely the creation of scholarship. Since the Bible is the church’s book, to “reconstruct” a text that has never been used by the church is seen as an inappropriate and artificial construct. Several critics of the eclectic method adopt this line of reasoning, though solutions to this single problem are varied. Therefore the following discussion will be divided according to the proposed solutions to this problem.

1.2.3.1. Majority Text/Byzantine Textform

Advocates of the “Majority Text” or “Byzantine Priority” perspective accept the validity of restoring an “original text” of the New Testament, though their method of such a restoration is significantly different than modern eclecticism. They object to the eclectic reconstruction of the Greek text of the New Testament for several reasons, though a primary tenet of their argument is based on the conviction that modern eclectic texts do not reflect a text that is represented in any known manuscript. Maurice A. Robinson provides the clearest articulation of this criticism:

²⁸ Parker, *The Living Text*, 19, 101-102, 210-11; David C. Parker, “Is ‘Living Text’ Compatible with ‘Initial Text’? Editing the Gospel of John,” in *The Textual History of the Greek New Testament: Changing Views in Contemporary Research* (ed. K. Wachtel and M. W. Holmes; SBLTCS 8; Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 20-21.

Modern methods of textual restoration appear to promise a good degree of success when applying reasoned or rigorous eclecticism to the text of the New Testament. The resultant text created by modern eclectic methods, however, has an Achilles' heel that calls its entire methodology into question. Although modern eclectic methods apparently function well when evaluating readings within an isolated variant unit of text, the overall sequential linkage of readings from those separate variant units results in a running text that has absolutely *no* support from any known manuscript, version, or patristic writer within the entire period of historical textual transmission prior to the invention of printing.²⁹

Robinson goes on to say that such an approach turns the “original text” into a “phantom mirage” that has never existed.³⁰

In opposition to such eclectic methods and the inconsistent sequential linkage of variation-units that these methods produce, Robinson proposes that “the Byzantine Textform at any point or over lengthy portions of text can demonstrate an overarching transmissional existence, not based upon merely a single manuscript or a small handful of manuscripts, but upon the broadest possible base of support.”³¹ Therefore, Robinson argues that the Byzantine/Majority Text is a textform that has consistent support for its readings over long stretches of text.

However, choosing the reading preserved in the majority of extant manuscripts does not, in reality, resolve the problem of eclecticism. Though the Byzantine textform shows a great deal of textual stability, it is by no means a wholly uniform text.³² There remains variation amongst Byzantine witnesses, therefore to say that one has adopted the Byzantine textform does not remove the need for applying critical principles to the text in order to determine which reading to

²⁹ Maurice A. Robinson, “The Case for Byzantine Priority,” in *Rethinking New Testament Textual Criticism* (ed. D. A. Black; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 125, italics original.

³⁰ Robinson, “Case for Byzantine Priority,” 126.

³¹ Robinson, “Case for Byzantine Priority,” 129.

³² A noteworthy example is 2 Cor 1:6-7a, for which Kurt Aland identified 52 variant readings presented by the Majority Text alone. Kurt Aland, “The Text of the Church?” *TJ* 8 (1987): 136-7.

adopt.³³ Once readings have been drawn from multiple manuscripts, we once again are presented with an eclectic text. Which actual manuscript can this text appeal to in all cases? Thus we still have a reconstructed text that on the whole conforms to no known manuscript, and can therefore make little claim to being a text that has been in use by the historical church any more than any other New Testament text.

1.2.3.2. *Follow the Earliest Manuscripts*

Philip Comfort has defended the pursuit of an original text of the New Testament, though he criticizes modern eclectic methodology and the text that such a method produces. Like advocates of Majority Text theory, Comfort criticizes modern critical editions because “no one in ancient times read the Greek text that is presented in NA²⁶/UBS³ in its totality—or in any other critical edition of the Greek New Testament, for that matter—because modern critical editions are compilations drawn from multiple manuscripts on a variation-unit by variation-unit basis.”³⁴ However, unlike Majority Text theorists, Comfort advocates for the age, rather than number, of manuscripts being the most important aspect when choosing among variants. Therefore Comfort favors the employment of one aspect of external evidence to the near exclusion of other considerations.

Comfort further criticizes modern eclectic text critics for their reliance on the principle that the reading that best explains the existence of the other variant readings is most likely to be original. This principle is said to be highly subjective because different scholars may posit different causes of variation, therefore elevating different readings to the status of “original.” Comfort also sees this principle as problematic because it allows for the wording of the original

³³ Proponents of the Byzantine Priority perspective do not deny the need for criticism and choice of readings where manuscripts diverge, even within the Byzantine text type; yet this concession does not lead to the realization that the resultant text from their method remains an eclectic text that, as a whole, conforms to no one manuscript.

³⁴ Philip Comfort, *The Quest for the Original Text of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 130.

text to be found within any manuscript of any date. Instead, Comfort proposes the more “objective” criteria of following the reading found in the earliest manuscript.³⁵

A few problems with Comfort’s proposals must be identified. First, there is no guarantee that the earlier the date of a manuscript, the more reliable is its text. Theoretically, the oldest manuscripts are the products of fewer stages of copying, thus limiting the opportunities for corruption when compared with more recently copied manuscripts. However, there is no way to be sure of how many “manuscript generations” have led to the copying of any one manuscript. A fourth century manuscript may be the hundredth copy of a text, whereas a tenth century manuscript may be the twentieth copy, or may itself have been copied from a fourth century exemplar.³⁶ Furthermore, greater antiquity does not necessarily tell us anything about a scribe’s copying technique. An early scribe may have been quite careless when making their copy, or a later scribe may have been very careful.³⁷ Therefore, manuscript date on its own tells us very little about the quality of its text.

Second, on a more fundamental level, objective criteria do not guarantee better interpretation of the data than do subjective criteria. Yes, scholars often disagree as to why variants came into being and which one stands at the beginning of the process. However, this does not mean that it is best to narrow the considerations for such a choice to manuscript date.

³⁵ Comfort, *Original Text*, 38-39.

³⁶ The tenth-century codex 1739 is known to be a copy of a much earlier, fourth- or fifth-century, exemplar. Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 91. K. W. Kim, “Codices 1582, 1739, and Origen,” *JBL* 69 (1950): 168. While this situation may not be typical, it does show that manuscript age cannot be consulted aside from other considerations when making textual decisions.

³⁷ P⁶⁶, while an early witness to John’s gospel (200 CE), contains numerous corrections and unique readings that betray the rather clumsy nature of the scribe who produced it. “The nearly 200 nonsense readings and the 400 itacistic spellings in P⁶⁶ are evidence of something less than disciplined attention to the basic task.” Ernest C. Colwell, “Method in Evaluating Scribal Habits: A Study of P⁴⁵, P⁶⁶, P⁷⁵,” in *Studies in Methodology in Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (NTTS 9; Leiden: Brill, 1969), 114. See also Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 56-57. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has likewise demonstrated that manuscript date cannot guarantee textual purity or reliable scribal technique. The Masoretic textual tradition is noteworthy because of its careful preservation of texts, while many of the earlier Qumran scrolls evidence a relatively “free” approach that was not so concerned with producing an exact copy of an exemplar. See Emmanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (3d ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 184-5.

This would certainly make textual decisions easier, as all that is needed is to see which manuscript is the earliest and follows its reading, barring any incontrovertible internal considerations. Yet, this is precisely the method that Comfort proposes and practices when he recommends changes to current critical editions.³⁸

Third, Comfort’s method does not resolve the problem of an edition creating a text that is not known from antiquity. When Comfort lays out how he would create an edition by drawing from the earliest manuscripts for any given portion of New Testament text, he creates a text that resembles a quilt made up of different colored patches. Yes, each segment may represent the earliest known reading, but the overall form of the text does not command any greater level of “documentary presentation” on the whole than do the current NA and UBS texts. So, if we follow Comfort’s method, we are still left with a text that conforms to no known manuscript “in its totality.”

1.2.3.3. *Adopt a Single Manuscript*

Stanley Porter has recently defended the traditional goal of reconstructing an “original text” of the New Testament, though he does not view the eclectic approach as the best means for achieving this goal. His questioning of the eclectic method derives from three concerns: (1) the text of modern critical editions has changed very little despite recent discoveries of early papyrus manuscripts; (2) modern critical editions are largely based on codices Vaticanus (B) and Sinaiticus (Ⲁ); and (3) modern critical editions are eclectic texts that do not represent the text of any extant manuscript.³⁹

Rather than eclectic reconstruction on a variant-by-variant basis, Porter’s proposed method is to seek the “original text” in the texts of individual manuscripts. He does not

³⁸ Comfort, *Original Text*, 130-33.

³⁹ Stanley E. Porter, *How We Got the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 73-74.

necessarily argue for adoption of one codex (though he does call attention to \aleph being the oldest complete New Testament codex), but rather his method would involve selection from the two major codices, and some early papyri, on a book-by-book basis.⁴⁰ Porter supports this reasoning with basically two points. The first is that Westcott and Hort relied primarily on B and \aleph , and our current NA/UBS texts is 99.5% the same as Westcott and Hort's text. Therefore, since only 0.5% of the text is different, "it seems as if we are already in essence using the text of the two major codices [sic]."⁴¹ The second point is that these codices were texts that we know were actually used by the early church.⁴²

A number of problems arise from Porter's approach, and thus warrant comment. First, Porter is not really advocating a non-eclectic approach. The edition that his method would produce could be classified as a book-by-book diplomatic edition; though is this not just a modified eclectic method? It is certainly not eclectic in the sense of choosing readings from individual variation-units after comparison of all known manuscripts to yield a reconstructed text. However, it is eclectic in that the resultant text would follow one manuscript for one book, another manuscript for the next book, and a different manuscript for the next. Porter therefore, in reality, is expanding the limits of a "variation-unit" to encompass entire books, not allowing for scholarly judgment to narrow the bounds of variation. One must ask what historical manuscript Porter's text would follow in its entirety? Could Porter's text claim to have been used by any historical Christian community? He criticizes the critical texts of Westcott and Hort and Nestle-Aland as being "only as old as nineteenth-century scholarship," but would his edition not be only

⁴⁰ Porter, *How We Got the New Testament*, 75. "For individual books within the New Testament, one could use the individual books in Codex Sinaiticus (01 \aleph), and those in Codex Vaticanus (03 B) for everything up to Hebrews. A few papyri manuscripts might possibly qualify."

⁴¹ Porter, *How We Got the New Testament*, 75.

⁴² Porter, *How We Got the New Testament*, 75. Porter also tacks on the claim that "in reality they [B and \aleph] get closer to the original autographs in terms of quantifiable evidence than a text edited in the nineteenth, twentieth, and now twenty-first centuries." What constitutes "quantifiable evidence" is not defined, and without possession of the actual autographs for comparison, this can only be an unverifiable conjecture.

as old as twenty-first century scholarship when viewed as a whole?⁴³ To be truly consistent, Porter would need to advocate for a diplomatic edition of Codex Sinaiticus, since it is the earliest complete New Testament. This would be a good representative of the Alexandrian text-type (which Porter prefers) and would make legitimate claim to being a text actually used by an historical Christian community. However, even this choice is not without difficulties. What should be done with the *Epistle of Barnabas* and the *Shepherd of Hermas*, included in Sinaiticus but now considered outside the canon?

Second, Porter has not provided any means for making critical decisions as to which manuscript should be followed for which biblical book. He is obviously favoring early texts, though in places where decisions among these early manuscripts are necessary, no method is given. Furthermore, Porter does not address what is to be done in cases where the manuscript chosen for a particular book contains either scribal errors or known textual corruptions. Though the Alexandrian witnesses cited are often determined to contain the most original readings when compared to other manuscripts, they are by no means perfect in their presentation of the “original text.” So, what should be done in those cases? What about corrections within the manuscript itself? What of instances of parablepsis or dittography? Should these be corrected, or should they be adopted as well and printed in the resultant critical text? If they are corrected, by what criteria, and should other manuscripts be examined to aid the correction process? If other manuscripts should be used in these cases, are we not back where we started with an eclectic reconstruction based on individual variation-units?

Third, Porter’s conclusion that since the most popular critical texts today are 99.5% the same as Westcott and Hort, and that since Westcott and Hort primarily printed the texts of B and \aleph , we should follow these codices in their entirety, minimizes the value of textual criticism to a

⁴³ Porter, *How We Got the New Testament*, 74.

point that is untenable. It is widely known that the vast majority of the New Testament text is in no need of textual criticism, though it is precisely the minority portion that exhibits variation that necessitates such judgments. Porter is, in essence, saying that we are “close enough” if we follow these codices. One wonders at what point the scales would be tipped such that more thorough textual criticism would be necessary. Would the text need to have a 99-1 split, 95-5, 90-10? How much variation is enough for us to justifiably depart from these, admittedly good, though imperfect, codices? We would do well to recall the words of Kenneth W. Clark here:

Of course it is true that the great bulk of text shows little or no record of variation. The latest Nestle is predominantly the text of the *Textus Receptus*. But it is the minimal variation for which we search and which we seek to refine, a principle that applies to all other scientific research. The research on a single chemical need not upset the basic table of formulae or the chemist’s ‘creed’ but it is essential to learn more of any single chemical. *So in the NT text it is the doubtful portion that stands in need of refinement. Its importance far exceeds its fractional size.*⁴⁴

1.2.3.4. Reconstruction of a “Canonical Text”

In order to account for the existence of the canon and best make use of the canonical approach in New Testament textual criticism, Brevard Childs proposed a different methodology for textual analysis of the New Testament manuscript tradition.⁴⁵ This proposal envisions a fundamentally different goal than has been traditionally sought: “Theoretically, the goal of text criticism, which is commensurate with its canonical role, is to recover the New Testament text which best reflects the true apostolic witness found in the church’s scripture.”⁴⁶ This “true apostolic witness” is not equated with the autographic text or even a textual form that most closely approximates such a text. Instead, the goal is to present the “best received text” after

⁴⁴ Clark, “Theological Relevance,” 4, emphasis mine.

⁴⁵ The proposals made by Childs (as well as those by Merrill Parvis; see below) have been addressed by Kent D. Clarke, “Original Text or Canonical Text? Questioning the Shape of the New Testament Text We Translate,” in *Translating the Bible: Problems and Prospects* (ed. S. E. Porter and R. S. Hess; *JSNTSup* 173; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 281-322.

⁴⁶ Brevard S. Childs, “The Hermeneutical Problem of New Testament Textual Criticism,” in *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 527.

examination of the manuscript tradition.⁴⁷ Childs recognizes the challenge that such an endeavor poses, openly asking “Is there any means of locating a text which is by definition different from the original author’s autograph and at the same time is not to be identified with an uncritical text represented by the last stages of a stabilized *koine* tradition?”⁴⁸

Childs’ method for retrieving such a text from the extant witnesses is essentially a two-stage process.⁴⁹ The first stage is the selection of a textual starting point and an understanding of this point’s textual character. Childs proposes the selection of the Textus Receptus (TR) for two reasons: (1) the TR is a textform that has been in actual use by the historical Christian church; and (2) the textual character of the TR is one of inclusivity. The inclusive nature of the TR is important because it allows the TR “to describe a full range of textual possibilities which actually functioned in the church.”⁵⁰ Since the TR is known to have harmonizing and conflating tendencies, preferring to combine earlier variant readings rather than lose any of the divergent forms, this textform provides the outermost parameters within which the text critic may operate. If one were to try and imagine Child’s method spatially, you could envision a circle, with the outer border of the circle representing the Textus Receptus, the inner-most point

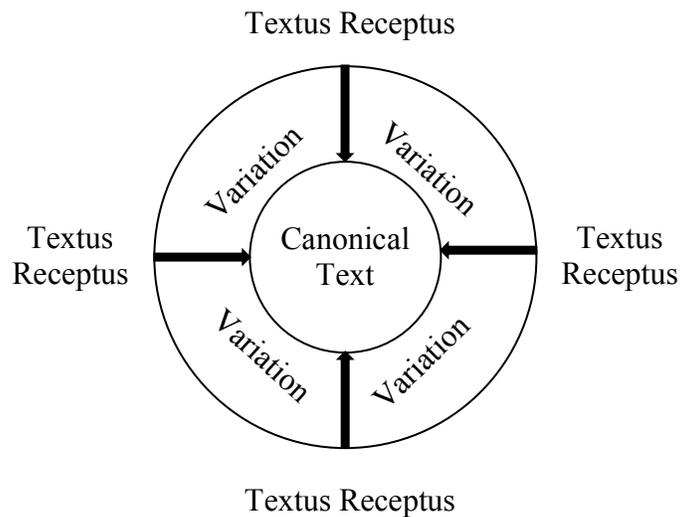
⁴⁷ Childs, “Hermeneutical Problem,” 528.

⁴⁸ Childs, “Hermeneutical Problem,” 527, italics original. Interestingly, a recent poll conducted on the Evangelical Textual Criticism blog provided “canonical text” as an answer option for the question, “What is the goal of textual criticism?” The “canonical text” was selected 11 times (6% of the overall responses), beating out “initial text” (10 responses) and “authorial text” (8 responses), though losing out to “original text” (59 responses), “earliest attainable text” (45 responses), and “none of the above” (29 responses). Notably, some commenters were unsure of what was implied by the notion of a “canonical text.” Peter J. Gurry, “Poll: What’s the Goal of Textual Criticism?” *Evangelical Textual Criticism*, May 22, 2015, <http://evangelicaltextualcriticism.blogspot.ca/2015/05/poll-whats-goal-of-textual-criticism.html>.

⁴⁹ In several respects, this method as applied to text-critical problems is modeled after Childs’ earlier proposals for Christian engagement with the Scriptures when faced with making ethical decisions. See Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), 132-4.

⁵⁰ Childs, “Hermeneutical Problem,” 528.

representing the canonical text, and the space in between these two representing extant textual variation in the manuscript tradition, as can be seen in the diagram below:



During the second stage “the text critic enters into a process of searching for the best received, that is, canonical text.”⁵¹ This text is then said to be that which “best reflects the church’s judgment as to its truth.”⁵² Somewhat surprisingly, Childs proposes no new criteria by which such judgments are made, but affirms that:

[T]he criteria by which these judgments are made are precisely those which critical scholarship has developed over the last two hundred years. One evaluates a variety of factors which includes the age of a text, the quality of its text type, the geographical breadth of its witness, the inner relationship of variants, and the inner consistency of style and context.⁵³

Thus Childs accepts the validity of traditional critical questions that account for both external and internal criteria. However, exactly how these criteria are employed to yield the “best received text” remains unclear.

⁵¹ Childs, “Hermeneutical Problem,” 528.

⁵² Childs, “Hermeneutical Problem,” 528.

⁵³ Childs, “Hermeneutical Problem,” 528.

Childs' proposed method raises several questions. At the most basic level there is the problem of terminology. Childs utilizes terms that require greater clarification if they are going to be used to describe the complex situation of the New Testament's textual history. For example, what do the terms "best received text" or "true apostolic witness" mean for Childs? His clarification of the phrase "best received" as meaning "canonical" does not really provide any greater specificity to the term; it ultimately provides two terms that are to be equated, though no succinct definition is given for either one. Furthermore, when Childs identifies the TR as "the textual tradition by which to test more or less pure textual readings,"⁵⁴ what does he mean by "pure"? Traditionally, textual "purity" has indicated a lack of alteration from the "original" or "autographic" text. However, if reconstruction of this textual form is admittedly not the goal of Childs' method, then "purity" must be understood to have a different nuance than is usually understood within the text-critical discipline. Childs also identifies the TR as being "an inclusive, if often distorted" textual tradition against which one can "test more and less pure textual readings." What makes this tradition "distorted"? Is it due to theological embellishment, or is it "distorted" because it represents a late and somewhat altered text? Distortion has generally been seen as a product of textual alteration, either intentional or unintentional. However, if we are looking to discern the "best received text" that is not equated with an authorial text, distortion must necessarily mean something different than textual modification. This problem of terminology is closely related to Childs' use of "pure" as a way to describe readings, since "pure" and "distorted" are posed as antithetical, though neither are used in reference to an authorial textform as has been traditionally envisioned.

The criteria that Childs lists by which this textual purity is to be measured were designed to assess relative antiquity of variant readings and witnesses in order to help establish the earliest

⁵⁴ Childs, "Hermeneutical Problem," 528.

attainable textform. If this should not be the goal of the text-critical enterprise, then these criteria would either need to be applied in a different fashion, or they would need to be replaced by other criteria that catered to a different goal. If recovery of the “original” or earliest attainable textform that is associated with the author is not a desirable task for text critics, then one wonders why the age of a text, the quality of its text type, and the internal consistency of its style should have any bearing on what readings are followed. The fundamentally different textual goal proposed by Childs cannot be achieved by using the same methods that were designed to expose original readings. Application of the traditional “canons of criticism” will presumably yield the same results as they always have, unless their application or the weight given to certain criteria is changed.

It should also be noted that Childs provided no examples of how the application of his method either changes the approach of textual criticism or yields different results to the textual evaluation. One is forced to ask how the resultant critical text would look compared to modern critical editions. Would Childs’ text be shorter or longer? Would it be grammatically and theologically smoother or more rough and terse? Would it introduce new, or exclude accepted, doctrinal concepts? Would Childs’ text be more harmonistic than current critical texts?

Merrill Parvis raised similar concerns to those of Childs, though with different emphases. For Parvis, the need to restore the original text of the New Testament has been undermined by recent changes in how the text’s inspiration and authority are viewed. As long as the text was considered verbally inspired by God, the restoration of the *ipsissima verba* of the New Testament books was of primary importance. However, as scholars and laymen alike have questioned, or

totally abandoned, such a stance on inspiration, the need for a singular, pristine original text can no longer be motivated by such a belief.⁵⁵

Furthermore, Parvis pointed out that the textual tradition, and the earliest form of the text, is really only one form of the larger traditional framework of the Christian church. When referring to the high status and ongoing influence of the oral traditions that gave way to the written gospels, Parvis questions:

Why should the fact that one form was reduced to writing have given it authority over other existent forms when all were the product of the understanding and interpretation of the primitive church...And why should we think that significant interpretation stopped when the autographs more or less stereotyped one form of the tradition?⁵⁶

Thus it is argued that the high esteem afforded the earliest textual form of the New Testament has crowded out authentic Christian tradition that has been utilized by the historic church.

Much like Childs, Parvis closely connected the problems of textual variation and canon. Since the concept of “canon” is fundamentally concerned with matters of authority, it is not surprising that Parvis frequently approaches the problem of textual criticism’s goal with the question of what is authoritative in mind. For Parvis, the New Testament text critic should not pretend to be approaching his or her task believing that the best method is to treat the New Testament like any classical text that evidences textual variation. To do such is to deny the function of the canon and the status of the New Testament canon in the life of the historic Christian church throughout the ages. Therefore, when trying to answer the questions “What is authoritative?” and “What is Scripture?”, textual originality or antiquity is not the determinative consideration. Thus Parvis is able to say that:

We must always be ready to accept a particular reading as a part of the New Testament not because it is an “original” reading, but because it comes to us in the tradition of the Church Catholic. Our goal must be to give to our contemporaries not only an “original”

⁵⁵ Merrill M. Parvis, “The Nature and Task of New Testament Textual Criticism: An Appraisal,” *JR* 32 (1952): 169.

⁵⁶ Parvis, “Nature and Task,” 172.

text but also many readings which have been examined and criticized in the light of that tradition. The readings and the texts which we single out need not be the oldest possible texts and readings. If they proclaim the faith of the Church Catholic, they are Scripture.⁵⁷

It is clear that Parvis is approaching textual variation with a concern for the text's *meaning* rather than its exact *wording*.⁵⁸ However, Parvis neglects to address what should guide decisions among variants that cannot be arbitrated by a test of theological orthodoxy. In fact, most text critics will say that the majority of variant readings do not substantially affect meaning or determine matters of doctrine. Therefore, it seems that most textual decisions involve a choice between multiple readings that all "proclaim the faith of the Church Catholic."

David Trobisch has also advocated for an altered goal for textual criticism of the New Testament in light of concerns related to canon. Trobisch argues that when the New Testament manuscript tradition is examined, one concludes that "the history of the New Testament is the history of an edition."⁵⁹ His overall thesis is that the New Testament canon should not be understood as the product of centuries of slow and uncontrolled development, but as an intentional editorial effort by the first "publishers" of the New Testament.⁶⁰ This effort included "standardization" of *nomina sacra*, collection and ordering of books, etc. These revisions are said to have taken place during the "final redaction" which introduced "editorial elements that serve to combine individual writings into a larger literary unit and are not original components of the collected traditional material."⁶¹ This understanding of the New Testament text and canon leads Trobisch to propose that

⁵⁷ Merrill M. Parvis, "The Goals of New Testament Textual Studies," *SE VI* (1973): 407.

⁵⁸ This is stated most explicitly by Parvis as a distinguishing factor between text critics of the New Testament and those of classical texts: "Our goals, I venture to suggest, are not to be understood solely on the analogy of classical textual criticism. The coin of the classical textual critic is words; the coin of the New Testament textual critic is ideas." Parvis, "Goals of New Testament Textual Studies," 406.

⁵⁹ David Trobisch, *The First Edition of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 8.

⁶⁰ Trobisch, *First Edition*, 6.

⁶¹ Trobisch, *First Edition*, 9.

Modern textual criticism should strive to produce an edition of the Greek text that closely represents the *editio princeps* of the Canonical Edition. The original intent should be respected not only as far as peculiarities of the text are concerned but also, more important [sic], with regard to the redactional frame of this carefully designed work.⁶²

Therefore, elements of the text that Trobisch proposes are the works of editors rather than authors, and remain the object of text-critical reconstruction. Since this *editio princeps* necessarily represents a form of text that came later than, and consciously emended, the original documents, the pursuit of an “original text” is replaced with the pursuit of a textform from a specific time and place in the history of the tradition.

1.3. Conclusions

Given the problems associated with the traditional goals and methods of New Testament textual criticism, and the proposals that have sought to address such problems, we must now ask ourselves what text we wish to present at the end of text-critical inquiry. This decision must be made at the outset since it will necessarily determine the method that a critic utilizes and the type of evidence that is considered important. Is the pursuit of an “original text” feasible, or desirable; and can such a text be supported conceptually by the extant evidence? Or, should we be pursuing a “canonical” or “received” text? How does the matter of biblical authority play into such a decision; and how should textual scholarship and current ecclesial or theological concerns interact? At the end of the day, we must decide what text critics should be searching for, and why such a pursuit is desirable. While all of the problems laid out in this chapter cannot be resolved in the present investigation, the matter of an “original” vs. “canonical” text will be taken up in greater detail.

In doing so, what follows will focus on two overarching questions. First, is there historical evidence that supports the existence of a “canonical text” of the New Testament as a

⁶² Trobisch, *First Edition*, 102-3.

lost artifact, and therefore a valid object of historical reconstruction? Second, if such evidence exists, should this textform be preferred by modern text critics and exegetes? The first question will be addressed in chapters two and three, where it will be argued that (1) concepts of a “canonical text” that is distinct from an authorial text are modern, rather than ancient, notions, and that (2) where the canon served as the impetus for textual alterations, these were motivated by a desire to smooth over intracanoncial textual difficulties. The second question will be addressed in chapter four, where it will be argued that even if a “canonical text” of the New Testament exists, text critics and exegetes alike should prefer the reconstruction of the earliest attainable, and thus most likely to be original, textual form rather the adoption of a “canonical text.” Therefore, the arguments related to these two questions contribute to one overall argument, namely that the reconstruction of a “canonical text” of the New Testament does not represent a viable or preferable alternative to the traditional text-critical goal of reconstructing an original text, and that proposals to reconstruct such a “canonical text” or adopt late textual readings as “canonical” should be rejected.

CHAPTER 2:

CANONICITY—AT WHAT LEVEL?

BOOKS, READINGS, AND THE CHURCH FATHERS

In the previous chapter it was shown that there have been various objections to New Testament textual criticism's traditional goal of reconstructing the "original" text of the New Testament writings. Some of these critics have charged that such a goal inappropriately divorces the text of the New Testament from the church that has been responsible for its transmission down to our current day. Instead of pursuing a lost original text, these critics have proposed that a better goal is to establish or reconstruct a "canonical" text from the extant witnesses. Merrill Parvis asked the probing question:

Should we excise from our New Testaments and from our liturgies the doxology of the Lord's Prayer because it is not a part of the original text of St. Matthew's Gospel? I think not. *The usage of the Church since ancient times has made a place for these words; it has canonized them.* It would be the work of an overzealous critic to cavil at their use now.¹

In making this statement, Parvis has claimed that canonical decisions can be made on the level of particular *readings*, and not just in determining a list of authoritative *books* that make up the New Testament canon.²

Bruce Metzger, when engaging the concept of reconstructing a "canonical text," advised that "we may find it instructive to consider the attitude of Church Fathers toward variant readings in the text of the New Testament."³ This concern for the church fathers' treatment of variants will occupy the main part of this chapter, specifically asking whether or not the Fathers

¹ Merrill M. Parvis, "The Goals of New Testament Textual Studies," *SE* 6 (1973): 402, emphasis mine.

² For a critique of Parvis' arguments concerning the "canonization" of textual accretions, see Kent D. Clarke, "Original Text or Canonical Text? Questioning the Shape of the New Testament Text We Translate," in *Translating the Bible: Problems and Prospects* (ed. S. E. Porter and R. S. Hess; *JSNTSup* 173; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 313-5.

³ Bruce M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 269.

conceived of a “canonical text” as they engaged problems of textual variation. In order to do this, we must first establish the ways in which the Fathers described the books that would (and would not) eventually make up the New Testament canon, and then compare the terminology they used with how they described and responded to textual variants.

2.1. Church Fathers and Early Christian Books

In what follows, we will see how the Fathers expressed their views on which of the various early Christian documents should be accepted and used by orthodox Christian communities. It should be noted that while the Fathers thought that certain books should be considered Scripture and others should not, the concept of labeling certain books as Scripture does not necessarily demand the existence of a canon consisting of a definite list of books from which nothing can be removed and to which nothing can be added.⁴ The New Testament canon remained in a state of flux at least into the second half of the fourth century.⁵ Since many of the Fathers predate this time period, it is problematic to assume that every discussion of selecting and rejecting books reflects their judgment on “canon” proper. Even so, we do see the Fathers commenting on what books should and should not be embraced by Christian communities, even if their comments were not necessarily meant to be exhaustive and final. This impulse has been helpfully termed a “canon principle” by Dimitris J. Kyrtatas, which he defines as “a definite notion regarding an assembled group of sacred texts that should be (or, rather, should become)

⁴ Craig D. Allert, *A High View of Scripture?: The Authority of the Bible and the Formation of the New Testament Canon* (Evangelical ressourcement series; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 37-52; and Harry Y. Gamble, *The New Testament Canon: Its Making and Meaning* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985; repr., Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2002), 18.

⁵ Geoffrey Mark Hahneman has pointed to the fourth century as the time in which the church made the conceptual shift from the more open-ended concept of *Scriptures* to the more definite and exclusive idea of *canon*. While Christians had used the term “canon” before this time, it was generally in the metaphorical sense of a “norm” or “standard” (as in phrases such as “the canon of truth” or “the canon of faith”). It was not until the fourth century that “canon” began to be applied to Christian writings, which corresponds with the appearance of several Christian catalogues of books during this time period. Geoffrey Mark Hahneman, *The Muratorian Fragment and the Development of the Canon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), 172-4. For a succinct treatment of this shift, see Gamble, *New Testament Canon*, 15-19.

the common property of all orthodox-minded Christians, amidst uncertainty about the exact list.”⁶ Therefore, we are looking to see how the Fathers participated in this ongoing process of selection in order to see how these various books were described during that process.

Eusebius of Caesarea (ca. 263-339 CE), as part of his *Ecclesiastical History*, categorizes books that competed for scriptural status according to their reception within the church (*Hist. eccl.* 3.25.1-7).⁷ The first category is that of the “accepted writings” (ὁμολογουμένα), which includes the four Gospels, Acts, the Pauline Epistles, 1 John, 1 Peter, and perhaps Revelation. Eusebius’ second category consists of the “disputed writings” (ἀντιλεγόμενα/νόθοι), including James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, *The Acts of Paul*, *The Shepherd [of Hermas]*, *The Apocalypse of Peter*, *The Epistle of Barnabas*, *The Teachings of the Apostles*, perhaps Revelation (again), and *The Gospel according to the Hebrews*.⁸ Though these books are disputed, Eusebius includes them because they are nevertheless known by many ecclesiastical writers.

Having given the books that fall into these first two categories, Eusebius makes a hard distinction between these—summarized as “those works which according to ecclesiastical tradition are true and genuine and commonly accepted [i.e., ὁμολογουμένα], from those others which, although not canonical (οὐκ ἐνδιαθήκους)⁹ but disputed, are yet at the same time known to

⁶ Dimitris J. Kyrtatas, “Historical Aspects of the Formation of the New Testament Canon,” in *Canon and Canonicity: The Formation and Use of Scripture* (ed. E. Thomassen; Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2010), 34.

⁷ *NPNF*² 1:155-7; PG 20:268-72.

⁸ Whether or not this category should be further subdivided into two separate categories, distinguishing between ἀντιλεγόμενα and νόθοι, is a matter of debate. The most compelling reasons for grouping these two terms together as describing one category are (1) Eusebius’ summary statement at 3.25.5 (“And all these may be reckoned among the disputed books”), indicating that all of the listed books from James to *The Gospel according to the Hebrews* should fall under this designation; and (2) another summary statement made at 3.31.6 which utilizes a threefold division of books (corresponding generally to the accepted-disputed-heretical division found at 3.25.1-7). For a more detailed discussion of how this portion of Eusebius’ catalogue should be divided, see Everett R. Kalin, “The New Testament Canon of Eusebius,” in *The Canon Debate: On the Origins and Formation of the Bible* (ed. L. M. McDonald and J. A. Sanders; Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002), 392-7; and Allert, *A High View of Scripture?* 137-8.

⁹ Translating this phrase as “not canonical” is problematic since Eusebius does not actually use the term “canon” here. Gregory Allen Robbins, “Eusebius’ Lexicon of ‘Canonicity,’” *StPatr* 25 (1993): 134-41, argues against

most ecclesiastical writers [i.e. ἀντιλεγόμενα/νόθοι]”—from those of Eusebius’ third category which consists of those books which are “cited by the heretics under the name of the apostles . . . which no one belonging to the succession of ecclesiastical writers has deemed worthy of mention in his writings.” Examples of these books include the gospels of Peter, Thomas, Matthias, and the Acts of Andrew and John, though Eusebius leaves such a list open-ended enough to include any other gospels or Acts of apostles that are not among the accepted writings and are used regularly by heretics. These types of books are considered forgeries made by heretics because “the character of the style is at variance with apostolic usage” and their content is “completely out of accord with true orthodoxy.”

Eusebius also includes material from several of Origen’s (ca. 185-253 CE) writings in order to show his judgment concerning which Christian writings should serve as Scripture (*Hist. eccl.* 6.25.3-14).¹⁰ Beginning with Origen’s discussion of the Gospels in the first book of his *Commentary on Matthew*, he quotes him as describing the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John as “the only indisputable ones (μόνα ἀναντίρρητά) in the Church of God under heaven.” Quoting from Origen’s fifth book of his *Expositions of John*, he discusses the status of the epistles of the apostles, noting that “Peter . . . has left one acknowledged (ἐπιστολὴν ὁμολογουμένην); perhaps also a second, but this is doubtful (ἀμφιβάλλεται).” Referring to the Johannine Epistles, he says that “[John] has left also an epistle of very few lines; perhaps also a second and third; but not all consider them genuine (γνησίους).” Concerning the book of Hebrews, he says, “The thoughts of the epistle are admirable, and not inferior to the acknowledged apostolic writings (τῶν ἀποστολικῶν ὁμολογουμένων γραμμάτων).”

translating ἐνδιαθήκους as “canonical,” choosing instead to employ terms like “covenantal” and “encovenanted.” See also Kalin, “New Testament Canon of Eusebius,” 397-8; and Allert, *High View of Scripture?* 133.

¹⁰ *NPNF*² 1:273; PG 20:581-5.

Cyril of Jerusalem's (d. 386 CE) *Catechetical Lectures* 4.36 includes a discussion of what books are to be considered Scripture for both the Old and New Testaments.¹¹ Cyril insists that there are only four gospels and that all the other gospels "have false titles and are mischievous." He specifically warns that the Gospel according to Thomas was written by the Manicheans and that, despite bearing the title of "gospel," it "corrupts the souls of the simple sort." He instructs his readers to receive the Acts of the Apostles, the seven Catholic Epistles, and the fourteen Pauline Epistles. All others are to be considered "secondary" (δευτέρω), and any books that are not allowed to be read publicly in church services should likewise be avoided in private reading.

The Synod of Laodicea (ca. 363 CE) pronounced this judgment: "No psalms composed by private individuals nor any uncanonical books (ἀκανόνιστα βιβλία) may be read in the church, but only the canonical books (τὰ κανονικά) of the Old and New Testaments."¹² Gregory of Nazianzus (ca. 330-ca. 389) closes his list of books of the "new mystery"—comprised of what came to be the complete New Testament, minus Revelation—with the statement that "you have all the books. If there is any besides these, do not repute it genuine (οὐκ ἐν γνησίαις)."¹³ While providing a list of the canonical New Testament books, Amphilochius of Iconium (d. after 394 CE) says that "Some call that to the Hebrews spurious (νόθον), but not rightly do they say it; for the gift is genuine (γνησία). . . . The Apocalypse of John again some accept (ἐγκρίνουσιν), but most will call it spurious (νόθον)."¹⁴

¹¹ *NPNF*² 7:27-28; PG 33:500-501.

¹² Canon 59. *NPNF*² 14:158; Greek text from Brooke Foss Westcott, *A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament* (7th ed.; London: MacMillan, 1896), 549-50.

¹³ *NPNF*² 14:612; PG 37:474.

¹⁴ William A. Jurgens, *The Faith of the Early Fathers* (3 vols.; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1970-1979), 2:66; PG 37:1597-8.

Finally, Athanasius' 39th *Festal Letter* (367 CE) provides a list of the 27 books that now make up the New Testament canon, explicitly labeling them as “canonical” (κανονιζομένων).¹⁵ These canonical books are contrasted with those which are labeled “not canonical” (οὐ κανονιζόμενα), including Wisdom of Solomon, Wisdom of Sirach, Esther, Judith, Tobit, *The Teaching of the Apostles*, and *The Shepherd [of Hermas]*. Though these were deemed outside the canon, Athanasius states that these books “were ‘recommended’ by the Fathers to be read by the novices and by those who desire to be instructed in the learning of piety.” Finally, Athanasius refers to an unspecified group of “apocrypha” beyond those books that are merely read, saying that “they are a device of the heretics, [who], writing them when they desire, approve them and assign [early] dates to them so that, presenting [them] as ancient, they may have a pretence to lead astray the simple by these [writings].”

We can see that discussions of the status of various books produce similar (if not the same) language across several of the Fathers. Those that they thought should be accepted (or were already accepted by many communities) were referred to as “acknowledged,” “indisputable,” “genuine,” and (eventually) “canonical.” Those books whose status was uncertain, or accepted and read by only a portion of the church, were called “disputed.” Others that the Fathers thought should be avoided (or were already being avoided by many communities) were rejected as “spurious,” and (eventually) labeled “not canonical,” often because they did not conform to established standards of orthodoxy and were therefore considered heretical.

¹⁵ Greek text and English translations are from Daniel J. Theron, *Evidence of Tradition: Selected Source Material for the Study of the History of the Early Church, the New Testament Books, the New Testament Canon* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980), 118-9.

If the Fathers thought about variant readings with this same type of “canon principle” in mind, we would expect to see these same (or similarly themed) terms being employed to refer to individual readings. Thus, if certain readings are referred to as “accepted,” “acknowledged,” “canonical,” etc., while others are deemed “disputed,” “spurious,” “not canonical,” etc., in the same ways that books are classified, then it is reasonable to conclude that “canon” was a concern at both the level of a selection of authoritative books (ultimately culminating in definite lists), as well as the exact textual contents of those books. Therefore, it is appropriate that we turn at this point to evaluating how the Fathers went about commenting on variant readings that they encountered in manuscripts of their day.

2.2. Treatment of Variants by the Church Fathers

For her 2009 PhD dissertation, Amy Donaldson gathered and catalogued explicit references to textual variants in Greek and Latin church fathers.¹⁶ The primary section of her catalogue consists of 165 passages from the Fathers in which “the author indicates knowledge of more than one reading for a specific word or passage.”¹⁷ In order to see in what ways the Fathers approached the problem of textual variation, I have categorized each of these passages according to (1) the types of textual data they refer to, and (2) their overall response or explanation for the variant.¹⁸ Of these 165 passages, I have excluded eight of them because I do not believe they actually indicate knowledge of variant readings from the manuscripts themselves, but rather

¹⁶ Donaldson’s catalogue includes authors up through the 12th century, with such a broad date range allowed “in order to facilitate broader use of the Catalogue beyond the limitations of the present study.” Amy M. Donaldson, “Explicit References to New Testament Variant Readings Among Greek and Latin Church Fathers” (vol. 2; Ph.D. diss., The Graduate School of the University of Notre Dame, 2009), 336.

¹⁷ Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 336.

¹⁸ Examples of each category will be provided, though see *Appendix A* for a full list of passages included in each category. It should be noted that the same passage may be included in multiple categories since a father may rely on multiple forms of textual data or may propose several potential responses, or both.

ancient conjectures to solve an exegetical problem.¹⁹ Therefore, my analysis consists of 157 passages from the church fathers.²⁰

When faced with the problem of textual variation in manuscripts of Scripture, the Fathers respond to such issues in a number of ways, depending on the variant itself and the context in which the father is writing. The Fathers consistently demonstrate a concern for the text of Scripture, though it will be seen that the way in which they go about arbitrating textual differences is couched in language that is significantly different from how they discuss the status of Christian writings as a whole. It will be helpful to observe the various reactions that the Fathers have to textual variants in New Testament manuscripts. What follows will consider (1) the types of textual evidence that the Fathers relied on and (2) the overall responses that the Fathers had to the variants they encountered. The ways in which the Fathers responded to textual variation and the evidence that they utilized provides the best evidence for what types of concerns drove their discussion of these variant readings. These responses can be classified as follows.

2.2.1. Types of Textual Data Referenced by the Fathers

When the Fathers discuss textual variation, they generally refer to one or more data points as evidence that factors into their textual decision. These have been categorized below.

2.2.1.1. Reading Supported by Greek Manuscripts

In 36 passages (22.9%), the Fathers specify that Greek copies contain one of the readings in question. Especially in cases where a father is addressing a community that is likely using

¹⁹ See *Appendix A*, “Excluded from Analysis,” for a list of references. Donaldson herself notes that several of these could have justifiably gone in her “Additional Texts” section of the catalogue because they do not necessarily indicate actual knowledge of variants within the manuscript tradition; see Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 385, n. 26, and 440, n. 74.

²⁰ In many cases, there are no published English translations of the passages included in Donaldson’s catalogue. In these cases, unless otherwise noted, I follow her original translation.

Latin copies of the Scriptures, readings that are found in Greek copies will be cited as possessing greater textual authority than do the Latin since the Latin was translated from the Greek. In these cases, the Latin text may or may not exhibit its own variation. Therefore, the Greek witnesses either function as a way to tip the scales between multiple Latin renderings, or they are used as a way to criticize the Latin translation and the meaning given to the text by such a translation.²¹

Jerome (ca. 345-ca. 419 CE), when answering a question about potential contradictions between Matthew and Mark's resurrection accounts, presents as one solution that Mark 16:9-20 was not original to Mark's gospel, "because it is present in few [copies of the] Gospels—nearly all the Greek manuscripts do not have this section to the end" (*Ep.* 120.3).²² Likewise Augustine, in his discussion of a variant at Rom 5:14, says:

Therefore "death reigned from Adam unto Moses," in all who were not assisted by the grace of Christ, that in them the kingdom of death might be destroyed, "even in those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression" I am quite aware, indeed, that several Latin copies read the passage thus: "Death reigned from Adam to Moses over them who have sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression"; but even this version is referred by those who so read it to the very same purport, for they understood those who have sinned in him to have sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression; so that they are created in his likeness, not only as men born of a man, but as sinners born of a sinner, dying ones of a dying one, and condemned ones to a condemned one. However, the Greek copies from which the Latin version was made, have all, without exception or nearly so, the reading which I first adduced. (*Pecc. merit.* 1.13)²³

²¹ In no passage from Donaldson's catalogue does a father prefer a variant supported by the Latin tradition independent of the Greek. In the cases where a Latin reading is preferred, that the reading is supported by Latin copies is never the primary factor for the decision, and these readings are always supported by at least a portion of the Greek tradition.

²² CSEL 55:481. As of yet, no complete English translation of Jerome's *Epistle 120* has been published (*NPNF*² 6:224 only provides a summary and list of questions Jerome addresses, not the text of the actual letter), therefore this translation is from Donaldson, "Explicit References," 402. A translation of this portion of the epistle can be found at John W. Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to Mark: Vindicated Against Recent Critical Objectors and Established* (Oxford: James Parker and Co., 1871), 53, though I have opted for Donaldson's version because it conforms better to contemporary English usage (though there is no material difference between the two).

²³ *NPNF*¹ 5:20; and Donaldson, "Explicit References," 455-6. Augustine, *Ep.* 157.19 (Augustine, *Letters 156-210* [trans. R. Teske; II/3; Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2004], 27-28) addresses the same variant in the same fashion.

Thus Augustine removes the possibility of misinterpretation regardless of which reading is followed; yet ultimately the near-unanimous testimony of the Greek codices is intended to supersede the Latin translation that is derivative of the Greek.

2.2.1.2. *Reading Supported by Numerous or the Majority of Manuscripts*

In 24 passages (15.3%), the number or proportion of manuscripts that support a reading is referenced.²⁴ In most cases, a father mentions that many (or most) manuscripts support a reading in order to express their own preference, as well as to persuade their reader that they should prefer the reading that is in the majority.

An example of this comes from Eusebius' letter to Marinus, where he addresses several questions about supposed discrepancies between the canonical Gospels. One of these concerns the endings of Matthew and Mark, specifically related to the timing of Jesus' resurrection and appearance. As part of his answer, Eusebius calls attention to the fact that the longer ending of Mark that includes an appearance narrative (16:9-20) is lacking from the majority of manuscripts: “‘And having heard [this] they fled, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.’ For in this way the ending of the Gospel according to Mark is defined in nearly all the copies [σχεδὸν ἐν ᾗπασι τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις]” (*Quaest. Marin.* 1.1).²⁵ While Eusebius does go on to concede that some people could argue that both the shorter and longer endings can be accepted, thus prompting him to provide an interpretation for the longer ending so that it does not stand in contradiction with Matthew, he nevertheless offers up as one solution that the passage can be disregarded as an insertion since it is contained in so few copies of Mark's gospel.²⁶

²⁴ Not that a specific number of manuscripts is given, but rather phrases like “many manuscripts read . . .” are used, which does not necessarily demand that the majority of manuscripts support the reading.

²⁵ James A. Kelhoffer, “The Witness of Eusebius' *ad Marinum* and Other Christian Writings to Text-Critical Debates concerning the Original Conclusion to Mark's Gospel,” *ZNW* 92 (2001): 85; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 397-9.

²⁶ See below for further comments on this passage from Eusebius.

2.2.1.3. Reading Preferred Based on Meaning and/or Context

In 22 passages (14.0%), the Fathers prefer a reading based primarily on the meaning that the text has with a particular reading or how it fits with the surrounding context. Origen indicates his preference for the omission of “without cause” at Matt 5:22 because of the way including that reading would change the meaning in Matthew and would therefore disagree with other biblical texts:

Since some think that anger sometimes occurs with good reason because they improperly add to the Gospel the word “without cause” [εἰκῆ] in the saying, “Whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgement” (Matt. 5:22)—for some have read, “Whoever is angry with his brother without cause”—let us convince them of their error from the statement under discussion which says, “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and blasphemy be removed from you.” For the term “all” here clearly applies to all the nouns in common, so that no bitterness is allowed, no wrath is permitted, and no anger occurs with good reason. It is said in the thirty-sixth Psalm, since all anger is sin (and likewise also wrath), “Cease from anger, and leave wrath” (Ps. 36:8). It is never possible, therefore, to be angry with someone with good reason. (Origen, *Fr. Eph.* 4:31)²⁷

We can see here that Origen has made a definite textual judgment, though his reasons are more exegetical or theological than text-critical, since the message of these passages from Ephesians and Psalms do not necessarily have any bearing on the textual form of Matthew.

A good example of a father relying on the immediate context of a text comes from

Jerome’s *Commentary on Ephesians*:

I know that I have heard someone preaching about this passage in church. As a theatrical marvel he presented a model never before seen by the people so that it was pleasing. He said of this testimony, that it is said that Adam was buried at Calvary where the Lord was crucified. The place was called Calvary [i.e. skull], therefore, because the head of the ancient man was buried there. At the time when the Lord was crucified, therefore, he was hanging over Adam’s grave and this prophecy was fulfilled which says, “Awake,” Adam, “who are asleep and arise from the dead,” and not as we read, ἐπιφάυσει σοι ὁ Χριστός, that is, “Christ will rise like the sun on you,” but ἐπιψάυσει, that is, “Christ will touch you.” That was because, of course, by the touch of his blood and hanging body Adam would be made alive and would arise. That type was also truly fulfilled at the time the

²⁷ R. E. Heine, trans., *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 205-6; J. A. F. Gregg, “The Commentary of Origen upon the Epistle to the Ephesians: Part III,” *JTS* 3 (1902): 557; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 352-3.

dead Elisha awakened the dead (4 Kgs. 4:32-5). Whether these things are true or not I leave to the reader's decision. They were certainly pleasing at the time they were spoken among the people who received them with applause and by stamping their feet. I mention one thing which I know: that understanding does not fit with the interpretation and coherence of this passage. (Jerome, *Comm. Eph. 5:14b*)²⁸

Since the context of Ephesians has been contrasting life lived in the light vs. that lived in darkness, Jerome prefers the reading and interpretation that is consistent with the preceding analogy. This type of reasoning is most closely aligned with the modern text critic's consideration of intrinsic probability (i.e., what the author of Ephesians is most-likely to have written).

2.2.1.4. *Reading Supported by Latin Manuscripts*

In 19 passages (12.1%), the Fathers refer to readings found in Latin copies.²⁹ The mention of a reading found in Latin manuscripts is often given in comparison to that found in Greek copies. A good example of this comes from Jerome's *Commentary on Galatians*, in which he refers to a variant within the Greek and Latin textual traditions at 1 Cor 13:3:

I am aware that in the Latin manuscripts the above-quoted passage, "If I hand over my body that I may boast," has "burn" (*ardeam*) instead of "boast" (*glorier*). But due to the similarity of the word—among the Greeks, the words "burn" and "boast," that is, *καυθήσομαι* and *καυχήσομαι*, are distinguished by one letter—the mistake has become entrenched among the Latin translators. Yet even among the Greeks themselves the manuscripts give variant readings. (Jerome, *Comm Gal. 5:26*)³⁰

Though Jerome does not actually make an argument for why his preferred reading ("boast") should be adopted, he nevertheless indicates that the alternative reading prevails in the Latin tradition due to a transcriptional error in the Greek, the product of which has gained some currency even in the Greek tradition.

²⁸ Heine, *Commentaries of Origen and Jerome*, 224; PL 26:526a-b; and Donaldson, "Explicit References," 507-8.

²⁹ Not surprisingly, 11 of these passages come from Jerome's writings (see *Appendix A*).

³⁰ FC 121:246; John Chapman, "St Jerome and the Vulgate New Testament," *JTS* 93 (1922): 48; and Donaldson, "Explicit References," 476-7.

2.2.1.5. Reading Supported by Earlier Manuscripts

In 15 passages (9.5%), the Fathers consider more ancient manuscripts to carry more weight than recent copies when it comes to textual disputes. This tendency is presumably for the same reasons that modern critics generally grant more weight to older manuscripts—namely that they are less likely to have been the product of more copying stages, and thus have had fewer opportunities for corruption.

Basil (ca. 329-379) expresses his preference for the omission of “in Ephesus” at Eph 1:1 based on his experience with ancient manuscripts:

When he was writing to the Ephesians, whom he treated as people genuinely united through knowledge to *He Who Is*, he gave them a peculiar name, “those who exist,” when he said: *to the saints who exist and are faithful in Christ Jesus* [Eph 1:1]. For this is how our ancestors have transmitted [οἱ πρὸ ἡμῶν παραδεδώκασι] the verse to us and how we ourselves have found it in the oldest copies [τοῖς παλαιοῖς τῶν ἀντιγράφων]. (*Eun.* 2.19)³¹

Jerome also relies on the evidence of older copies concerning the inclusion or omission of “without cause” at Matt 5:22 when opposing the claims of Pelagius:

And in the same Gospel, we read: “He who is angry with his brother without cause shall be liable to judgment”; although in many of the ancient copies [*codicibus antiquis*], the phrase, “without cause,” has not been added, so that we should not be angry, to be sure, even with cause. What man will be able to say that he is free forever from the fault of anger, a fault that is without justice? (*Pelag.* 2.5)³²

Jerome voices the same judgment in his *Commentary on Matthew*, though there he relies more heavily on other scriptural texts that prohibit anger than on the age of manuscripts that have this reading, as he does here.³³

2.2.1.6. Reading Supported by “Accurate” Manuscripts

In 15 passages (9.5%), a father resolves a textual problem by asserting that the reading that is preferred is found in the “accurate copies.” Rarely are specific manuscripts actually

³¹ FC 122:157, italics original; PG 29b:612-3; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 501.

³² FC 53:302; PL 23:540c; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 351.

³³ Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 5:22; FC 117:78-79; PL 26:36c-d; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 350.

mentioned, and often there is no indication as to what proportion of total manuscripts these copies make up (majority vs. minority).³⁴ “Accuracy” can also be a somewhat ambiguous term, at times indicating a conviction that certain copies have preserved readings that are more historically or geographically correct, though generally it appears to mean copies that have not been corrupted by scribes.

Eusebius, as part of his *Commentary on Psalm 77*, refers to a variant at Matt 13:35 where some manuscripts quote the psalm with the introduction, “This was to fulfill what had been spoken through *Isaiah* the prophet.” However, Eusebius knows that this prophecy is not actually found in *Isaiah*, and that manuscripts differ at this point, therefore he says:

What some do not understand is the explanation set forth in the Gospel, namely, ‘through *Isaiah* the prophet’; but indeed, in the accurate copies [ἀκριβέσιν ἀντιγράφοις], lacking the explanation ‘through *Isaiah*,’ it simply says: “so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, ‘I will open my mouth in parables; I will proclaim what has been hidden from the foundation [of the world],’” which indeed is contained in the present text, not in the prophecy of *Isaiah*. (*Comm. Ps. 77*)³⁵

Eusebius does not tell us of any objective reason why the copies should be considered accurate, or which copies he is referring to, only that the potential error in Matthew is no error at all because only inaccurate copies create such a problem by their textual insertion. We may deduce that because the prophecy is found in Ps 77 and not in *Isaiah*, accuracy is not strictly judged on the level of faithful copying, but in this case on accurate attribution (or appropriate ambiguity) concerning a prophecy’s location. Jerome’s discussion of this variant conjectures that early copyists, upon encountering the phrase “through *Asaph* the prophet,” replaced “*Asaph*” with the

³⁴ Jerome, *Comm. Gal.* 3:1b (FC 121:120), chooses to omit “not to believe in the truth” following “who has bewitched you” on the basis that the final phrase is not present in Origen’s copies. Donaldson “Explicit References,” 498-9.

³⁵ PG 23:901. No complete translation of Eusebius’ *Commentary on Psalm 77* has been published, so this translation is from Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 368.

more familiar “Isaiah,” believing that previous copyists had themselves erred (*Comm. Matt.* 13:35).³⁶

John Chrysostom (ca. 347-407) similarly refers to “accurate copies” when he encounters a variant at John 1:28 over whether John the Baptist’s ministry was being carried out at “Bethany” or “Bethabara,” though his justification for such a choice is of a different nature. Rather than addressing a potential inter-textual disagreement, his argument is based on his knowledge of geography: “‘These things took place at Bethany.’ Some more accurate copies (*ἀντιγράφων ἀκριβέστερον*) say: ‘In Bethabara,’ for Bethany was not ‘beyond the Jordan,’ or in the desert, but somewhere near Jerusalem” (*Hom. Jo.* 17).³⁷ Here, accuracy is not specifically a scribal matter, but an historical one. The physical location of John’s ministry does not match what is known of Bethany, and the author of John’s Gospel is assumed to have been accurate geographically, therefore the “accurate copies” are the ones that conform to the facts of geography. Chrysostom is still resolving a difficulty in the text by appealing to accurate copies, but his meaning of “accuracy” is not entirely the same as that of Eusebius mentioned above.³⁸

2.2.1.7. Reading Supported by Specific Copies or Authors

In nine passages (5.7%), a father refers to specific manuscripts, or readings associated with specific authors, in order to lend support to a particular reading. An example of this comes from Theophylact’s (b. ca. 1050/60 CE; d. after 1125 CE) comments on a variant at 2 Thess 3:14:

Some read “our word,” with an eta. Based on this, they therefore observe: “‘But if someone does not obey my word,’ i.e. Paul’s word, which is speaking as if ‘through this epistle, take note of this person’ and treat him as an outcast.” But the blessed John [Chrysostom?] reads “your,” with an upsilon, and explains to us that “‘If someone

³⁶ FC 117:160-61; PL 26:92b-c; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 371.

³⁷ FC 33:162; PG 59:107; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 426.

³⁸ This passage is also included in the “Reading Preferred Due to Non-Textual Evidence” category (see below), though it is discussed here in order to demonstrate what types of factors contributed to the conviction that a particular copy was “accurate.”

disobeys you,’ they speak to him those things ‘which you learned through this letter of mine.’” (*Comm. 2 Thess 3:14*)³⁹

While it is unclear which “John” Theophylact is referring to (though it is probably Chrysostom), the reference is nevertheless used to strengthen the support for his preferred reading (ὕμῶν).⁴⁰

The *Chronicon Paschale* (written shortly after 628 CE) makes an interesting reference to the autograph copy of John’s gospel as supporting the reading ὥρα ἣν ὡσεὶ τρίτη at John 19:14: “‘But it was the Friday (of Passover); it was the third hour,’ just as the accurate books contain, and (John) the evangelist’s very own hand, which until now has been guarded by the grace of God in the most holy church of the Ephesians, and is venerated by the faithful there.”⁴¹ In this case it is not that the text of a particular father supports the reading, but rather the manuscript written by the evangelist himself is called on to be the deciding textual factor.

2.2.1.8. Reading Preferred Due to Non-Textual Evidence

In five passages (3.2%), the Fathers prefer a particular reading based on evidence that does not directly derive from the manuscript tradition. Instead, outside information is brought in to arbitrate the textual discrepancy. This generally concerns matters of place names, where the father’s knowledge of geography is used to measure which reading best conforms to what they know of the places named in the manuscripts. A good example of this comes from Origen’s *Commentary on John*:

³⁹ PG 124:1356. No English translation of Theophylact’s *Commentary on 2 Thessalonians* has been published, so I follow Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 521.

⁴⁰ Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 521, says that she (as well as Tischendorf) was unable to locate this quote in Chrysostom’s works.

⁴¹ L. Dindorf, ed., *Chronicon Paschale* (2 vols.; Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae; Bonn: Weber, 1832), 1:11, 411. No full English translation of the *Chronicon Paschale* has been published. There is a partial English translation (Michael Whitby and Mary Whitby, trans., *Chronicon Paschale 284-628 AD* [TTH 7; Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989]), though this edition omits any material prior to the accession of Diocletian in 284 CE because the translators deemed this to be “the point at which *CP* [*Chronicon Paschale*] begins regularly to contain useful historical information” (xxviii-xxix). Therefore, this translation is from Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 441.

“These things were done in Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.” We are aware of the reading which is found in almost all the copies, “These things were done in Bethany.” This appears, moreover, to have been the reading at an earlier time; and in Heracleon we read “Bethany.” We are convinced, however, that we should not read “Bethany,” but “Bethabara.” We have visited the places to enquire as to the footsteps of Jesus and His disciples, and of the prophets. Now, Bethany, as the same evangelist tells us, was the town of Lazarus, and of Martha and Mary; it is fifteen stadia from Jerusalem, and the river Jordan is about a hundred and eighty stadia distant from it. Nor is there any other place of the same name in the neighbourhood of the Jordan, but they say that Bethabara is pointed out on the banks of the Jordan, and that John is said to have baptized there. The etymology of the name, too, corresponds with the baptism of him who made ready for the Lord a people prepared for Him; for it yields the meaning “House of preparation,” while Bethany means “House of obedience.” Where else was it fitting that he should baptize, who was sent as a messenger before the face of the Christ, to prepare His way before Him, but at the House of preparation? And what more fitting home for Mary, who chose the good part, which was not taken away from her, and for Martha, who was cumbered for the reception of Jesus, and for their brother, who is called the friend of the Saviour, than Bethany, the House of obedience? Thus we see that he who aims at a complete understanding of the Holy Scriptures must not neglect the careful examination of the proper names in it. In the matter of proper names the Greek copies are often incorrect, and in the Gospels one might be misled by their authority. (Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.40-41[24])⁴²

Thus we can see that Origen has relied upon his knowledge of Bethany and Bethabara as places, as well as their Semitic etymologies, to determine this textual matter. Notably, his confidence in these facts is enough to persuade him, despite the fact that “Bethany” is both an early reading and is found “in almost all the copies.”

2.2.2. The Fathers’ Response to Variation

After referencing the various data points given above, the Fathers will often continue their analysis by providing a more general response to the problems posed by a given variant. Broadly speaking, this may involve a discussion of how a variant may affect a passage’s meaning, or a father may choose to posit a cause for a particular reading’s introduction into the manuscript tradition. In what follows, these general responses are categorized and described in greater detail, including examples of each type of response.

⁴² *ANF* 10:370-71; *GCS*, Origen vol. 4:149-50; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 427-8.

2.2.2.1. Variant Mentioned

In 42 passages (26.8%), a father will simply mention that a variant exists, though will not provide any extended discussion or analysis of the variant's meaning or significance for the passage. At times, the father will express a textual preference, but they will not spend any time trying to persuade their reader beyond flatly stating their judgment. In most cases, this mention is merely a parenthetical comment that does not significantly disrupt the argument or exposition that the father is in the middle of developing.

An example of this occurs as part of Jerome's *Commentary on Galatians*, in which he alludes to Heb 2:9, providing a parenthetical reference to the $\chi\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma/\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\iota$ variant:

You should not esteem this statement based on my interpretation; Scripture stands as a witness because Christ, "by the grace of God (or, as in some copies it is read, without God) died on behalf of everyone"; if, however, "on behalf of everyone," also on behalf of Moses and all of the prophets, from whom not one of the ancients was able to expunge what was written out by hand against us and to affix that to a cross (*Comm. Gal. 3:10*)⁴³

Though noting the variant, Jerome chooses to focus his comments on the phrase "on behalf of everyone," for which the variant has no bearing. Despite the difference that this variant could have on the text in Hebrews, the variant is nevertheless simply noted without comment or preference.

Augustine (354-430) makes a similar parenthetical comment when noting a variant at 1 Cor 15:51:

As if someone had said this, he explains what he said and adds, See, I am telling you a mystery. All of us will indeed rise—or as some Greek manuscripts have, All of us will

⁴³ Here I follow Donaldson's translation ("Explicit References," 528), primarily because of the way she punctuates the quotation to better bring out the parenthetical reference to Heb 2:9. Compare this to the translation found in FC 117:136-7, which largely misses this reference: "Do not imagine that I have concocted this idea on my own. Scripture testifies that Christ is the grace of God, or, as it is worded in some manuscripts, 'he died for all' except God. Moreover, he died for all—for Moses and every one of the prophets, none of whom was able either to erase the old code of the Law which had been written against us or to nail it to a cross."

indeed fall asleep—but not all of us will be transformed. The following shows whether he wanted us to understand this transformation for the worse or for the better. (*Ep.* 205.14)⁴⁴

Since his concern has more to do with the nature of the resurrected body, Augustine does not elaborate on the difference that the variant could make, or which reading he prefers.⁴⁵

2.2.2.2. *Exegete Multiple Variant Readings*

In 33 passages (21.0%), the Fathers will choose to provide an exposition of a text that treats both readings as if they are original. Thus, the father can say, “if A is original, then the text means X, but if B is original, then the text means Y.” This approach seems to accept that textual variation is simply a fact of life when texts are only produced by manual copying, and therefore the meaning of each variant should be known, especially if the father finds each meaning acceptable.

A good example of this occurs at Rom 12:13, where there is a variant between “share in the needs (*χρείαις*) of the saints” and “share in the remembrances (*μνείας*) of the saints.” Origen (or potentially Rufinus, his Latin translator) and Pelagius both offer interpretations of each variant without making a judgment as to which reading should be preferred. Origen’s commentary reads:

Share in the needs of the saints. I remember that the Latin copies have, rather, “Share in the remembrances of the saints.” But we should not disturb the tradition or prejudice the truth, especially since both [readings] contribute to edification. For to supply the needs of the saints, sincerely and becomingly, not as if they crave alms, but as those who possess our wealth, so to speak, in common with them, and to remember the saints, whether at church services or instead that we might make progress by the memory of them, seem appropriate and fitting. (*Comm. Rom.* 9.12 [Rufinus])⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Teske, II/3:383; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 482.

⁴⁵ Augustine does comment on the significance of this variant in his letter to Mercator (*Ep.* 193.10-11 [CSEL 57:173-74; Teske, II/3:284-5]), where he likewise does not make a judgment as to which reading is preferred, but emphasizes that both readings support the interpretation that death must precede the resurrection of the saints. Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 481-2.

⁴⁶ FC 104:214; Origenes, *Commentarii in epistolam ad Romanos* (ed. and trans. T. Heither; 6 vols.; Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1990-99), 5:72; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 468-9.

We can see that Origen does not choose between the readings, nor does he encourage his readers to make a choice. Instead, the virtues of *both* readings are presented, and the readers are expected to adopt both virtues, regardless of the status of each variant.

A similar approach is taken by Pelagius (late 4th-early 5th cent. CE) when coming to this same text:

Sharing in the needs of the saints. Provide for those who need the services of others for a while because they neglect their own affairs on account of Christ. Some codices read: *Sharing in remembrances of the saints.* This should be understood in such a way that they remember in what manner and with what works the saints won favour with God, and become partners with them by imitating their examples. (*Comm. Rom. 12:13*)⁴⁷

Like Origen, it is not a question of which text is right, but whether there is valuable meaning in the readings preserved. Since the meaning of each reading is acceptable, there is no need to limit the commentary to only one of the readings on any grounds, proposed originality or otherwise.

These multiple meanings that correspond to multiple readings are also referenced with respect to how particular readings could be understood and used by heretics. So, it is often the case that the approach taken by the father is one of “if we accept reading A, then the text means X, but if we accept reading B, then the text means Y, not Z as the heretic would argue.”

Therefore doctrinal disputes are not won or lost merely by appeal to a particular reading present in the manuscripts; each meaning must be given so that heresy cannot find support, whatever the reading may be.

A good example of this comes from Theophylact’s discussion of the *χωρίς/χάριτι* variant at Heb 2:9:

“So that by the grace of God he might taste death on behalf of all.” For God did not owe it to us, but by grace he handed his Son over to death, not only on behalf of believers, but on behalf of the entire world . . . But the Nestorians, falsifying the Scripture [*παραποιούντες τὴν Γραφήν*], say, “apart from God, he might taste [death] on behalf of

⁴⁷ T. De Bruyn, trans., *Pelagius’s Commentary on St Paul’s Epistle to the Romans: Translated with Introduction and Notes* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 134, italics original; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 470.

all,” in order that they might contrive that the deity did not coexist in Christ who was crucified inasmuch as the deity was not unified with him in terms of person (*hypostasis*) but in terms of relationship (*schesis*). Someone who is orthodox, mocking their ignorance, said to them, let the text read as you say; in this case, then, it is on behalf of us that is speaking. For “apart from God, on behalf of every other” the Lord died, even on behalf of the angels, in order to destroy their hostility against us, and gain joy with them. (*Comm. Heb.* 2:9)⁴⁸

While a definite preference is expressed as to which text is original, there is nevertheless a reasonable and orthodox interpretation presented for a (supposed) textual corruption.

2.2.2.3. *Neither Reading Changes the Text’s Meaning*

In 14 passages (8.9%), the Fathers note the existence of variant readings, though they read them in such a way that the text’s meaning remains the same, regardless of which reading is adopted. Two examples will help to demonstrate this response.

Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444 CE), when commenting on Jesus’ request to his father as part of his *Commentary on John 12:28*, notes a variant in Jesus’ last statement: “Whether the text has, “Glorify your Son” or “Glorify your name,” the precise meaning is the same [ταυτόν ἐστι τῆ τῶν θεωρημάτων ἀκριβεία].”⁴⁹ While the variant is noted, its importance is considered negligible and warrants little discussion because it makes no difference concerning the text’s meaning.⁵⁰

Diodore of Tarsus (d. ca. 394 CE), in his *Commentary on Psalm 8*, draws on Heb 2:8-9 in order to demonstrate that Ps 8 refers specifically to Jesus, not merely to any human. In the process, he comments briefly on the *χωρίς/χάριτι* variant at Heb 2:9:

⁴⁸ PG 125:209; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 535.

⁴⁹ P. E. Pusey, ed., *Sancti patris nostri Cyrilli archiepiscopi Alexandrini in D. Joannis evangelium* (3 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1872), 2:318; Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on John* (ed. J. C. Elowshy; trans. D. R. Maxwell; 2 vols.; ACT; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013-15), 2:106; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 435-6.

⁵⁰ Cyril does treat “Glorify your Son” as his lemma twice in the following discussion as he develops the idea that for God “to glorify” Jesus is for him to consent to his suffering. Since the main portion of his exegesis assumes “Glorify your Son,” we can take this to be his preferred reading. Even so, he does briefly return to “Glorify you name” in order to show how human suffering that Christians experience can be kept in proper perspective if one knows that such suffering ultimately brings glory to God.

“We see Jesus as the one made a little lower than angels by suffering death crowned with glory and honor” (clearly referring to his lordship of all, his immortality and immutability) “so that apart from God he might taste death for everyone,” or, as some texts of the apostle have it, “so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.” Nothing in the text, in fact, impairs the meaning [λυμαίνεται γὰρ τῇ ἐννοίᾳ τοῦ σημαιομένου οὐδέν]: if “by the grace of God” the flesh tasted death, it was clearly apart from God that it tasted death; and if “apart from God” it tasted death, obviously it was by the grace of God that it tasted death. Nevertheless, we must be governed by a translation that does no violence to the verse. (*Comm Ps 8:6b-7*)⁵¹

While his lemma supports “apart from God,” he nevertheless explains how either reading implies the other, thus nullifying any difference in meaning between the two.

2.2.2.4. *Cause for the Introduction of a Reading Proposed*

In 13 passages (8.3%), a father posits the circumstance under which a variant reading was introduced into the manuscript tradition. These proposals can either concern the ideological motivations behind the change, or may claim that a reading was introduced by a simple transcriptional error.

A well-known example of a father proposing an ideological motivation for a variant comes from Augustine’s *Adulterous Marriages*, in which he addresses the omission of the *pericope adulterae* from John’s gospel:

However, the pagan mind obviously shrinks from this comparison, so that some men of slight faith, or, rather, some hostile to true faith, fearing, as I believe, that liberty to sin with impunity is granted their wives, remove from their Scriptural texts the account of our Lord’s pardon of the adulteress, as though He who said: ‘From now on, sin no more,’ granted permission to sin, or as though the woman should not have been cured by the Divine Physician by the remission of that sin, so as not to offend others who are equally unclean. (*Adult. conj. 2.7.6*)⁵²

Augustine obviously believes the *pericope adulterae* to be original, and therefore supposes that it was excised by some who were concerned that their wives would find in it a license for unfaithfulness.

⁵¹ *Diodore of Tarsus: Commentary on Psalms 1-51* (trans. R. C. Hill; Atlanta: SBL, 2005), 28-29; CCSG 6:48-49; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 526-8.

⁵² FC 27:107-8; CSEL 41:387-8; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 431-2.

Isidore of Pelusium (ca. 360-435 CE) discusses a variant at Heb 9:17 between μήποτε and μή τότε, attributing the variant to a scribe's introduction of a single stroke, changing a *tau* to a *pi*:

Since you have written that you think Paul has turned around to the opposite of what he intended to say, and you asked what this means: "For a will is put into effect with respect to the dead, since it is never in force while the one who made the will is living," I write in reply that the "never" is actually "not at the time"; for, a single stroke was added to one letter by some who were perhaps ignorant. And I found this reading even in the old copies—for the one who was assigned by the divine spirit and who was considered to be Hermes [i.e., God's messenger] would not have turned around into the opposite: "for since the will is not in force at the time when the one who made the will is living, after death it is put into effect." But if the text does read "never," one should not put the stress on the μή, but on the τότε, so that it means "not at all." (*Ep.* 1576)⁵³

It is noteworthy that not only is a scribe blamed for the alteration, but the ancient copies also support the preferred reading, and an appropriate reading strategy is even provided for the altered text.

2.2.2.5. Heretics/Orthodox at Fault for Variant

In eight passages (5.1%), the Fathers indicate that a variant was introduced intentionally as a result of theological disputes.⁵⁴ In all but one case, heretics are the ones charged with having altered the text of Scripture in order to lend support to their heretical doctrines. The Fathers do not claim that particular manuscripts are the products of heretical contamination, only that particular readings are the result of such alteration.

Origen, addressing the textual peculiarities of the doxology at Rom 16:25-27, asserts that Marcion is at fault for its omission:

Marcion, by whom the evangelical and apostolic Scriptures have been interpolated, completely removed this section from this epistle; and not only this but he also cut up everything from the place where it is written, "But all that is not from faith is sin," [14:23] to the end. But, in other copies, i.e., in those that have not been desecrated by

⁵³ SC 454:282. No English translation of Isidore's *Ep.* 1576 has yet been published, so I follow Donaldson, "Explicit References," 536-7.

⁵⁴ These passages could have been included in the previous section, though I have grouped them into their own category because they each concern struggles between heresy and orthodoxy, which represents a specific subset of ideologically motivated variation.

Marcion, we find this section itself placed in different locations. For in several manuscripts, after the passage we cited above, that is “All that is not from faith is sin,” immediately joining this is rendered, “now to him who is able to strengthen you.” But other manuscripts contain it at the end, as it now stands. (*Comm. Rom.* 10.43.2)⁵⁵

In similar fashion, Ambrosiaster (4th cent.) blames a textual variant at Rom 5:14 on heretics:

What has happened is that somebody who could not win his argument altered the words of the text in order to make them say what he wanted them to say, so that not argument but textual authority would determine the issue. However, it is known that there were Latin-speakers who translated ancient Greek manuscripts which preserved an uncorrupted version from earlier times. But once these problems were raised by heretics and schismatics who were upsetting the harmony of the church, many things were altered so that the biblical text might conform to what people wanted. Thus even the Greeks have different readings in their manuscripts. (*Comm. Rom.* 5:14)⁵⁶

By contrast, Epiphanius blames orthodox scribes for excising Luke 22:43-44 due to its perceived theological connotations:

But also “he wept.” It is found in the Gospel according to Luke in unrevised copies [τοῖς ἀδιορθώτοις ἀντιγράφοις] (and the holy Irenaeus has used the testimony in *Against Heresies* against those who said that Christ has shown himself [only] in appearance, but the orthodox have removed the passage, frightened and not thinking about the end of it [the passage] and its most powerful meaning). And, “Having come to be in agony he sweated, and his sweat became as drops of blood, and an angel appeared strengthening him” [Luke 22:44, 43]. (*Anc.* 31.4-5)⁵⁷

We can see in these examples that the Fathers believed that theological disputes, at times, effected the transmission of the text. Though they most often attributed changes to heretics, Epiphanius’ text demonstrates that the potential for alterations by orthodox Christians was there as well.

⁵⁵ FC 104:307-8; Origenes, *Commentarii in epistolam ad Romanos*, 5:280; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 473.

⁵⁶ ACCS 6:141; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 454.

⁵⁷ GCS 25, Epiphanius vol. 1:40; FC 128:106-7; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 421.

2.2.3. Potential Use of “Canonical” Terminology to Describe Variant Readings

Of the 157 passages from Donaldson’s catalogue, six (3.8%) use language that could potentially indicate the use of canonically themed terminology in the evaluation of variant readings. Therefore, these passages warrant further comment.

2.2.3.1. Anastasius Abbot of Sinai, *Viae Dux* 22.3⁵⁸

Anastasius (d. ca. 700 CE), when addressing the textual problem at Luke 22:43-44 (Jesus sweating drops of blood), assumes that the verses are original, accusing those who have deleted the verses as attempting “to adulterate” (νοθεῦσαι) the books of Scripture. The verb νοθεύω (LSJ, 1178: to corrupt, adulterate; consider spurious) corresponds to the adjective νόθος (LSJ, 1178: bastard [BDAG, 675: illegitimate], baseborn; spurious), a term which we have seen was used by the Fathers to refer to literary works that were thought to be “spurious.” While this is potentially significant, two observations should be made. First, the reading produced by the textual tampering is not itself called νόθος, but rather is the result of νοθεύω, which describes the editing action, not the reading. Second, there is no counter-category (“genuine,” “accepted,” etc.) to describe the fuller form, as we see in the context of the Fathers’ discussions of which books to accept.

2.2.3.2. Victor of Antioch, *Comm. Mark* 16:8-9⁵⁹

Victor of Antioch (5th cent. CE), when discussing the textual problem of the end of Mark’s gospel, indicates that some consider the longer ending following 16:8 to be “spurious” (using νόθα and νενόθευται) because it is not found in most copies. This use of νόθος to describe a particular reading is very similar to that of Anastasius given above, and is perhaps the closest in

⁵⁸ PG 89:289; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 420-21.

⁵⁹ Kelhoffer, “Witness of Eusebius’ *ad Marinum*,” 104; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 404-7.

meaning to the type of language we see concerning books that were rejected from the canon. However, like the passage from Anastasius, there is no canonically themed counter-category given for the shorter form. Furthermore, Victor actually defends the longer form, claiming that it is found in the “accurate copies” (*ἀκριβῶν ἀντιγραφῶν*).

2.2.3.3. Eusebius, *Quaest. Marin.* 1.1-2⁶⁰

Eusebius also engages the textual problem of the end of Mark’s gospel, himself potentially using canonical terminology to describe the variant. If one follows Donaldson’s translation, the relevant portion reads: “For in this way the ending of the Gospel according to Mark is defined in nearly all the copies. The things that appear next, seldom [and] in some but not in all [of the copies], may be *spurious*, especially since it implies a contradiction to the testimony of the rest of the evangelists.”⁶¹ The word translated here as “spurious” is *περιττός*, which generally carries the meaning of “extraordinary; strange,” “excessive,” or “superfluous.”⁶² Notably, this is not the same word generally translated as “spurious” in Eusebius’ catalogue of books (*Hist. eccl.* 3.25.1-7), which is *νόθος*. In this context, *περιττός* indicates that this text at the end of Mark may have gone beyond what was originally written. Therefore, this passage from Eusebius does not really evidence the use of canonical terminology being utilized in the discussion of textual variants.

2.2.3.4. Epiphanius, *Anc.* 31.4-5⁶³

Also engaging the textual problem at Luke 22:43-44, Epiphanius (ca. 315-403) argues for the originality of the verses by claiming that they are present in the “unrevised” or “uncorrected” copies (*τοῖς ἀδιορθώτοις ἀντιγράφοις*). He claims that these verses were removed by Orthodox

⁶⁰ PG 22:937, 940; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 397-9.

⁶¹ Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 398, italics mine.

⁶² See LSJ, 1387: “περισσός”

⁶³ GCS 25, Epiphanius vol. 1:40; FC 128;106-7; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 421.

Christians because they could not tolerate Jesus' expression of anguish in the garden, believing it to be a sign of weakness. From this description, one could (theoretically) deduce that there was an Orthodox revision of the Scriptures, thus producing an authorized edition that lacked these verses. However, it is apparent that ἀδιόρθωτος here carries the nuance of “unaltered, unchanged,” since Epiphanius clearly sees such a “correction” as itself incorrect. Furthermore, one can only consider Epiphanius' explanation of the cause of this variant a conjecture, rather than indicating knowledge of any thoroughgoing ecclesiastical revision, since he gives no details as to who these Orthodox Christians were, or when and where they “revised” copies of Luke.

2.2.3.5. Pseudo-Athanasius, *De sancta trinitate* 3.20 [Didymus?]⁶⁴

As part of a debate between an Orthodox Christian and a Macedonian concerning the Spirit, the Macedonian objects to the Orthodox' use of Rom 8:11 as evidence due to his knowledge of a textual variant. The Orthodox' lemma is διὰ τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος (“through the indwelling”), though the Macedonian protests that the correct reading is διὰ τὸ ἐνοικοῦν (“in order to indwell”), even to the point of insinuating that the Orthodox Christian has corrupted the text for the sake of his argument. The Orthodox Christian replies that his lemma is actually in all of the ancient copies [ὅλοις τοῖς ἀρχαίοις ἀντιγράφοις], though he is willing to utilize a different proof-text “since you [the Macedonian] consider this disputed (ἀντιλεγόμενον),” to which the Macedonian replies “Speak, for this is disputed (ἀντιλέγεται).”⁶⁵

One will recall that Eusebius described several books that were not universally accepted as Scripture as “disputed” (ἀντιλεγόμενα) writings. At first blush, this might indicate that the

⁶⁴ PG 28:1233; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 462-3.

⁶⁵ I depart from Donaldson's translation of ἀντιλέγω here (which she rendered as “refuted”) since the Macedonian only calls into question the Orthodox Christian's claim, rather than offering counter-evidence sufficient to “refute” the Orthodox' claim.

Orthodox Christian and Macedonian here are operating on the presumption of similarly disputed *readings*. However, on closer examination, it is not the specific reading that is disputed, but rather the Orthodox Christian's claim that his lemma is present in all of the ancient copies. The Macedonian does not accept this claim, thus prompting the Orthodox Christian to move on to his next text.

2.2.3.6. Basil, *Eun.* 2.19⁶⁶

When commenting on the status of “in Ephesus” at Eph 1:1, Basil prefers to omit the text because “those who came before us handed it down in this form, and we have found it in the old copies.” Though not using any overtly “canonical” terminology, the language of “handing down” could indicate a level of traditional and “received” status for the shorter reading. However, the combination of the phrase “those who came before” (οἱ πρὸ ἡμῶν) and the reading being found in “the old copies” (τοῖς παλαιοῖς ἀντιγράφων) emphasizes that this reading is *earlier* than the competing reading, not that it has been more widely received or accepted. Therefore, the reading's greater antiquity is used as an indicator as to its originality.

2.2.4. *Canonical Terminology Applied to Variant Readings?*

We can see that there are multiple ways that the Fathers dealt with textual variants depending on the variant and the context of a father's writing. However, we do not encounter clear instances where the language used to refer to Christian writings is similarly applied to variant readings. If anything, it is the *manuscripts* that are categorized, not the readings themselves, and even these are labeled using different terms. Manuscripts are considered trustworthy based on their age, (supposed) level of accuracy, language, or number. Readings are often preferred due to their association with such manuscripts, or are simply preferred because of

⁶⁶ FC 122:157; PG 29b:612-3; and Donaldson, “Explicit References,” 501.

their meaning in comparison to competing forms. Furthermore, there are many occasions where a variant is said to make no difference in meaning, or all of the potential meanings that are gleaned from the variant readings are appreciated. Of all of the passages in Donaldson's catalogue, only two (Anastasius Abbot of Sinai, *Viae Dux* 22.3; and Victor of Antioch, *Comm. Mark* 16:8-9) really come close to using the same kind of terms to refer to specific readings as do the Fathers with respect to canonical books—and there are reasons to doubt even these two as such examples. If a “canon principle” operated at the level of particular readings, we would expect to find greater use of “canonical” language with respect to variant readings, as well as a greater insistence that only *one* reading should be consulted for scriptural meaning and authority.

We may also notice that the Fathers who provide lists of books do not specify which textual form of those books is to be considered “canonical.”⁶⁷ Even the most well known accretions (ending of Mark, *pericope adultrae*, etc.) were not brought into the discussion of canon. Though the Fathers knew of these textual difficulties and commented on them, they did not consider such judgments to be raised to the level of canon. J. K. Elliott comments on this difference between text and canon:

[T]he *text* of the New Testament that was found in the manuscripts was not of importance to those who pronounced on the canon. Jerome, Origen and others recognized certain books as approved, canonical scripture, but they did not try to specify a particular or precise form of the text to be found in the manuscripts even though these Fathers were alert to textual variation in manuscripts. As we know, the surviving manuscripts exhibit a marked difference between themselves—and this is especially true of the earliest manuscripts (precisely in the centuries before the canon was fixed). So what was fixed as canonical was ‘Mark’ without further qualification. The question was not raised whether Mark is to include 16.9–20 or not. ‘John’ was approved without a word being said about

⁶⁷ All indications are that it was not until the sixteenth-century Council of Trent that decisions were made on the specific textual form of books in the context of canonical judgments: “If anyone does not accept as sacred and canonical the aforesaid books *in their entirety with all their parts*, as they have been accustomed to be read in the Catholic Church, *and as they are contained in the old Latin Vulgate Edition*, and knowingly and deliberately rejects the aforesaid traditions, let him be anathema.” H. J. Schroeder, trans., *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (Rockford: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1978), 18, emphasis mine. This point is made by Clarke, “Original Text or Canonical Text?” 317-9. See also Hubert Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent* (trans. D. Graf; 2 vols.; London: Thomas Nelson, 1957-61), 2:81.

the inclusion or exclusion of the passage about the adulteress (Jn 7.53–8.11). In effect, the manuscript an individual church possessed was canonical; a neighbouring church may have had radically different forms of the same books and these would be its canonical scriptures.⁶⁸

2.3. Multiple Communities—Multiple Canonical Texts

Besides the differences in terminology noted above, the proposal of reconstructing a “canonical” text as opposed to an “original” text raises the problem of there being a single “canonical” text to be reconstructed. Such an assertion would need to assume that since this canonical text needs to be reconstructed by modern scholars, the Christian communities that have used the New Testament since its canon was defined have only had an authoritative text *in part*. At places where their texts have been different from the supposed “canonical” text, then we would have to conclude that they were using some other text that was not canonical. Thus the lack of textual uniformity becomes a real problem for conceptions of an agreed upon canon of the New Testament if “canon” functions at the level of text. Kent Clarke makes this clear by pointing out that:

Because the concept of canon had relatively little to do with the exact form of a book’s text, but instead sought to address whether or not that book—understood at more contextual, literary and theological levels—could rightfully be included in a larger authoritative collection, it is more accurate to speak of *various* canonical texts rather than *one* canonical text. In fact, there is no *one* text which is canonical, but a multitude of canonical texts; nor is there one final form of text, but many final forms.⁶⁹

Indeed, we have no indication that the Christians using ancient manuscripts of the New Testament would have considered some portion of the textual readings in their manuscripts to be “canonical,” with the remaining portion somehow “noncanonical.” Instead, we have every indication that for each given community, the form of text that they had in their possession

⁶⁸ J. K. Elliott, “Manuscripts, the Codex and the Canon,” in *New Testament Textual Criticism: The Application of Thoroughgoing Principles: Essays on Manuscripts and Textual Variation* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 621, italics original. Peter Ackroyd also makes this point, though expanding the scope to include temporal distance between communities at different points in history. Peter R. Ackroyd, “Original Text and Canonical Text,” *USQR* 32 (1977): 170.

⁶⁹ Clarke, “Original Text or Canonical Text?” 307, italics original.

would have been considered canonical in whole. Epp addresses what the terms “canonical” and “canon” mean, saying:

Just as each of the 5,300 Greek New Testament manuscripts and the perhaps 9,000 versional manuscripts is an “original,” so each of these thousands of manuscripts likely was considered “canonical” when used in the worship and teaching of individual churches—and yet no two are exactly alike. Consequently, each collection or “canon” of early Christian writings during the centuries-long process of canonization was likewise different, whether in the writings it included and excluded or—more likely—in the detailed content of those writings as represented in their respective manuscripts, with their varying textual readings.⁷⁰

2.4. Conclusions

This discussion of the status of books and readings has demonstrated what types of responses were typical from the Fathers when they were faced with needing to choose between texts. What this investigation has revealed is that these choices were made at two distinct levels. At the “macro” level, they were concerned with identifying which writings contained the true doctrines of orthodoxy and could therefore serve as the authoritative documents for the church. At the “micro” level, the Fathers were concerned with the accurate preservation of the text of these authoritative books in its particulars, though often on the level of *meaning* rather than *reading*.

While these were both concerns of the Fathers, we should not think that they were the same concern. Just because a “canonical” book must necessarily be made up of a text, it does not follow that there must then be a “canonical” text. When we compare the testimony of the Fathers concerning books and readings, we see that their terminology is significantly different. In fact, unlike discussions of Christian writings, we see very little categorizing of readings depending on their reception within the church. We are not given lists or discussions that consider some readings to be “accepted” or “acknowledged” while others are deemed “disputed” or “spurious.”

⁷⁰ Eldon Jay Epp, “The Multivalence of the Term ‘Original Text’ in New Testament Textual Criticism,” *HTR* 92 (1999): 275.

Instead, there exist a variety of responses, though none of which clearly put forth “canonical” terminology. Furthermore, we must also observe that when the Fathers pronounce judgments on the canon, such determinations always remain at the “book level.” We do not find the Fathers considering only one “version” of a biblical book to be canonical, whereas a competing “version” is to be rejected.

On another note, it is important for us to recognize the differences between our own times and those of the church fathers. It is only in recent history, since the invention of the printing press, that the exact reproduction and distribution of texts has become a possibility. Westcott made the comment that “It is almost impossible for any one whose ideas of communication are suggested by the railway and the printing press to understand how far mere material hinderances [sic] must have prevented a speedy and unanimous settlement of the Canon.”⁷¹ How much more true is this for the production of a wholly uniform text? Only in our modern era can we distribute thousands of documents with confidence that each copy will be an exact representation of its exemplar. Even the most professional and talented scribes made errors, and many scribes made “corrections” that actually introduced new errors themselves. Thus it is not surprising that we are able to conceptualize a singular “canonical” text that we can then distribute to Christians across the globe. However, for people of the Fathers’ time, even if they had a perfectly “canonical” text, they would by no means be certain that such a text would be accurately copied for future generations. Each manuscript was only ever one generation from potential (perhaps near-certain) corruption on some level. In such a transmissional climate, would it even make sense to talk about “canon” at the level of readings? Authenticity of readings was discussed, though to put such a discussion in terms of canonicity would have lead to a hopelessly unending canon

⁷¹ Brooke Foss Westcott, *A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament* (7th ed.; London: MacMillan, 1896), 4.

controversy until the age of printing, for which the ancients did not even dream. For them, manual transmission was the way documents would be reproduced indefinitely. Therefore, the church was able to make claims as to which document would be “canonical,” while limiting their judgments on variants to the level of authenticity.

Keeping this in mind, it makes sense that the limits of what is “canonical” would be placed at the document, rather than reading, level. Textual differences were an accepted, however unfortunate, fact of life. Yet, even a combination of scribal mistakes and intentional alterations would not be likely to transform a document to the point that it was no longer recognizable from one copy to the next. We might say that the Acts of the Apostles remains the Acts of the Apostles, whether we read Codex Vaticanus or Bezae.⁷² Therefore, to speak of a “canonical” text that is preferred to an “original” text as the goal of New Testament textual criticism does not really resolve all of the problems that are associated with the pursuit of an “original” text. In fact, a supposed “canonical” text introduces its own set of problems, and there is no reason to prefer those problems to those of a lost “original.”

⁷² Günther Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles: A Disquisition on the Corpus Paulinum* (Schweich Lectures, 1946; London: Oxford University Press, 1953), 264-5, made a similar conclusion concerning his own study of the Pauline epistles: “[H]owever large the differences of detail may be, the whole tradition is basically one. The Epistles, as far as we can see, have never been rewritten in the same fundamental manner as have some *Volksbücher*, like the fables of Aesop or the Alexander Romance; nor even in the more restricted but still thorough way which is evidenced by the ‘Bezan’ text of the Acts of the Apostles.” In like manner, Michael W. Holmes, “From ‘Original Text’ to ‘Initial Text’: The Traditional Goal of New Testament Textual Criticism in Contemporary Discussion,” in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis* (ed. B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes; 2d ed.; NTTSD 42; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 674-7, when discussing the textual transmission of the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, recognizes the extensive variation between manuscripts concerning the “wording within a verse, sentence or paragraph,” though he also points out the highly stabile nature of the text when it comes to their “overall structure, arrangement, and content” (p. 674). This allows him to say that “the individual manuscripts of any one of the Four Gospels under discussion are so similar in terms of structure, sequence, and number of pericopes that they may rightly be considered to be copies of the Matthean, Markan, Lucan, and Johannine instantiation of the traditions about Jesus, rather than new instantiations of the Jesus tradition that could stand alongside the other four” (p. 675).

CHAPTER 3:

IN SEARCH OF A CANONICAL TEXT:

CANONICAL TEXTUAL CRITICISM AND THE MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE

3.1. An Example of the Canonical Method of Textual Criticism

While Brevard Childs advocated for a different goal for New Testament textual criticism, and a modified method for achieving that goal, it is unfortunate that he never published any examples of textual decisions that utilized his method. Such examples would likely have clarified some of the unclear terminology he used for his proposed method.¹ However, Theodore Letis, in an article included in his book *The Ecclesiastical Text: Text Criticism, Biblical Authority and the Popular Mind*, attempted “to give a concrete demonstration of how I see [Childs’] method possibly operating within the New Testament regarding textual variants specifically.”² His application of this method addresses the textual problem found at John 1:18, specifically concerning whether the text should read “the only begotten God” or “the only begotten son” (manuscript data from NA²⁸ apparatus):

| | |
|------------------|---|
| μονογενης θεος | P ⁶⁶ א* B C* L sy ^{p,hmg} ; Or ^{pt} Did [NA ²⁸ UBS ⁵ WH SBLGNT] |
| ο μονογενης θεος | P ⁷⁵ א ¹ 33; CI ^{pt} CI ^{exThd pt} Or ^{pt} |
| ο μονογενης υιος | A C ³ K Γ Δ Θ Ψ f ^{1,13} 565. 579. 700. 892. 1241. 1424 M lat sy ^{c,h} ; CI ^{pt} CI ^{exThd pt} [RP] |

A summary of Letis’ treatment of the variants at this verse will serve to show the canonical text-critical method at work.

¹ Childs himself stated, “Any proposal for a new shape to a theological discipline that does not offer concrete examples in support of it can also be judged deficient.” Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), 149.

² Theodore P. Letis, “The Prologue of John and the Egyptian Manuscripts: John 1:18 as a Case Study in the Canonical Approach,” in *The Ecclesiastical Text: Text Criticism, Biblical Authority and the Popular Mind* (Philadelphia: The Institute for Renaissance and Reformation Biblical Studies, 1997), 107.

First, Letis lays out his goals and methods for his analysis, relying heavily on Childs' proposals (nearly the whole section on goals and methods is composed of direct quotes of Childs). Letis' goal is to "look for the reading that became exegetically and hermeneutically sanctioned, or canonized," which requires the critic to "abandon the notion of an 'original text.'"³ His method is two-fold: (1) "work within the proper canonical context" and (2) "use traditional text critical [*sic*] methods within this tradition."⁴ According to Letis, the analysis of the textual evidence as part of the canonical approach does not need to incorporate any different tools, it need only apply them to a different end:

The goal is simply different: one is no longer looking for an idealized, perhaps imaginary "autographic" text; one is now trying to discover the reading that fits the canonical context, in its kerygmatic role, within the entire N.T. corpus, as determined by the apostolic community who gave final shape to the sacred text.⁵

As with Childs, Letis' proposals suffer from imprecise language. Unfortunately, none of the significant terms used by Letis in this quotation receive any extended discussion or definition. One can only conjecture what Letis is meaning when he speaks of "the reading that fits the canonical context." What is this canonical context, and (of equal importance), what is outside of this context, and how does one go about establishing its boundaries? How does the "kerygmatic role" factor into this, and is it the kerygmatic role of the specific reading or of the "canonical context"? When situating this reading "within the entire N.T. corpus," what does this practically involve? Does this mean that readings should be judged based on their conformity to the wording, meaning, theology, etc. of the rest of the New Testament canon? And finally, the reader will encounter no specifics as to who made up "the apostolic community who gave final shape to the sacred text." In other words, there are no dates, places or peoples to which this community

³ Letis, "Prologue of John," 128.

⁴ Letis, "Prologue of John," 129.

⁵ Letis, "Prologue of John," 129-30.

can be traced—or at least we are not told this information, if Letis knows it. What we are left with then is a *desideratum* without data or precise definitions by which to operate.

Nevertheless, it is important to look at how Letis applies this method to the manuscript evidence for this variation-unit. The majority of Letis' discussion treats the parties that preferred each form (lumping the two *θεος* forms together, treating them as one). He most specifically seeks to demonstrate that the *θεος* forms are likely to be regional alterations motivated by the theological convictions of Valentinian Gnostics.⁶

Letis' analysis of the textual evidence demonstrates what type of evidence he values most. He establishes that the oldest Greek manuscripts attest to *ο μονογενης θεος* or *μονογενης θεος*. However, the oldest versions (except the Coptic), the majority of Greek manuscripts and all lectionaries present *ο μονογενης υιος*. Though Letis' wording is somewhat ambiguous, it is this final grouping of witnesses that he claims represents "the reading sanctioned by ecclesiastical usage."⁷ Here, we see Letis relying rather heavily on one particular assumption: that the scribes and/or ecclesial authorities supervising the scribes' work were aware of multiple readings at this verse and intentionally chose one over the other. The assumption is that the reading found in the majority of the manuscripts and in the lectionaries was consciously chosen and the alternate readings consciously rejected. Can this be demonstrated? One can say that one reading was consciously preferred over the other at some point; but at what point, by whom, for what reason, and why that reading was ultimately preserved in the majority of manuscripts is beyond certain conclusion. Even readings that were intentionally introduced could well have become dominant

⁶ Letis argues that the *θεος* form was introduced by Valentinians because it allowed for a "separation between the Logos and the Son" ("Prologue of John," 117). However, see Benjamin J. Burkholder, "Considering the Possibility of a Theological Corruption in Joh 1,18 in Light of its Early Reception," *ZNW* 103 (2012): 72-74, for evidence that, despite the fact that this reading was used by Valentinians, it was not especially important for their overall theology.

⁷ Letis, "Prologue of John," 130.

as a result of an historical accident; we simply do not know enough about the genealogical process by which the text was transmitted to make definite claims as to how a reading became dominant, only that it did become dominant.

Canon inherently implies selection from multiple options. It implies conscious adoption of some material and rejection of others. In other words, the establishment of a canon cannot be accidental. We can clearly see from the evidence of the church fathers that decisions were consciously made about which books to receive. For there to be a “canonical” text requires the same procedure (or at least one that is quite similar) to have occurred at the specific textual level. Variant readings must be known, and decisions made about their authority in order to create a “canonical” text. Yet, we do not know of such procedures being carried out by ecclesiastical authorities. Many of these variant readings appear to have been introduced by individual scribes or readers of the text, with little control being exhibited over that process.⁸ Therefore, if an altered reading is either haphazardly or intentionally introduced into the text of a manuscript by a scribe, and that manuscript becomes the exemplar for fifty more manuscripts, or is used in the production of a lectionary or new translation, can we say with any confidence that the inclusion of that reading within these new copies and resources reflects a *conscious* choice? If not, regardless of the status that that reading acquires, or the proportion of manuscripts that bear that reading as time goes on, can we say that such a reading has become uniquely “canonical”?

Even Letis, in his textual analysis, betrays the difficulty in using terms like “canonical” and “received” to describe particular variant readings: “The former [μονογενης θεος] eventually became the ‘received’ Egyptian reading.”⁹ Such usage indicates that the “received” nature of

⁸ For a discussion of readers adding notes in New Testament manuscripts, see Ulrich Schmid, “Conceptualizing ‘Scribal’ Performances: Reader’s Notes” in *The Textual History of the Greek New Testament: Changing Views in Contemporary Research* (ed. K. Wachtel and M. W. Holmes; SBLTCS 8; Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 49-64.

⁹ Letis, “Prologue of John,” 130, italics original

readings takes on a regional and synchronic quality; the “reading sanctioned by ecclesiastical usage” as determined by Letis is not judged on universal and diachronic grounds. It is itself a reading that is distinguishable from other readings that have been “sanctioned by ecclesiastical usage”—here specifically in Egypt. Thus, we can see how language of a “received text” is imprecise and introduces new problems for the reconstruction of the New Testament text. We are immediately compelled to ask “Received when, and by whom?” Furthermore, one who wishes to use this type of terminology must justify decisions that a given reading found in the manuscripts was preserved, yet not “received.” In places of variation, we will likely need to conclude that each variant was “received” by its respective community, with little or no awareness of alternative forms. In such cases, how does one arbitrate between the two (or more) forms that were each “received.” It seems that we are necessarily at an impasse.

One fundamental problem in Letis’ argument is assuming that the readings classified as “Egyptian” can confidently be restricted to only that specific region—having originated there and not from somewhere else. Epp has noted that early examples of letters and other literature whose departure and arrival dates and locations were recorded demonstrates that written material travelled quite quickly in the ancient world—hundreds of miles in a matter of weeks. This is especially important for how we think about the text of our early New Testament papyrus manuscripts, which almost exclusively come from Egypt (probably due to its arid climate, which is best for the preservation of papyrus). In light of how quickly written material could travel in antiquity, there is no reason to assume that early manuscripts found in Egypt could only preserve readings introduced in Egypt. It may well be that the texts from Egypt represent a spectrum of textual forms that originated in other parts of the Mediterranean world and travelled to Egypt.¹⁰

¹⁰ Eldon Jay Epp, “Textual Criticism in the Exegesis of the New Testament, with an Excursus on Canon,” in *Handbook to Exegesis of the New Testament* (ed. S. E. Porter; NTTS 25; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 56-58; Daniel B.

This having been said, the bigger issue centers on why the supposedly “sanctioned” readings by this community in Egypt should be so undervalued in Letis’ application of the “canonical” method of textual criticism. Even if we were to accept the terminology and logic of canonical criticism and do away with notions of an original, authorial text that holds pride of place in terms of authority, we still must ask why, from the perspective of canonical criticism, any reading that existed in the church’s usage of its Scripture anywhere should be relegated to the cutting room floor just because it did not ultimately become dominant?¹¹ Is this not, in essence, rejecting what was legitimate and authoritative Scripture for the church, the church which was itself the mover in terms of the so-called “canonical process”? Why should later communities of a particular region be preferred over the witness of earlier churches in a different location?¹² These questions press the difficulty of introducing notions of canon into specific text-critical decisions. In other words, when Letis declares that one reading is “canonical,” he must do so by dispensing with all other readings that were themselves “canonical” for their respective communities.

This consideration is complicated by the fact that we have no way of knowing what portion of the manuscript evidence has been preserved and whether what we have is a representative sample of the total manuscript evidence that once existed in antiquity. If anything,

Wallace, “The Majority Text Theory: History, Methods, and Critique,” in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Questions on the Status Quaestionis* (ed. B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes; SD 46; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 312.

¹¹ While more traditional methods seek to distinguish “original” from “altered” readings, the canonical method must choose one “canonical” reading from a number of variants that were each “canonical” themselves. It would seem that a desire to value “canonical” readings would actually take the form of drawing attention to the reception and use of all of the various readings that were used in the life of the church, rather than forcing the critic to select one to the exclusion of all others.

¹² Since Letis associates the $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ forms with heretical Valentinian theology in Egypt, this is taken to be grounds for rejecting the reading that was supposedly “sanctioned” in Egypt. However, the $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ forms do not demand a Valentinian system, as can be seen from the interpretation given by Hilary of Poitiers [ca. 315-367], *On the Councils* 36 (ACCS 4a:55; *NPNF*² 9:14). Even if Valentinians did use and prefer the $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ forms, this does not mean that we can therefore label the reading as itself “heretical,” and thus use standards of orthodoxy as a criterion to reject this so-called “Egyptian” reading.

there is evidence that readings with only meager external support were once much better represented, thus indicating a much broader “reception” within the church.¹³ It is thus too simple and too easy to say that what we have is typical and base our methods and conclusions on such an assumption.¹⁴

In his introduction to *The Ecclesiastical Text*, Letis forcefully criticized the plethora of English translations available today, and specifically some of the approaches to making a translation as practiced by modern Bible societies. In order to give a clear picture of Letis’ perspective, it will be helpful to quote his criticisms of the gender-neutral updates to the NIV at length:

[W]e discover that part of the need to “communicate” (read = “market”), involves actually altering what in the past religious communities regarded as inspired and sacrosanct Biblical content, in order to reflect the cultural concerns of ideological feminism. Even the rather non-confrontational, Evangelical author, J.I. Packer, was heard to decry: “Adjustments made by what I call the feminist edition are not made in the interests of legitimate translation procedure. These changes have been made to pander to a cultural prejudice that I hope will be short-lived.”

Not likely. How one defines “legitimate translation procedure” is up for grabs these days. Pandora’s box has been pried open and the Bible, no longer in the possession of the Church and her specific theological criteria for a religious understanding of the translation task, is now a commodity of the ‘Bible society’ and the Bible landlords of the corporate world.”¹⁵

It is ironic that when one compares Letis’ critique of dynamic development in translation technique and results with his view of which textual forms of the Greek New Testament should be preferred, we find that he is much more hostile to editors changing the English rendering known by Christian communities of the past than he is of early scribes altering the wording of the actual Greek text itself. If, in establishing an “ecclesiastical text,” the ancient scribes carrying

¹³ Wallace, “Majority Text,” 309-13.

¹⁴ Moisés Silva, when responding to a defense of the Byzantine Priority/Majority Text theory by Maurice Robinson, provides a helpful analogy to demonstrate how the proportional majority of a reading does not necessarily indicate anything concerning its originality. Moisés Silva, “Response,” in *Rethinking New Testament Textual Criticism* (ed. D. A. Black; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 147-9. For Robinson’s arguments, see “The Case for Byzantine Priority,” pages 125-39 of the same volume.

¹⁵ Letis, *Ecclesiastical Text*, x

out this task changed or rejected readings that had been used by earlier Christian communities, is this not another example of “actually altering what in the past religious communities regarded as inspired and sacrosanct Biblical content”? If this is permissible for the ancients, why is it deplorable for modern translation committees? It is one thing to criticize a rendering given in a translation because it cannot be supported linguistically or exegetically, but it is something different to say that a translation is poor because it departs from a more traditional rendering that is familiar to Christians. Thus we can see that Letis’ own arguments concerning translations can be turned against his recommendations concerning the Greek text itself.

Despite his professed attempt to apply Childs’ method to an actual textual problem, Letis demonstrates methodological confusion in his analysis. In order to argue that the *υιος* reading is the “received,” and therefore preferred, reading, Letis simply makes the argument that modern text critics have misjudged which reading is original and which is the altered form. Letis argues that the *θεος* reading(s) are in greater conformity to the beliefs of Valentinian Gnosticism, and are therefore likely to be alterations in order to make John’s gospel conform to those beliefs. This is made explicit in a footnote from Letis’ conclusions: “For those who would say the Egyptian reading [“*θεος*”] is the harder reading and for that reason it should be seen as the original reading, we need only point out that for a Valentinian Gnostic, *μονογενης υιος* is decidedly the harder reading.”¹⁶ Thus Letis’ argument is equally as historicist as those he is arguing against, it only so happens that the reading he chooses is the most widely dispersed amongst patristic, versional and lectionary evidence, thus representing (in his view) “the reading sanctioned by ecclesiastical usage.”¹⁷

This form of argument actually exhibits the same approach that Childs explicitly

¹⁶ Letis, “Prologue of John,” 131, n. 83.

¹⁷ Letis, “Prologue of John,” 130.

criticized John William Burgon for: “He turned the debate into a misconstrued historical issue, arguing that the Textus Receptus represented the oldest text which was closest to the original apostolic autographs.”¹⁸ For Childs, the canonical method attempts to provide a means for “locating a text which is by definition different from the original author’s autograph and at the same time is not to be identified with an uncritical text represented by the last stages of a stabilized *koine* tradition.”¹⁹ Instead of living out this intention, Letis merely provides a critique of modern text critics who have not fully accounted for the possibility of regional, theologically motivated alteration. In order to provide an example of the full potential of Childs’ method, Letis would have needed to choose a text that allowed him to prefer a reading that was demonstrably not original, and yet could still make some claim to being “canonical.” Letis’ goes to great lengths to demonstrate that the reading preferred by modern textual critics is actually a secondary Gnostic reading, thus arguing that the reading that eventually became dominant was actually the original reading. In other words, Letis could have provided his treatment of this variant without reference to Childs’ proposed method and it would have made little difference for his conclusions.

Letis would have been in much greater conformity with Childs’ method had he argued that the *θεος* reading was both the original reading *and* the reading preferred (and exploited) by Valentinian Gnostics. Such an assertion would allow Letis to say that the Gnostic preference prompted an orthodox alteration that would from then on be considered “canonical” or “ecclesiastically sanctioned” because it better represented the truth of the gospel than did the original text that tended to be misconstrued by heretics. We can, therefore, say that Letis’

¹⁸ Brevard S. Childs, “The Hermeneutical Problem of New Testament Textual Criticism,” in *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 524. Letis himself quoted this part of Childs’ argument (“Prologue of John,” 129 n. 78). Letis never tries to make a defense of the Textus Receptus in specific, though his arguments do emphasize historical priority of readings, thus departing from Childs’ vision of a “canonical text.”

¹⁹ Childs, *Hermeneutical Problem*, 527.

analysis employs a type of “hybrid” method, mixing traditional textual criticism with Childs’ “canonical” method, though being unwilling to commit fully to either. It may be that this methodological confusion is why Letis never provides an argument for why supposedly “ecclesiastically sanctioned” readings should be preferred by modern critics. Since his conclusion concerning this variant is that the “canonical” reading is also the original reading, he does not have an opportunity to provide a rationale for choosing admittedly late and altered readings over earlier, unaltered forms.

3.2. Is There a “Canonical Text”? Matt 26 as a Case Study

Having evaluated one example of the canonical method of textual criticism being applied to a text-critical problem, I would like to propose an alternative way to approach the manuscript evidence to inform this question of a “canonical text” of the New Testament. Much of the problem with the “canonical” method of textual criticism stems from the assumption that there is such a “canonical” text, which must be discerned and reconstructed from the textual options presented by any given variation-unit. However, the existence of such a text is truly an assumption rather than a conclusion based on historical evidence. In some ways, it is the result of a logical syllogism: the church has a canon of authoritative literature, which is in turn made up of specific readings, therefore there exist “canonical readings,” which collectively constitute a “canonical text” of canonical literature. The problem is that such a syllogism is not accompanied by historical evidence to support each of its moves. The result is that the question “Is there a canonical text to reconstruct?” is not asked before making recommendations as to how to go about reconstructing that text.²⁰

²⁰ This is a problem that is not limited to proposals concerning a canonical method of textual criticism, but is true of canonical criticism’s claims more generally. James Barr rightly noted that “even if one agrees with the main direction of Childs’s thinking, his presentation of it is overwhelmingly *declarative*: it suggests that simple *assertion* of the centrality of the canon constitutes demonstration.” James Barr, *Holy Scripture: Canon, Authority, Criticism*

The effect of this is that an object of historical research is created without presenting the necessary evidence to support its existence. In light of this problem, I suggest that a “canonical” text must first be established on ontological grounds, as a lost artifact of history, before insisting on its reconstruction based on the consideration of “hermeneutical issues.”²¹ Rather than take known textual variants and attempt to discern which reading constitutes the so-called “canonical reading” (as Letis did in the example above), I propose that we must first look at the text as found within actual manuscripts and see if a “canonical consciousness” can be discerned from apparent scribal habits and the nature of textual variation where the manuscripts diverge. The remaining portion of this chapter will be dedicated to such a search.

As a data sample I have chosen to compare the texts of Matt 26 in codices \aleph , A, B, D, and W as a heuristic attempt to see what textual phenomena surface.²² Variation-units are then categorized according to their textual phenomena, from which statistics can be calculated. From the total number of variants, corrections and significant variants are discussed at greater length in order to try and determine the cause of variation in each case. Finally, the existence or non-existence of a “canonical text” and its textual tendencies are discussed.

3.2.1. Choice of Text and Manuscripts

Matthew 26 was chosen for several reasons. First, this chapter includes Jesus’ institution of the Lord’s Supper, a text that would have played a significant role in the church’s liturgy and worship, and would therefore be more susceptible to theologically and/or liturgically motivated

(Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983), 147, italics original. See also Stanley E. Porter, “Pauline Authorship and the Pastoral Epistles: A Response to R. W. Wall’s Response,” *BBR* 6 (1996): 134-7.

²¹ Childs, “Hermeneutical Problem,” 521. While addressing problematic terminology concerning Childs’ discussion of a “canonical text” of the Hebrew Bible (though also touching on the textual transmission of the New Testament), Eugene Ulrich argues that such a text is “an abstraction, not a text that one can pick up and read,” and that “Childs is theologically seeking something that historically is not yet there.” Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible* (SDSS; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 58-59.

²² The text of Matt 26 in each of these manuscripts has been arranged in parallel lines (*Appendix B*) to make variants easy to spot and compare.

alteration.²³ While the inclusion of this pericope was a factor in the choice of text, it was decided that the whole chapter should be examined in order to avoid only targeting texts whose transmission would be especially vulnerable to these influences. This chapter is also quite long (75 verses), thus providing a significant amount of text to analyze. Second, the parallels between Matthew and the other Synoptic Gospels would leave its transmission open to textual influence from these parallel texts. Third, this chapter is preserved complete in several of the most significant gospel codices, which include representatives (or significant precursors) of the major Greek New Testament textual traditions (i.e., Alexandrian, Western, and Byzantine). Codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are known to be the primary representatives of the Alexandrian text;²⁴ Codex Alexandrinus is an early representative of the Byzantine text in the Gospels;²⁵ Codex Bezae is the primary representative of the so-called “Western” text;²⁶ and Codex Washingtonianus is known to preserve both typically “Western” readings, as well as other readings that are not readily categorized.²⁷

²³ Helmut Koester, “The Text of the Synoptic Gospels in the Second Century,” in *Gospel Traditions in the Second Century* (ed. W. L. Petersen; CJA 3; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 20. For the influence of an already-established Eucharist tradition concerning ritualistic and liturgical terminology and structure upon this passage in Matthew, see R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 988; and John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 1074.

²⁴ Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism* (2d ed.; trans. E. Rhodes; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 107; Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of The New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (4th ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 66, 69.

²⁵ Metzger and Ehrman, *The Text of The New Testament*, 67.

²⁶ Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 109; Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of The New Testament*, 67.

²⁷ Aland and Aland, *Text of the New Testament*, 113 gives the brief description: “Text irregular.” One particular instance of W’s textual idiosyncrasies concerns the ending of Mark’s gospel, which closes with the so-called “Freer Logion,” concluding Mark’s gospel following Mark 16:14: “And they excused themselves with the words, ‘This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan, who by the unclean spirits does not permit the truth and power of God to be comprehended.’ They [the disciples] said to Christ, ‘Therefore, reveal your righteousness now.’ And Christ replied to them, ‘The measure of the years of Satan’s authority has been filled up. But other dreadful things are coming. And for those who sinned, I was given over to death that they might turn back to the truth and sin no longer, that they might inherit the spiritual and incorruptible glory of righteousness in heaven.’” For this and other textual peculiarities of W, see Larry Hurtado, “Introduction,” in *The Freer Biblical Manuscripts: Fresh Studies of an American Treasure Trove* (ed. L. W. Hurtado; Atlanta: SBL Press, 2006), 4-9.

3.2.2. *Statistical Analysis*

One of the inherent difficulties when it comes to any quantitative analysis of text-critical evidence is how one chooses to count variation-units and readings. For variation-units, the problem is one of demarcation and boundaries. On the one hand, one could consider all of the various disagreements presented by the manuscripts at any given point in the text as parts of one variation-unit. On the other hand, this same portion of text may evidence multiple, unrelated textual phenomena (orthography, word order, grammar differences, etc.), each of which could be counted as a separate variation-unit (unless of course one change necessitates another, thus linking them together as one textual change).²⁸

Any use of statistics to discuss the relative frequency of textual phenomena amongst a sample of witnesses must be clear about its goals, terms and procedures. The procedure here is to examine a portion of text as found in the manuscripts as a heuristic endeavor aimed at detecting the presence or absence of a “canonical consciousness” at work as the scribe completes his task. As far as the terms used to describe textual phenomena, a variation-unit is conceived of very broadly, including variation in orthography (including *nomina sacra*), word order, grammatical form, substitutions, addition/omission of words, and abbreviation practices. Furthermore, when it comes to the counting of variation-units for statistical purposes, textual phenomena within the same group of words that do not require a genealogical relationship are counted individually,

²⁸ Ernest C. Colwell and Ernest W. Tune, “Method in Classifying and Evaluating Variant Readings,” in *Studies in Methodology in Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (NTTS 9; Leiden: Brill, 1969), 98-99. This compounding of variant forms is referred to as “nesting” by Vanton A. Dearing, “Determining Variations by Computer,” *SBL Seminar Papers, 1974* (2 vols.; SBLSP; Cambridge, Mass.: Society of Biblical Literature, 1974), 2:22-23. Gordon Fee has also said that “within one variation-unit where the elements of expression go together there is sometimes a second or a third set of variants which also belong together. That is, a single variation-unit may contain more than one set of variants, which are (or may be) genetically unrelated.” Gordon D. Fee, “On the Types, Classification, and Presentation of Textual Variation” in *Studies in the Theory and Method of New Testament Textual Criticism* (ed. E. J. Epp and G. D. Fee; SD 45; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 63.

since resolution of one textual issue frequently does not resolve other problems affecting the same set of words.²⁹

The term “canonical consciousness” requires further clarification. What does it mean for a scribe to exhibit a “canonical consciousness”? First, let us say what it *does not* mean.

Indications that a scribe understood the literature they were copying to be canonical is not what is meant here by a “canonical consciousness.” While a scribe’s understanding of the authoritative status of a now-biblical book may be a matter of interest for very early papyrus copies, that the scribes responsible for the manuscripts in question understood them to be authoritative Scripture is beyond dispute. The fact that each manuscript utilizes a codex form containing multiple books, most of which came to be universally recognized as Christian Scripture, indicates that the scribes who copied the text for these manuscripts understood them to be a corpus of authoritative literature.³⁰

Positively stated for the present investigation, for textual phenomena to potentially indicate a “canonical consciousness” at work on the part of a scribe, such phenomena must meet three criteria. First, since a canon of authoritative literature (in the typical sense of a closed list of books) cannot be determined accidentally, variant readings must first be shown to have been introduced intentionally by the scribe.³¹ This immediately disqualifies any demonstrable scribal errors from consideration. Second, a reading must indicate that it was introduced under the influence of some other portion of the New Testament canon. Third, such phenomena must

²⁹ An obvious example of genealogical relationship between two different textual phenomena occurs at Matt 26:2, where the manuscripts read either *μετα δυο ημερας* or *μεθ ημερας δυο*. On the one hand, one could count the disagreement over *μετα* or *μεθ* as one variation unit concerning orthography, and that of *δυο ημερας* or *ημερας δυο* as a separate word order variant. However, it is obvious that the word order preference is determinative for whether or not the *α* of *μετα* is elided, thus affirming the genealogical relationship between the two.

³⁰ See Larry W. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 53-61, for the Christian preference for the codex for literary works considered to be Scripture.

³¹ Since corrections can only be introduced intentionally, a correction indicating a “canonical consciousness” must consist of a meaningful change from one sensible form to another.

indicate that a scribe was aware that the reading they are introducing does not replicate the words of the author, choosing to allow concerns of canon to outweigh concerns of textual authenticity.³²

Looking at the textual differences that arise through comparison of these manuscripts, one could get the initial impression that the text was treated with great freedom and that copyists were not all that concerned with exact replication of the text being copied. However, under closer examination, the text reveals itself to be largely the same, regardless of which manuscript you read. There are some real textual problems evidenced in these manuscripts, and these must not be downplayed or dismissed. Yet we still get the impression that there was one text that acts as the predecessor to all of these texts. All of these manuscripts are recognizably copies of the same work, and no large-scale revision appears to be behind any one of them.

After categorizing the type of variation for each textual disagreement between these manuscripts, (conveniently) 400 distinct, genealogically unrelated (or not necessarily related) variation-units could be identified.³³ The greatest cause of variation amongst these codices is by far simple orthographic differences. Such orthographic variation occurs 178 times (44.5%). Most of these spelling differences are the result of similarly pronounced vowels and diphthongs.³⁴ There are several instances where such orthographic variation appears at first glance to be the substitution of different grammatical forms for the same word. However, the same types of orthographic variation are repeatedly introduced, and in such ways that assuming a grammatical

³² Examples of such readings could include interpolations, explanatory glosses, or substantial deletions that are influenced by the content of another New Testament book.

³³ See *Appendix B* for designations of the types of variation *ad loc.*

³⁴ However, there are a few exceptions. For example, at Matt 26:6 the scribe of D wrote *λεπρωσου* where all of the other codices have *λεπρου*. Being a diglot Greek-Latin codex, D's scribe was influenced by the Latin [*leprosi*] on the opposing page when writing his Greek text (see BDAG, 592). This spelling error was corrected to *λεπρου*. For the impact of Greek pronunciation on text-critical analysis, see Chrys C. Caragounis, *The Development of Greek and the New Testament: Morphology, Syntax, Phonology, and Textual Transmission* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 475-564.

impulse is at work would create many instances of nonsense readings.³⁵ One need not approach these manuscripts with strict concepts of fixed grammatical paradigms; the best explanation in almost every case is merely that spelling conventions were not fixed and that there were multiple ways that a scribe could visually represent the same phonetic unit.

The second most frequent type of variant, occurring 79 times (19.75%), is that of an addition/omission (see below for comments on several of these). Substitutions occur 54 times (13.5%). Variations in the use of *Nomina Sacra* occur 43 times (10.75%).³⁶ These variants are of two types. The first concerns the decision about whether or not to abbreviate a word by using a *Nomen Sacrum*, the second involves variations in the actual abbreviated form. At no place in this chapter do variations in the implementation of *Nomina Sacra* also involve the substitution of one grammatical form of the abbreviated word for another. Thus, different approaches to the *Nomina Sacra* only indicate, from a text-critical perspective, a difference in the visual representation of the exact same word. Besides *Nomina Sacra*, there are six differences (1.5%) caused by the use of abbreviations for numerals. Like the *Nomina Sacra*, at no point do these variations represent differences in the number being signified, only how the same number is represented visually. Variation in word order occurs 22 times (5.5%). Finally, there are 17 instances (4.5%) where variation is the result of a demonstrable scribal error.

3.2.3. Corrections

Corrections provide a unique opportunity for understanding scribal habits because they are places where we know that conscious decisions were made concerning two or more textual options. Whereas it is difficult to know whether or not a particular scribe consciously introduced

³⁵ Following Colwell and Tune, “Classifying and Evaluating,” 101, who defined a nonsense reading as a reading “which does not make sense, and/or cannot be found in the lexicon, and/or is not Greek grammar.”

³⁶ For information on the use of *Nomina Sacra* in Christian manuscripts, see Hurtado, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 95-134; and Bruce M. Metzger, *Manuscripts of the Greek Bible: An Introduction to Greek Paleography* (corr. ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 36-37.

an alternative reading that we find in a manuscript, corrections reveal that there were two or more known textual options from which the scribe could choose (either in the mind of the scribe or in the text of a manuscript), and they were unwilling to allow the manuscript to continue existing with its previous reading. Therefore, it will be helpful to examine the corrections made in these manuscripts for this portion of text to see what were the apparent motivations for such corrections.³⁷

Matt 26:1

κ*: οτε εοτελεσεν

κ^c: οτε ετελεσεν

The scribe of κ accidentally inserted an ο where it did not belong in “ετελεσεν.” This is understandable when one considers how the text of his exemplar would have looked in uncial script with *scriptura continua* (characters involved in the error underlined):

ΚΑΙ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟΟΤΕΕΤΕΛΕCΕΝ

Therefore, the scribe merely marks out the extra ο to correct his error.

D*: οτε λεσεν

D^c: οτε ετελεσεν

This is an apparent case of haplography, with the scribe of D skipping from οτε to ετελεσεν, thus omitting ετε at the beginning of ετελεσεν. The error created a nonsense reading (λεσεν is not a Greek word).

B*: ειπεν

B^c: ειπε

³⁷ In this way, the current investigation is asking the same question posed by Fee in his study of the corrections in P⁶⁶: “On what principle did this scribe operate when he made a deliberate shift from one reading to another?” Gordon D. Fee, “The Corrections of Papyrus Bodmer II and Early Textual Transmission,” *NovT* 7 (1965): 248.

This correction was made by the scribe who reinked B. Rather than simply retrace every character, this scribe made corrections as he went, usually in the form of neglecting to reinforce certain characters, allowing them to continue to fade, in some sense “deleting” them.³⁸ This scribe operated under a fairly strict understanding of the use of movable nu, consistently choosing to not retrace movable nus that are followed by words beginning with consonants.³⁹ Since *ειπεν* is followed by *τοις μαθηταις* here, the scribe chooses to not reinforce the *ν*.

Matt 26:2

B*: γεινεται

B^c: γινεται

This is merely an orthographic correction concerning an itacism (*ι/ει*), which makes no difference in meaning. This is one of the most common orthographic errors in the manuscripts, and the same correction is frequently made in B.⁴⁰

Matt 26:3

B*: οι πρεσβυτεροι

B^c: οι πρεσβυτεροι του λαου

There is no obvious reason that *του λαου* would have been omitted by accident. This is a singular reading only found in B*.⁴¹ *πρεσβυτερος* occurs twelve times in Matthew, three of which also add *του λαου*, not including 26:3 (21:23; 26:47; 27:1). Of these, variation only occurs at

³⁸ Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 68; and Philip B. Payne and Paul Canart, “The Originality of Text-Critical Signs in Codex Vaticanus,” *NovT* 42 (2000): 105-6. However, the scribe did not attempt to erase the unreinforced characters, therefore these are not technically “deletions.”

³⁹ This same type of correction occurs elsewhere in Matt 26 of B at vv. 4, 7, 15, 18, 25, 26, 28, 47, 49, 51, 59, 65, 74, and 75 (though note *ειπεν λαβετε* at v. 26). The *ν* in *εστιν τοτε* at vv.66-67 may have been reinked because *εστιν* was the last word of the verse, as indicated by the following space. Since it is the same scribal phenomenon, this type of correction will only be discussed here and not at each occurrence in these other verses.

⁴⁰ Caragounis, *Development of Greek*, 502-8; James W. Voelz, “The Greek of Codex Vaticanus in the Second Gospel and Marcan Greek,” *NovT* 47 (2005): 211. Correction of this same itacism in B also occurs in Matt 26 at vv. 7, 29, 32, 39, 62, 69, and 73. Since it is the same scribal phenomenon, this type of correction will only be discussed here and not at each occurrence in these other verses.

⁴¹ Unless otherwise noted, the designation of a reading as singular is according to The Center for New Testament Textual Studies (CNTTS) New Testament Critical Apparatus.

27:1, where minuscule 35 singularly omits του λαου. The initial omission here in B* was apparently an accidental lapse by the scribe.

Matt 26:4

B*: κρατησωσιν

B^c: κρατησωσι και αποκτεινωσιν

This correction is two-fold. First, the addition of και αποκτεινωσιν corrects an obvious instance of haplography due to homoioteleuton (κρατησωσιν και αποκτειωσιν). The omission of και αποκτεινωσιν is a singular reading of B*. Second, the reinking scribe declines to reinforce the movable nu on the end of κρατησωσιν in light of the following και.⁴²

Matt 26:6

D*: λεπρωσου

D^c: λεπρου

The scribe of D allows the Latin (*leprosi*) on the opposite page of this diglot codex to influence his spelling of λεπρος.⁴³ This was a nonsense spelling in Greek and was corrected to its proper form.

Matt 26:9

B*: εδυνατο

B^c: ηδυνατο

Though these are both legitimate forms of the imperfect third person singular of δυναμαι (see BDAG, 261-2), the scribe nevertheless corrects the text to have the η augment. There is no difference in meaning between the two forms.

⁴² See comments above on B's correction at 26:1.

⁴³ See BDAG, 592: "λεπρος."

Matt 26:10

κ*: γυνεκι

κ^c: γυναικι

This is simply an orthographic change. The *αι* diphthong and *ε* sounded virtually identical and were therefore frequently confused in the manuscripts.⁴⁴

κ*: ηργασατο

κ^c: ειργασατο

The pronunciation of *ει* and *η* were quite close, if not identical, as is evidenced by their interchange in the manuscripts.⁴⁵ Both forms of the augment are attested, therefore this is merely an orthographic variant.⁴⁶

Matt 26:12

D*: σωματοσματος

D^c: σματος

This is a clear example of dittography, perhaps made easier by the following word (*μου*) itself beginning with a *μ*. The repeated text was deleted.

Matt 26:13

B*: αμην λεγω

B^c: αμην δε λεγω

The supralinear addition of the *δε* conjunction makes little difference in meaning. It is unlikely to be the earlier form since Matthew's habit is to consistently write *αμην λεγω* (27x), with only *γαρ* being used as a conjunction between the two words (4x). Significantly, the Markan parallel to this verse (14:9) is the only place in all of the Gospels where NA²⁸ prints *αμην δε*

⁴⁴ Caragounis, *Development of Greek*, 374, 510-14.

⁴⁵ Caragounis, *Development of Greek*, 367, 509, 536-7.

⁴⁶ F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (trans. R. Funk; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), §67, 3.

λεγω, though the manuscripts are also divided here concerning the presence of δε.⁴⁷ Therefore, this correction may have been made in an effort to bring Matthew and Mark into closer conformity.

Matt 26:14

D*: omit

D^c: ο λεγομενος ιουδας σκαριωτης

This appears to be an instance where D's scribe accidentally skipped a line. The text that was added to make the correction occupies exactly one line, without any other text being written on the same line, nor any of the added text needing to be written on the next line. This correction was made by the original scribe, and appears to be made almost immediately since the next Greek folio continues with the text that had originally been written in the place that the corrected text now stands. Note the unusual spelling of Judas' last name.⁴⁸

Matt 26:15

D*: και ειπεν αυτοις

D^c: ειπεν αυτοις

The και was deleted by placing a supralinear dot above each of its characters. The original reading is only supported by D* latt (sa^{ms} bo).⁴⁹ The και creates a grammatical difficulty, leaving little sense to the aorist participle πορευθεις of v. 14.

κ*: ι

κ^c: τι

⁴⁷ There is no apparatus entry in NA²⁸, though the CNTTS Apparatus lists several manuscripts as omitting the δε, including A C W Θ 565. 579. 1424 f¹ f¹³ and several Latin manuscripts.

⁴⁸ For a discussion of the textual transmission of Judas' last name, see Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2d ed.; Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1994), 21-22; Philip Comfort, *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary: Commentary on the Variant Readings of the Ancient New Testament Manuscripts and How They Relate to the Major English Translations* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House, 2008), 29, 77.

⁴⁹ NA²⁸ does not note the correction.

The scribe accidentally omitted the τ as he came to the end of the line, creating a nonsense reading. This was corrected by adding a crossbar to the ι, thus making it a τ, then adding a small ι to complete the word.

D*: οις δε

D^c: οι δε

There is a deleted character between οι and δε. It is either a σ or an ε. In uncial script, the two looked quite similar (ε = € , σ = C), the only difference being the horizontal middle stroke. I choose to follow Scrivener and the IGNTP transcription provided on Cambridge University's Digital Library website for positing the σ.⁵⁰ The inclusion of either letter creates nonsense, and should therefore be considered a simple scribal error in which an unintended letter was accidentally written.

Matt 26:23

D*: αποκρεις

D^c: αποκριθεις

A later scribe wrote the missing “ιθ” supralinearly, thus correcting the nonsense form “αποκρεις.” This appears to merely be a blunder by the original scribe that was not caught and thus not corrected initially.

Matt 26:26

κ*: εδιδου

κ^c: δους

⁵⁰ Frederick H. Scrivener, *Bezae Codex Cantabrigiensis, Being an Exact Copy, in Ordinary Type, of the Celebrated Uncial Graeco-Latin Manuscript of the Four Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, Written Early in the Sixth Century, and Presented to the University of Cambridge by Theodore Beza, A.D. 1581: Edited with a Critical Introduction, Annotations, and Facsimiles* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell and Co., 1864), 82; <http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-NN-00002-00041/166>, accessed January 29, 2015.

The correction is from the imperfect active indicative to the aorist active participle of *διδωμι*. Both are sensible readings, though the imperfect is somewhat awkward without a *και* between *τοις μαθηταις* and *ειπεν*. The majority of manuscripts (including A and W) have both the imperfect and the additional *και*.

κ*: μαθητες
κ^c: μαθηταις

This correction is merely an orthographic change due to the similar pronunciation of the diphthong *αι* and *ε*, as can be seen in their frequent interchange in the manuscripts.⁵¹

Matt 26:28

B*: εκχυνομενον
B^c: εκχυνομενον

This orthographic correction neglects to reinforce one of two adjacent *νυ*. Both forms occur in the manuscripts, with earlier manuscripts generally supporting the *-νυ-* form, though the majority support the *-ν-* spelling.⁵² There is no difference in meaning between the two forms.

Matt 26:29

κ*: γενηματος
κ^c: του γενηματος

Here, the scribe initially omits the article, though later corrects the mistake. The preceding *τουτου* is probably at fault for the omission, thus repeating “του” three times in a row in the scribe’s exemplar (letters involved in the error underlined):

ΕΚΤΟΥΤΟΥΤΟΥΓΕΝΗΜΑΤΟΣ

⁵¹ Caragounis, *Development of Greek*, 374, 510-15. The same type of correction in κ also occurs at 26:31, 33, 52, 54, 56.

⁵² Blass and Debrunner, *Greek Grammar*, §73.

Such repetition would make it easy to skip over the article. This same error also occurs in P^{37*} C and L.

Matt 26:33

κ*: *omit*

κ^c: *ει και*

The original form in κ has no conditional element to Peter's exclamation, thus having him say, rather matter-of-factly, "All will fall away because of you, I will never fall away." Not only does the scribe correct the text by adding in the conditional *ει*, but an emphatic *και* is also added (as in W), thus changing Peter's statement to "Even if all fall away because of you, I will never fall away." The original form in κ hardly makes sense in the context; Peter's statement demands the conditional element in order to provide contrast between himself and everyone else. The addition or omission of the emphatic *και* does not change whether or not the text makes sense, though its inclusion does replicate the text of Mark 14:29, indicating that harmonization was a factor in its introduction. The vast majority of manuscripts do not include *και*.

Matt 26:35

B*: *ομοιως*

B^c: *ομοιω*

The reinking scribe neglects to reinforce the *σ* of *ομοιως*, actually creating a nonsense reading. There is no good reason why the scribe would wish to "delete" this letter.

Matt 26:39

κ*: *εσστιν*

κ^c: *εστιν*

This correction concerns the dittography of a single *σ*. The original form in κ splits the word between the two faces of the same leaf, with the bottom right corner of the *recto* ending

with εσ-, and the top left of the *verso* beginning with -στιν. Therefore, when the scribe turned the leaf over, he forgot that he had already written the σ and wrote it a second time.

Matt 26:40

D*: αυτους

D^c: τους μαθητας αυτου⁵³

D* may have been influenced by the parallel phrase immediately following this place (και ευρισκει αυτους), thus using the pronoun in place of the noun. Both readings make sense, though Jesus having just returned from a time of solitude makes the use of the pronoun alone somewhat awkward. The correction brings the text into greater conformity with the text of the majority of manuscripts, though adding the αυτου to specify that they are *his* disciples (though there is no ambiguity that this addition resolves).

Matt 26:41

W*: εισερ(χησθε)⁵⁴

W^c: εισελθητε

The scribe has made an *in scribendo* correction,⁵⁵ seemingly beginning to write εισερχησθε, though realizing his error after writing the ρ. After erasing the ρ, he continues with -λθητε. Royse proposes that the presence of ερχεται in the previous verse influenced the scribe's initial tendency to use the present subjunctive rather than the aorist.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, the scribe quickly realized his budding error and remedied it by maintaining the reading in his exemplar.

⁵³ Unfortunately, the NA²⁸ apparatus has erroneously reversed the direction of change for this variant.

⁵⁴ Proposed by Edgar J. Goodspeed, "The Freer Gospels," *AJT* 17 (1917): 409; cited favorably by James R. Royse, "The Corrections in the Freer Gospels Codex," in *The Freer Biblical Manuscripts: Fresh Studies of an American Treasure Trove* (ed. L. W. Hurtado; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 189.

⁵⁵ Meaning a correction in which "a scribe begins to write an erroneous reading, but then notices his error as he is making it and corrects it." James R. Royse, *Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri* (NTTSD 36; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 115, n. 65.

⁵⁶ Royse, "Corrections in the Freer Gospels Codex," 189.

Matt 26:42

κ*: λ̄εγω̄ν
κ¹: ο̄ ῙC̄ λ̄εγω̄ν

Here we can see two stages of correction concerning either the inclusion or exclusion of ο̄ ῙC̄. The inclusion of ο̄ ῙC̄ makes the subject of the sentence explicit, though its exclusion does not create any real ambiguity.

Matt 26:45

D*: του
D^c: τους

Here, the original scribe of D accidentally left off the σ of the accusative plural article for μαθητας. A later scribe or reader realized the error and wrote the σ supralinearly.

Matt 26:46

κ*: παραδιδων
κ^c: παραδιδους

The original scribe of κ writes the form παραδιδων for the masculine nominative singular present active participle of παραδιδωμι. This form is unusual because it follows the ω-conjugation rather than that of the expected μι-conjugation.⁵⁷ This grammatical difficulty is corrected to its more proper form, παραδιδους.

Matt 26:53

B*: δυνομαι
B^c: δυναμαι

⁵⁷ For information on the shift to the ω-conjugation in μι-verbs, see Blass and Debrunner, *Greek Grammar*, §92-94.

B* originally uses an *o* connecting vowel, which is then corrected to the more usual *α* connecting vowel. The use of the *o* connecting vowel here is a singular reading of B*, though it can be found in ancient papyri.⁵⁸

κ*: ωδε
κ^c: omit

The original reading in κ includes both temporal and spatial elements to Jesus statement, literally “and he will place beside me *here* [and] *now* more than twelve legions of angels.” The correction omits the spatial element, ωδε, by adding supralinear dots above its characters.

κ*: πλειω
κ^c: πλειους

This correction changes the adjective from the neuter plural accusative to the feminine. This variation is part of a larger textual problem surrounding the phrase πλειω δωδεκα λεγιωνας αγγελων (“more than twelve legions of angels”).⁵⁹ The specific problem here concerns the gender of the comparative adjective, which is made more difficult by δωδεκα being an indeclinable cardinal number.⁶⁰ This correction of the adjective to the feminine probably indicates an attempt to bring it into agreement with the feminine λεγ(α)ιωνων. There is no difference in meaning between the two forms.

κ*: λεγιωνων
κ^c: λεγαιωνων

This orthographic change is symptomatic of the different ways this word was pronounced and spelled to reflect its respective pronunciation. It is most often spelled either λεγεων or

⁵⁸ See LSJ, 451-2: “δυναμαι.”

⁵⁹ This is the wording of the phrase as reconstructed in NA²⁸, though κ differs (aside from the present correction) in that “legions” is in the genitive (with an orthographic correction of its own; see below). See also the correction of αγγελους to αγγελων.

⁶⁰ For the use of comparative adjectives with numbers, see Herbert Weir Smyth, *A Greek Grammar for Colleges* (rev. G. Messing; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), §1074.

λεγιων, utilizing either the e-sound or the i-sound in the second syllable.⁶¹ The κ* form utilizes the i-sound, while the κ^c form has added the α to create the αι diphthong, which was a viable option for representing the e-sound.⁶² There is no difference in meaning between the two forms.

D*: λεγειωνης

D^c: λεγειονας

Here, the correcting scribe makes two orthographic corrections. The first concerns the o-sound, changed from an ω to an ο, which were pronounced similarly.⁶³ The second concerns the vowel of the accusative plural ending, which was changed from the unexpected η to the typical α. This correction cannot be readily connected with similar pronunciations, since η was usually confused with ει, ι and υ, not α.⁶⁴

κ*: αγγελους

κ^c: αγγελων

Since the original form had the accusative plural, this has Jesus saying that he is able to call upon his Father and have him send “twelve angels of legions,” rather than “twelve legions of angels,” as the corrected text reads.

Matt 26:54

κ*: δι

κ^c: δει

This is an orthographic change concerning the similar sound of ι and the ει diphthong.⁶⁵

There is no difference in meaning between the two forms.

⁶¹ See LSJ, 1033: “λεγεω”; BDAG, 587-8: “λεγιων.”

⁶² Caragounis, *Development of Greek*, 374, 510-13.

⁶³ Caragounis, *Development of Greek*, 513-4, 538-46.

⁶⁴ Caragounis, *Development of Greek*, 367, 370-72, 509, 514, 518-37.

⁶⁵ Caragounis, *Development of Greek*, 365-7, 502-8.

Matt 26:56

B*: εφυγον οι δε κρατησαντες τον ιν εφυγον οι δε κρατησαντες τον ιν

B^c: εφυγον οι δε κρατησαντες τον ιν

Here, the reinking scribe detects and corrects a dittography in which the initial scribe wrote “εφυγον οι δε κρατησαντες τον ιν” twice. Apparently the initial scribe’s exemplar had lines that were just wide enough to accommodate this amount of text, and when it came time to move on to the next line’s text they accidentally picked up at “εφυγον...” again. Interestingly, the reinking scribe omits the text written first, rather than the duplicated text, from B.

Matt 26:57

B*: πρεσβυτεροι

B^c: πρεβυτεροι

Here, the reinking scribe neglects to reinforce the σ of *πρεσβυτεροι*.⁶⁶ This word breaks over two lines, with *πρεσ-* occurring at the end of one line and *-βυτεροι* beginning the next. Why the scribe chooses to not trace over this σ is difficult to determine. The two other examples of *πρεσβυτερος* in this chapter both have the σ traced over, thus demonstrating that this scribe is not inherently opposed to this spelling. The letter itself is quite small compared to the rest of the characters of the same line, as is to be expected since it falls at the end of the line. Since “*πρεβυτεροι*” is not a valid spelling alternative, it is most likely that the reinking scribe made an error himself, rather than an intentional deletion.

Matt 26:59

B*: ψευδομαρτυραν

B^c: ψευδομαρτυριαν

⁶⁶ This is not apparent in the 1868 pseudo-facsimile, the difference in ink between the σ and the previous letters can only be seen in the color images. Color images have recently become available online at http://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1209 (accessed March 12, 2015).

Here, the scribe has accidentally omitted the ι. Since the removal of the ι does not present an acceptable alternative spelling, the error was corrected by reintroducing the omitted letter.

Matt 26:60

A*: μαρτυρες

A^c: ψευδομαρτυρες

Here, the difference concerns whether it was “witnesses” or “false witnesses” that finally came forward to testify against Jesus. The original writing has been erased with ψευδομαρτυρες written overtop, greatly obscuring the original reading.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, it does appear that “μαρτυρες” was written first, creating a singular reading only found in A*. Elsewhere in the immediate context, the chief priests and the Sanhedrin consistently seek “false testimony” (ψευδομαρτυριαν) to be delivered by “false witnesses” (ψευδομαρτυρων). It would be surprising if, all of the sudden, two “witnesses” (μαρτυρες) came forward, seemingly indicating that their testimony is reliable. This reading may have been the result of parablepsis (with letters involved underlined):

ΕΛΘΟΝΤΕΣ ΔΥΟ ΨΕΥΔΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΕΣ

Though the fact that δυο and υδο do not have the same order of letters, they each end in an ο, and the general cluster of the three letters together may have led the scribe to skip from one cluster to the next, thus omitting “ψευδο.” This may have been easy for the scribe to do since the reading resulting from this error remains sensible. It must be said that NA²⁸ omits either reading from its body text, deeming it a later addition. This is probably right, as scribes would have been more likely to add ψευδομαρτυρες after δυο, under influence of the immediate context, than they would

⁶⁷ The original reading “μαρτυρες” is listed as A*^{vid} in NA²⁸.

be to omit it.⁶⁸ Even without making a judgment as to the original form, the intentional addition (or substitution) of μαρτυρες in A seems highly unlikely, with accidental omission of “ψευδο” being much more probable. Therefore, this correction most likely corrects a scribal error.

Matt 26:61

D*: τουτον ηκουσαμεν λεγοντα

D^c: τουτου ηκουσαμεν λεγοντος

Two words are changed, though this still constitutes only one correction since it concerns grammar, and the change of one word necessitates the change of the other. The original form has both the demonstrative pronoun and the present participle in the accusative singular, whereas the corrected form changes both to the genitive singular, thus creating a genitive absolute.⁶⁹

Matt 26:62

A*: σοι καταμαρτυρουσιν

A^c: σου καταμαρτυρουσιν

Since καταμαρτυρω takes a genitive as its object, the original dative for the personal pronoun is a nonsense reading, prompting the correction to the genitive.

Matt 26:62-63

κ*: omit

κ^c: ουδεν αποκρινη το ουτοι σου καταμαρτυρουσιν ο δε ις εσιωπα και ο αρχιερευς ειπεν αυτω

Though at first this seems like a serious difference, on closer examination this is a transparent case of parablepsis. The words just before the omission are “ο αρχιερευς ειπεν αυτω,” the same words that come at the end of the omitted portion of text. Therefore, the scribe’s eye skipped from the first occurrence of “ο αρχιερευς ειπεν αυτω” to the second occurrence of the same phrase, omitting the intervening text.

⁶⁸ Comfort, *Text and Translation*, 80.

⁶⁹ See the further discussion of this variant below under “Significant Variants.”

Matt 26:63

B*: ζωτος

B^c: ζωντος

B^c corrects the nonsense form “ζωτος” by restoring the missing *ν*, which had presumably been omitted accidentally.

Matt 26:65

κ*: αρχιερευς

κ^c: ο αρχιερευς

The correction adds the article. The article is present in κ for the two other occurrences of *αρχιερευς* in this pericope (26:62, 63).⁷⁰ Furthermore, *αρχιερευς* always has the article in Matthew, thus making the anathorous form highly suspect. There does not seem to be any reason that the article would be intentionally left out, either by the author or a scribe. The scribe of κ accidentally omitted the article, which was corrected by inserting it supralinearly.

κ*: και λεγει ιδε

κ^c: λεγων

The reading of κ* is a singular reading⁷¹ (though supported by the Syriac Peshitta). The main difference centers on the use of the present indicative in κ* instead of the participle, which in turn requires the addition of the *και*. The addition of *ιδε* may have been influenced by the use of the same term later in the verse.

Matt 26:66

κ*: ειπαν

κ^c: ειπον

⁷⁰ Technically, the second occurrence (26:63) is given by κ^c, though this is part of a correction of a larger leap (see comments above for 26:62-63), not specifically concerning the article.

⁷¹ According to the CNTTS Apparatus.

This correction concerns what the scribe considered to be the proper form of the third person plural aorist active indicative of $\lambda\epsilon\gamma\omega$. The original form found in \aleph^* has the second aorist stem, yet retains the α connecting vowel of the first aorist ending. This is corrected to have both a second aorist stem and connecting vowel.⁷² There is no difference in meaning between the two.

3.2.4. *Significant Variants*

Of the variant readings that exist between these codices, only a few have shown themselves to be significant variants.⁷³ For the present investigation, “significance” is not strictly defined as readings that are useful for the establishment of the original text or for determining manuscript clusters. Here, we are not just interested in where changes came from, but also *why* they were enacted, insofar as those motivations can be sufficiently discerned. This means that while nonsense readings, demonstrable scribal errors, and matters of orthography will naturally fall outside of this analysis, singular readings and the motives behind their introduction will at times be discussed in what follows.⁷⁴ At the beginning of each discussion, the variant will be

⁷² Blass and Debrunner, *Greek Grammar*, §80-81, 1.

⁷³ It must be said that any designation of significance is necessarily relative to the purpose of the inquiry; see James T. Clemons, “Variants for Whom? Some Proposed Classifications,” *SBL Seminar Papers, 1974* (2 vols.; SBLSP; Cambridge, Mass.: Society of Biblical Literature, 1974), 2:37-42. Some types of evidence (orthographic, codicological, paleographic, etc.) may be important for certain text-critical (or other historical-critical) concerns, though not others. See Eldon Jay Epp, “Toward the Clarification of the Term ‘Textual Variant,’” in *Studies in the Theory and Method of New Testament Textual Criticism* (ed. E. J. Epp and G. D. Fee; SD 45; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 48. Epp, “Textual Criticism in Exegesis,” 81 defined significant variants as those “that make sense and are unlikely to be the result of accidental scribal phenomena.” Colwell and Tune, “Classifying and Evaluating,” 96-105, did not provide specific positive criteria for calling a reading “significant,” though they did provide three negative criteria which identified “insignificant” readings. These were the Nonsense Reading (a “variant reading which does not make sense, and/or cannot be found in the lexicon, and/or is not Greek grammar”), the Dislocated Reading (concerning leaps ahead or behind, resulting in haplography or dittography), and the Singular Reading (a reading found in only one Greek manuscript). For discussion of Singular Readings with versional support, see Epp, “Toward Clarification,” 52, 54-56; Epp, “It’s All About Variants: A Variant-Conscious Approach to New Testament Textual Criticism,” *HTR* 100 (2007): 278. Epp, “Toward Clarification,” 60, has been more direct about the difficulty in providing positive criteria for significant readings: “It is easier to define ‘variant’ in this proper sense of ‘significant reading’ by indicating what it is not than to specify what it is. To state the obvious, a ‘significant variant’ is any reading that is not determined to be ‘insignificant,’ that is, a reading that is not a nonsense reading, not a demonstrable error, not an inconsequential orthographic difference, and not a singular reading.”

⁷⁴ Though singular readings have not had any extensive currency in the transmission history of the New Testament, they may nevertheless betray the motivations of a scribe, and thus something about their “scribal consciousness.” Furthermore, while singular readings may not have been preserved in another Greek manuscript, we must presume

given, with its manuscript support provided. The five codices under consideration will be listed in bold, though this information will be supplemented with the other manuscripts cited for each respective apparatus entry in NA²⁸ (where applicable). Modern editions of the Greek New Testament that follow a reading are provided in brackets.

Matt 26:3

και οι Φαρισαιοι **W**

και οι γραμματεις K Γ Δ (-οι) 579. 1241. ℳ it sy^{p,h} [RP]

omit P⁴⁵ **Ⲁ A B D L** Θ 0293 *f*^{1.13} 33^{vid}. 565. 700. 892. 1424. lat sy^s co [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ SBLGNT WH]

Here, the manuscripts divide over who made up the party of Jews plotting to kill Jesus. All manuscripts agree in listing “the chief priests and elders,” though others also include either “and the scribes” or “and the Pharisees” in between these other two groups. While the majority of manuscripts include “and the scribes,” the early witness of P⁴⁵ and the combined testimony of Ⲁ, A, B, and D represent strong external support for the omission of either phrase, limiting those involved at this place to “the chief priests and elders.”

Even so, it will be helpful to see how these combinations occur elsewhere in Matthew. The combination of the chief priest(s) and the scribes occurs elsewhere in Matthew at 2:4; 20:18; 21:15; 26:57; 27:41. The combination of the chief priest(s) and Pharisees occurs elsewhere in Matthew at 21:45; 27:62. The combination of the chief priest(s) and elders occurs elsewhere in Matthew at 21:23; 26:47; 27:1; 27:3; 27:12; 27:20. At no point in Matthew are the chief priests, scribes, Pharisees and elders listed together.

that *all* variant readings were themselves singular at the point of their introduction, however short-lived that singularity may have been.

The following table lists combinations of chief priest(s), elders, scribes and Pharisees found in Matthew’s gospel, with verse references where each combination can be found. Verses that exhibit variation concerning the listed parties are given in parentheses.

| Combination | Citation | Count |
|-----------------------------------|---|------------------|
| Chief Priests and Scribes | 2:4; 20:18; 21:15 | 3 |
| Chief Priests and Pharisees | 21:45; 27:62 | 2 |
| Chief Priests and Elders | 21:23; 26:47; 27:1, 3, 12, 20 | 6 |
| Chief Priests, Elders and Scribes | 16:21; 26:57; (27:41) | 3 |
| Scribes and Pharisees | 5:20; (12:38); (15:1); 23:2, 13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29 | 10 ⁷⁵ |
| Prophets, Sages and Scribes | 23:34 | 1 |

Of these combinations, NA²⁸ only identifies variation at three passages. At 12:38 the majority of manuscripts omit “and Pharisees.” At 15:1 the manuscripts disagree only concerning the proper order of scribes and Pharisees—no manuscripts alter who is included in the list. At 27:41 some manuscripts replace “elders” with “Pharisees,” while others merely add “Pharisees” in addition to “elders.”⁷⁶ The longer reading appears to be a conflation of the two shorter readings, and should be rejected since nowhere else in Matthew are the chief priests, scribes, Pharisees and elders listed together. Furthermore, the combination of chief priests, scribes and Pharisees is also unattested in Matthew, making the substitution of “Pharisees” for “elders” suspect.

We can see that when it came to listing these various groups of Jewish leaders together, Matthew is not slavishly committed to one particular list. However, there does appear to be a

⁷⁵ The combination of “scribes and Pharisees,” at first glance, appears to be the preferred combination in Matthew. However, when one considers that the repetition of this combination in Matt 23 is due to its use as part of the formal introduction of a new “woe” pronounced by Jesus, it can be seen that its total count is artificially high and its proportional importance thus greatly reduced. Had the author chosen a different combination, that combination would have been used most often, though only due to the literary function of a repeated formal introduction. In other words, the use of this combination seven times in Matt 23 is really the result of only one literary choice, not seven independent decisions. Thus for the purpose of comparing how often the author Matthew employs various combinations of Jewish leaders, the use of “scribes and Pharisees” more accurately represents four, rather than ten, literary decisions.

⁷⁶ One manuscript (Γ) lacks both “elders” and “Pharisees.” This reading is most likely a harmonization to Mark 15:31.

preference for the combination of chief priests and elders. Thus, from the perspective of intrinsic probability, it seems most likely that the author of Matthew would have written “chief priests and elders.”

The inclusion of *και οι Φαρισαιοι* is a singular reading in W. Henry Sanders judged this reading to be harmonistic, referencing Mark 14:1; Luke 22:2; John 11:47 as support.⁷⁷ Of these, only John 11:47 has *και οι Φαρισαιοι*, while both Mark 14:1 and Luke 22:2 read *και οι γραμματεις*. It is possible that he intended to say that *both* readings were harmonistic (each being a later insertion), since the reference to Mark 14:1 and Luke 22:2 does not support harmonization as the cause for *και οι Φαρισαιοι* being in Matt 26:3 of W. Again, the absence of the combination chief priests, elders and Pharisees elsewhere in Matthew, combined with the reading’s singularity, serves as evidence against W’s reading here. It seems best to see W’s reading, with Sanders, as a harmonization to John 11:47.

Though not in any of the codices that are the focus of this investigation, the reading that adds *και οι γραμματεις* does present a combination known elsewhere in Matthew (16:21; 26:57; 27:41). While accidental omission due to homoioteleuton is possible (*οι αρχιερεις και οι γραμματεις*), harmonization to Mark 14:1 and Luke 22:2 seems like the most probable reason for their inclusion in some manuscripts of Matthew.

Matt 26:7

πολυτιμου **ⲛ A D L Θ** 33. 565. 892. 1424 sy^{p,hmg}

βαρυτιμου **B K W Γ Δ** 0293 *f*^{1,13} 579. 700. 1241. *l* 844 **Ⲛ** sy^{s,h} [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT RP]

⁷⁷ Henry A. Sanders, *The New Testament Manuscripts in the Freer Collection: Part I, The Washington Manuscript of the Four Gospels* (New York: Macmillan, 1912), 63.

The choice of reading here makes little difference in meaning since *πολυτιμος* and *βαρυτιμος* are synonyms, both meaning “very expensive, valuable, precious.” What is significant is that *πολυτιμος* is the word used in the parallel pericope at John 12:3. Neither word is used frequently in the New Testament, though *πολυτιμος* does occur three times as opposed to the single occurrence of *βαρυτιμος* here, so change from a rare word to a more common word may be at work. Even if this is the case, the shared terminology between Matthew and John as a result of the substitution can hardly be coincidental. Therefore, it seems best to conclude that harmonization to John’s gospel was the primary motivation for changing the reading to *πολυτιμος*.⁷⁸

Matt 26:15

αργυρια **⋈ B W pm** [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT RP]

αργυρα **A**

στατηρας **D a b q r¹; Eus^{pt}**

στατηρας αργυριου **f¹ h**

This variant concerns the term used to describe the money given to Judas for his betrayal of Jesus. While the reading unanimously accepted by modern editions uses the general term *αργυριον* (“silver; silver money”), D specifies that this silver money was given in *στατηρας* (“staters”).⁷⁹ These two readings were then conflated by some manuscripts, thus yielding the reading *στατηρας αργυριου* (“silver staters”).

⁷⁸ Comfort, *Text and Translation*, 77; Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28* (WBC 33B; Dallas: Word Books, 1995), 756. NA²⁸ apparatus also marks *πολυτιμου* as a reading influenced by a parallel passage.

⁷⁹ This corresponds to the Latin *stateras* on the opposing page. The silver given to Judas is referenced again at Matt 27:3, 5, and 9. While D is missing almost all of its Greek text for Matt 27:2-12, the Latin page of these verses is extant. It is noteworthy that each reference to silver on this page uses *argentum* or *argenteos* (more generally referring to silver), rather than *stater*, making its use at 26:15 all the more peculiar.

Matt 26:17

ετοιμασωμεν **Ⲣ A B D** [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT RP]

απελθοντες ετοιμασωμεν **W**

The inclusion of *απελθοντες* brings Matthew's text into conformity with the wording of Mark 14:12. There is no reason why it would have been omitted if it had been present originally, making harmonization the best explanation for its introduction.

Matt 26:20

δωδεκα P^{37vid.45vid} **B D K Γ f^{1.13}** 565. 579. 700. l 2211 *pm* (sy^s) sa^{mss} mae bo; Eus [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ RP]

δωδεκα μαθητων **Ⲣ A L W Δ Θ** 33. 892. 1241. 1424. l 844 *pm* lat sy^h sa^{mss} mae bo [WH⁸⁰ SBLGNT]

δωδεκα μαθητων αυτου 0281 it vg^{cl} sy^p

The shortest reading accords with the wording found at Mark 14:17, perhaps indicating that *μαθητων* was omitted in order to harmonize to Mark.⁸¹ However, this reading has early and diverse external support, pushing the omission to a very early stage if it did occur. The longest reading has limited external support and is an obvious expansion.

Matt 26:23

ο εμβαψας μετ εμου την χειρα εν τω τρυβλιω **Ⲣ A B** [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT]

ο εμβαψας μετ εμου εν τω τρυβλιω την χειρα **W** [RP]

ο ενβαπτομενος την χειρα μετ εμου εις το τρυβαλιον **D**

⁸⁰ Westcott and Hort enclosed *μαθητων* in brackets, marking this variation unit as one of their "first class" of variations, in which "both readings have some good ancient authority, and each has a reasonable probability of being the true reading of the autograph." Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort, *Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1882; repr., Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988), 291.

⁸¹ This appears to be the case concerning the same phrase at Matt 20:17, where *μαθητων* seems to have been omitted in order to conform Matthew to Mark and/or Luke. See Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 41-42.

The scribe of D changes the text to match the wording found at Mark 14:20. While *την χειρα* is preserved (despite its absence in Mark), each of the surrounding words are altered to match Mark. This includes the change from the aorist active to the present middle participle of *εμβαπτω*, the substitution of the prepositional phrase *εις το τρυβαλιον* (note the unusual spelling of *τρυβλιον*), as well as a word order change to present the word cluster *μετ εμου εις το τρυβαλιον* as it appears in Mark. The reading in W only concerns word order, though it may also be motivated by matching Mark’s word order, but the change does not extend to grammar.

Matt 26:23

| | |
|---------|---|
| ουτος | ⲛ A B D <i>pm</i> [NA ²⁸ UBS ⁵ WH SBLGNT RP] |
| εκεινος | W |

A singular reading in W, *εκεινος* was most likely substituted for *ουτος* based on the two following instances of *εκεινος* that occur as part of Jesus’ statements about the man who will betray him (v. 24).

Matt 26:26

| | |
|-----------|---|
| αρτον | P ⁴⁵ ⲛ B C D L Z Θ <i>f</i> ¹ 33. 579. 700. 892. 1424. 1844. 12211 <i>co</i> [NA ²⁸ UBS ⁵ WH SBLGNT] |
| τον αρτον | A K W Γ Δ 0160 ^{vid} <i>f</i> ¹³ 565. 1241 <i>ⲛ</i> [RP] |

Here, the manuscripts divide over whether or not to attach the article to *αρτον* (“bread”). Though a variant concerning an article is not automatically considered significant, the fact that the articles for both the bread and cup of the Lord’s Supper in Matt 26 were a matter of textual disagreement indicates that this was a meaningful variant for early readers and scribes. As with the cup (see comments below), the tendency would have been for scribes to add, rather than delete, the article, perhaps due to liturgical influence.

Matt 26:26

ευλογησας P⁴⁵ **κ B C D L Z Θ** 0160. 0281. 0298^{vid}. 33. 700. 892. l 2211 *pm sy*^{s.p.hmg}
co; (Or) [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ SBLGNT WH]

ευχαριστησας **A K W Γ Δ f**^{1.13} 565. 579. 1241. l 844 *pm sy*^h [RP]

omit 1424

Here, the manuscripts disagree concerning whether Jesus “blessed” (ευλογησας) the bread or “gave thanks” (ευχαριστησας) for it when instituting the Lord’s Supper. That Jesus “blessed” the bread is given early support by P⁴⁵. Furthermore, the testimony of κ and B shows the unified witness of the Alexandrian tradition. The additional support provided by D makes a strong case for accepting ευλογησας.

When it comes to internal evidence, the wording of the other New Testament passages that describe Jesus’ institution of the Lord’s Supper are of particular importance. The following table displays the readings found at these parallel passages.

| Citation | Reading(s) | Emblem |
|-----------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Matt 26:27 | ευχαριστησας | Cup |
| Mark 14:22-25 | ευλογησας ευχαριστησας | Bread Cup |
| Luke 22:15-20 | ευχαριστησας ευχαριστησας | Cup Bread |
| 1 Cor 11:23-26 | ευχαριστησας | Bread ⁸² |

None of these parallel passages exhibit textual variation for Jesus’ action concerning either the bread or the cup. The Synoptic tradition is divided, with Matthew either resembling Mark or Luke depending on which reading is selected for Matthew’s account. Therefore it seems most likely that harmonization is at fault for the variant readings in Matthew, either to the immediate context (the cup in Matt 26:27) or to the readings found in the other books. The harmonization to

⁸² Though also the cup by implication, “ωσαυτως και το ποτηριον” (1 Cor 11:25).

the other books could of course cut either way, with Matthew’s reading being conformed to Mark’s, or conversely to Luke and Paul’s.

If Matthew’s account had originally read *ευχαριστησας* for both the bread and cup, only harmonization to Mark’s gospel would explain the substitution of *ευλογησας* for the bread. However, if *ευλογησας* were original, the substitution of *ευχαριστησας* could be motivated by harmonization to Luke’s gospel, 1 Corinthians or Matthew’s wording concerning the cup in the next verse. Therefore, it seems best to conclude that Matthew originally had *ευλογησας*, though this reading was changed to *ευχαριστησας*, motivated by harmonization.⁸³

Matt 26:27

ποτηριον **ⲛ B L W Z Δ Θ** 0281. 0298 *f*¹ 33. 700. 892. *l* 2211 [NA²⁸ UBS⁵
SBLGNT WH]

το ποτηριον P⁴⁵ **A C D K Γ** *f*¹³ 565. 1241 *pm* [RP]

Here, the textual problem concerns whether Jesus took *the* cup, or simply *a* cup. From a strictly grammatical perspective, the addition of the article may or may not make a significant difference in meaning. In Greek, the article can carry the same meaning as the definite article in English, though the absence of the article does not necessarily make a word “indefinite.”⁸⁴ This is to say that we should not automatically read this as a significant variant based on our

⁸³ So Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 770; and Nolland, *Matthew*, 1069. It is difficult to explain the absence of either phrase in 1424. There is no reason why a scribe would have intentionally omitted either phrase, regardless of which was in their exemplar, and there is no obvious scribal error that could have caused the omission. This could be explained as haplography due to homoioarchton, though only if 1424’s exemplar lacked the *και* preceding *ευλογησας/ευχαριστησας* (as does W, contra NA²⁸ apparatus). In 1424, “*εκλασεν*” is broken over two lines, with only the first *ε* being written at the end of the first line. Therefore, it could have been that the scribe began either *ευλογησας* or *ευχαριστησας* by writing the first *ε* at the end of the first line, then when returning to his exemplar his eye picked up at the first *ε* of *εκλασεν*, causing him to skip over the intervening material. This seems to be the only explanation for an accidental omission of the phrase by the scribe. While this explanation is necessarily speculative, the singularity of 1424’s reading combined with its relatively late date (9-10th cent.) makes the total absence of either phrase highly suspect.

⁸⁴ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 207-11.

familiarity with the function of the English definite article. Nevertheless, the fact that variation concerning the use of the article occurs in each of the parallel passages from the Synoptic gospels indicates that this was a significant variant that made a difference in meaning to early readers and scribes.

| Citation | Reading(s) |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mark 14:23 | ποτηριον το ποτηριον |
| Luke 22:17 | ποτηριον το ποτηριον |
| 1 Cor 11:25-26 ⁸⁵ | το ποτηριον |

Since each of the Synoptics have variants over the article, it is difficult to argue for harmonization of any one gospel to any of the others.⁸⁶ It is possible that the use of the article in 1 Cor 11 could be what the gospels were harmonized to, though this is by no means certain. It is most likely that scribes would tend to add the article in or to specify, rather than generalize, that Jesus took *the* cup, perhaps due to liturgical influence.⁸⁷

Matt 26:28

της διαθηκης P^{37.45vid} ⲛ B L Z Θ 0298^{vid}. 33 mae bo^{ms}; Ir^{arm} [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ SBLGNT WH]

της καινης διαθηκης A C D K W Γ Δ f^{1.13} 565. 579. 700. 892. 1241. 1424. l 844. l 2211 ℞ latt sy sa bo; Ir^{lat} [RP]

Here the manuscripts divide over whether Jesus referred to the cup as his blood of “the *new covenant*” (της καινης διαθηκης) or simply “the covenant” (της διαθηκης). The early evidence provided by P³⁷ and P^{45vid}, combined with that of ⲛ and B, provides strong external support for the shorter reading. However, the longer reading has significant support as well, including three

⁸⁵ το ποτηριον occurs three times in these verses, each without variants.

⁸⁶ This does not mean that harmonization was not a possible motivation for scribes, only that the direction of harmonization is difficult to discern since we cannot know which gospel’s reading was changed first.

⁸⁷ Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 54; Comfort, *Text and Translation*, 78. Nolland, *Matthew*, 1069.

of the five manuscripts under consideration (A, D, and W). In this case, it is internal evidence that will be more definitive for determining the earliest form of this phrase.

Again, the primary internal consideration is the wording of parallel passages elsewhere in the New Testament. The following table provides the parallel citations and the respective reading(s) found at each text:

| Citation | Reading(s) |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| Mark 14:24 | της διαθηκης της καινης διαθηκης |
| Luke 22:20 | η καινη διαθηκη |
| 1 Cor 11:25 | η καινη διαθηκη |

While there are differences in grammar between Matthew/Mark and Luke/1 Corinthians, it is clear that the primary difference concerns the status of *καινη* at this location. The uniformity of Luke's and 1 Corinthians' transmission history at this location indicates that these texts were originally written with the wording we now see in our critical texts. It is the addition/omission at Matt 26:28 and Mark 14:24 that requires greater attention. On the one hand, *καινης* could have been omitted as a result of homoioteleuton (της καινης διαθηκης).⁸⁸ However, it seems unlikely that this accidental omission would have occurred in *both* Matthew and Mark. It seems more likely that the text at these places has actually been harmonized to match the parallel texts from Luke and/or Paul, perhaps also influenced by liturgical practice.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 54 does not entertain the possibility that *καινης* was omitted due to homoioteleuton, saying, "if [*καινης*] had been present originally, there is no good reason why anyone would have deleted it." This is certainly true when it comes to *intentional* deletion, though it is possible that such a deletion could have occurred accidentally.

⁸⁹ Comfort, *Text and Translation*, 78; Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 771; France, *Matthew*, 996 n. 10; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21-28: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; trans. J. Crouch; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 364, n. 2; Nolland, *Matthew*, 1069; and Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew* (NAC; Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 391. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 54 only lists Luke 22:20 as a potential source of harmonization, despite Paul's eucharistic formula having the same wording for this phrase. While one would imagine that comparison among the Gospels would be the most likely candidate for harmonization, Pauline influence cannot be ruled out. It seems unlikely that either parallel passage can, with any certainty, bear the sole responsibility for the harmonization.

Matt 26:31

διασκορπισθησονται τα προβατα P⁵³ **σ** **A B C L** 067. 0281. *f*¹³ 33. 700. 892. 1241 *pm* [NA²⁸
UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT]

διασκορπισθησεται τα προβατα P^{37.45} **D K W Γ Δ Θ** *f*¹ 565. 579. 1424 *pm* [RP]

This variant concerns whether the verb should have a plural or singular third person verb. In Attic Greek, the general rule was that neuter plural subjects took singular verbs.⁹⁰ However, Attic writers did not always follow this rule, and Koine Greek had become even less stringent in this respect, frequently treating neuter plural subjects as true plurals, thus pairing them with plural verbs.⁹¹

Therefore it seems clear that this variant reflects the scribes' struggle to make sense of the grammar here, understandably so given the inconsistency of ancient practice for this construction. On the one hand, scribes could have made the change from the plural to the singular in order to conform the text to Attic practice. On the other hand, if the text had originally had the singular, a later scribe could have changed it to the plural under the influence of the more relaxed Koine rules. Since the singular would not have been thought of as "wrong," it seems unlikely that it would have been changed to the plural. However, if a scribe had a strict view of neuter plural subjects having singular verbs (as per the general rule), a change from the plural to the singular would be more likely to occur.⁹²

⁹⁰ Since neuter plurals often refer to impersonal objects or animals, the plural takes on a collective sense, resulting in a group being treated grammatically as a singular entity. Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 399-400; Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, §958-9; A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in Light of Historical Research* (2d ed.; New York: Hodder & Stoughton, 1915), 403; Blass and Debrunner, *Greek Grammar*, §133.

⁹¹ Robertson, *Grammar*, 404 poignantly stated, "The only rule on the matter that is true for N. T. Greek is the rule of liberty."

⁹² The choice of reading here may make a real difference as to how this text is understood exegetically. Departure from the general rule that neuter plural subjects are paired with singular verbs could indicate an author's emphasis on the individuality of each member of the plural group. See Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 400; and Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, §959. This intention would be appropriate here, given that Jesus has just stated, "You will all fall away because of me tonight."

Matt 26:36

τοις μαθηταις **B K L Γ Δ 067. 0281. 33. 565. 579. 700. 892. 1241** ʒl vg^{mss} sy^h sa^{mss}
[NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT RP]

τοις μαθηταις αυτου **⋈ A C D W** f¹ 1424 lat sy^{s,p} sa^{mss} mae bo

αυτοις Θ f¹³ l 844

If αυτου had been present originally, there is no reason that it would have been omitted, either accidentally or intentionally. Instead, the longest reading adds the αυτου to match the text at Mark 14:32. The substitution of αυτοις may likewise have been influenced by Luke 22:40.⁹³

Matt 26:40

ισχυσατε **⋈ B D W** pm [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT RP]

ισχυσας **A**

The scribe of A uses the second person singular, while nearly all other witnesses use the second person plural. Since Jesus is speaking directly to Peter here, the plural verb is somewhat surprising, though the other disciples are clearly present as can be seen by the following second person plural imperatives.⁹⁴ Significantly, Mark 14:37 has the singular, which is probably what motivated the change in A.

Matt 26:42

τουτο P³⁷ **⋈ A B C L W Δ^c** 067 f¹ 33. 565 b ff² q sy^h sa^{mss} [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT]

τουτο το ποτηριον **K Γ (Δ*) Θ** 579. 700. 892. 1241. 1424*. l 844 ʒl lat sy^{s,p} mae bo [RP]

το ποτηριον τουτο **D** f¹³ g¹ l

⁹³ Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 779. The NA²⁸ apparatus indicates that this variation unit has been influenced by parallel passages.

⁹⁴ That Peter is explicitly named as the recipient of Jesus' statement, despite it being ultimately addressed to all of the disciples, may be done in order to draw a parallel between the three prayers of Jesus in the garden and the three times Peter denies Jesus after he is arrested. See Nolland, *Matthew*, 1100-1101.

This variant occurs as part of Jesus' second prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, specifically over the inclusion/exclusion and placement of *το ποτηριον*. The omission of *το ποτηριον* altogether has the earliest and strongest (though not the most numerous) manuscript support. There is no obvious scribal error that would explain the accidental omission of *το ποτηριον* if it had been present originally. *το ποτηριον* is present as part of Jesus' first prayer in v. 39, as well as in the Synoptic parallel passages (Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42), none of which exhibit variation. This indicates that the inclusion of *το ποτηριον* is a later addition, intended to harmonize Matt 26:42 with the content of Jesus' first prayer in the same pericope (26:39) and the Synoptic parallels.⁹⁵

Matt 26:44

τον αυτον εκ τριτου **κ***

εκ τριτου τον αυτον **κ^c B W pm** [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT RP]

τον αυτον **P³⁷ A D K f¹ 565. 1424 it**

This variant occurs as part of the narrative framework reporting Jesus' third and final prayer in the garden before his arrest. The shortest text has the early support of P³⁷, combined with both A and D. The combined testimony of κ^c B W provides strong external support for the longer reading.⁹⁶ There is no obvious scribal error that would explain the accidental omission of *εκ τριτου* if it had been present originally. However, it seems appropriate that it would be here in light of *εκ δευτερου* in v. 42. This of course could cut either way, depending on whether or not one thinks Matthew must have been consistent in identifying both the second and third prayers as

⁹⁵ Comfort, *Text and Translation*, 79; Nolland, *Matthew*, 1093; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 392, n. 3. This addition was probably made easier due to the verb (*πιω*, "drink") that followed. Hagner, *Matt 14-28*, 780.

⁹⁶ Note that the correction in κ only concerns word order, not the inclusion or exclusion of *εκ τριτου*.

such. If not, *εκ τριτου* could be seen as a harmonization to v. 42.⁹⁷ If *εκ τριτου τον αυτον* is original, *εκ τριτου* must have been omitted as the result of a scribal lapse.

Matt 26:52

απολουνται P³⁷ **8 A B C D L** Θ 0281 *f*¹ 33. 700. 892. 1424. *l* 844 *pm* sy^s sa bo; Cyr
[NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT]

αποθανουνται K **W Γ Δ** *f*¹³ 565. 579. 1241 *pm* sy^{p,h} mae? [RP]

This variant occurs as part of Jesus’ admonition to a disciple who cut off the ear of the high priest’s servant in defense of Jesus during his arrest. Jesus instructs him to put away his sword, because “all who take up the sword will be destroyed/will die by the sword.” *απολουνται* has impressive early and diverse manuscript support. *αποθνησκω* occurs more frequently in the New Testament (111 occurrences) than does *απολλυμι* (90 occurrences); though Matthew generally uses *απολλυμι* (18 occurrences, not counting this verse) over *αποθνησκω* (5 occurrences). Both communicate roughly the same idea here, though *αποθνησκω* more directly refers to death, whereas *απολλυμι* relies on the reader to infer that destruction means death. Scribes may have recalled Jesus’ prediction of Peter’s denial, to which Peter replies that “even if it is necessary for me to die (*αποθανειν*) with you, I will surely not deny you” (26:35), thus encouraging the introduction of *αποθνησκω* here.⁹⁸ Though this is necessarily speculative, the other factors mentioned make it unlikely that the change would have gone in the other direction.

⁹⁷ See Comfort, *Text and Translation*, 79.

⁹⁸ Though Matthew is silent when it comes to who attacked the high priest’s servant, only referring to him as “one of the ones with Jesus,” John’s gospel explicitly identifies the attacker as Peter (John 18:10-11). This may have allowed scribes to see an ironic juxtaposition between Peter’s statement (Matt 26:35) and Jesus’ admonition (Matt 26:52), which would be further strengthened by shared use of *αποθνησκω*.

Matt 26:55

omit **⊠ B L** 0281. 33. 700. 892. 1424 sy^s sa bo [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT]

προς υμας **(A) C D K W Γ Δ Θ f^{1.13}** 565. 579. 1241. (l 844) ℣ latt sy^{p.h} mae; Eus [RP]

The majority of manuscripts specify that Jesus had sat in the temple on a daily basis “with you,” referring to the members of the crowd that has come to arrest him. If *προς υμας* had been present originally, there is obvious scribal error or other cause that would account for its omission. However, the addition of *προς υμας* conforms Jesus’ statement in Matthew to the parallel passage at Mark 14:49.⁹⁹ This impulse to harmonize parallel passages is the most likely explanation for this variant, indicating that the shorter form is earlier.

Matt 26:59

και οι πρεσβυτεροι **A C K N W Γ Δ f¹** 33. 565. 579. 700. 892^c. 1241. 1424. l 844 ℣ f q sy^{p.h} [RP]

omit **⊠ B D L Θ f¹³** 892* lat co [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ SBLGNT WH]

Here, the problem concerns who were the parties conspiring against Jesus after his arrest, specifically whether “the elders” were included in addition to the chief priests and the Sanhedrin. The closest parallel passage (Mark 14:55) does not add *και οι πρεσβυτεροι*, therefore harmonization between books cannot be the cause.¹⁰⁰ It seems more likely that *και οι πρεσβυτεροι* was added by scribes who were influenced by its use in v. 57.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 787. The NA²⁸ apparatus also identifies this as a reading influenced by a parallel passage.

¹⁰⁰ Theoretically, *και οι πρεσβυτεροι* could have been omitted from Matthew in order to bring it into conformity with Mark, though harmonization typically involved accumulating and conflating material rather than excising it, especially in cases like this where the material in question was not itself objectionable. See Metzger and Ehrman, *Text of the New Testament*, 265.

¹⁰¹ Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 794; Comfort, *Text and Translation*, 79-80.

living God.” There is no scribal phenomenon that would explain the accidental omission of *του ζωντος*. It is more likely that this has been added to conform the text to either the words just spoken by the high priest (“I put you under oath before the living [*του ζωντος*] God”), or perhaps to Peter’s confession at Matt 26:16 (“You are the Christ, the Son of the living [*του ζωντος*] God”).¹⁰⁴ There is no sure way to know which specific text influenced the scribes, though it seems clear that the desire to expand this text in light of one (or both) of these other occurrences in Matthew was the driving force for the addition.

Matt 26:65

την βλασφημιαν **ⲛ B D L Z 700 lat sa bo** [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT]

την βλασφημιαν αυτου **A C K W Γ Δ Θ 0281 f^{1.13} 33. 565. 579. 892. 1241. 1424. l 844 ㉓**
 b f ff² q vg^{mss} sy^{p.h} (mae) [RP]

The majority of manuscripts quote the high priest as saying “Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard *his* blasphemy.” However, several manuscripts do not have the possessive *αυτου*, making it simply “*the* blasphemy.” There is no scribal error that would account for the accidental omission of *αυτου*. The parallel line at Mark 14:64 generally lacks the *αυτου*, though several manuscripts do add the *αυτου* (D f¹ 2542^s sy^s), others add *του στοματος αυτου* (W Θ f¹³ sy^{p.h.}; cf. Luke 22:71), and one (565) conflates both elements to read *την βλασφημιαν αυτου εκ του στοματος αυτου*. This is to say that direct influence from Mark or Luke is unlikely. Instead, it seems that the immediate context (it was, after all, Jesus’ words that the high priest called blasphemous) was the most significant factor in this textual change.

¹⁰⁴ Comfort, *Text and Translation*, 80; Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 795; Nolland, *Matthew*, 1117; and Luz, *Matthew*, 428-9.

Matt 26:67

εραπισαν **⋈ A B D** [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT RP]

εραπισαν αυτον **D** *f*¹ 579. 700. 1 844 sy^{p,h}

Matt 26:67 reports a series of three abuses committed against Jesus once he has been condemned to die. This variant concerns the last of the three, where several manuscripts specify that “they slapped *him*,” with the pronoun being omitted by other manuscripts. The *αυτον* could have been omitted as a result of homoioteleuton (*εραπισαν αυτον*), though the endings of these words only share one letter, making it unlikely that a scribe familiar with Greek would accidentally omit based on such limited similarity. It is more likely that *αυτον* was added because each of the first two actions against Jesus specify their objects, making the isolation of the third verb stand out as awkward.

Matt 26:70

ουκ οιδα τι λεγεις **⋈ A B W** [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT RP]

ουκ οιδα τι λεγεις ουδε επισταμαι **D Δ** (*ουτε*) *f*¹ it sy^s

When Peter is first asked if he was with Jesus, some manuscripts have him say “I do not know what you are saying, *nor do I understand*.” There is no obvious scribal error that would have omitted *ουδε επισταμαι* if it had been present originally. Instead, these manuscripts have added the phrase in order to more closely conform this text to Mark 14:68, which reads *ουτε οιδα ουτε επισταμαι συ τι λεγεις* (“I neither know nor understand what you are talking about”).¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 804; and Nolland, *Matthew*, 1136. Luz, *Matthew*, 454, n.13 notes how Matthew improves upon Mark’s grammar and style by intentionally omitting *ουτε επισταμαι συ* when creating his own account.

Matt 26:71

ἐξελθοντα δε **ⲛ B L Z 33. 892 (a n) [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT]**

ἐξελθοντα δε αυτον **A C K W Γ Δ Θ 0281 f^{1.13} 565. 579. 700. 1241. 1424. l 844 m b r¹ [RP]**

ἐξελθοντος δε αυτου **D lat**

The majority of manuscripts include *αυτον* as the subject for *ἐξελθοντα*, making explicit what would normally be understood. The parallel passage at Mark 14:68 uses the aorist indicative form, thus not a likely factor for the creation of this variant. Instead, it seems that the *αυτον* was added to make the Greek read smoother. Note that D alters the majority reading to create a genitive absolute.

Matt 26:71

αλλη **ⲛ A B W pm [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT RP]**

αλλη παιδισκη **D it vg^{cl}**

When referring to the second servant girl who asserts Peter's association with Jesus, the majority of manuscripts refer to her as simply "another [fem.]," referring back to the use of *παιδισκη* in the previous verse. However, D and several Latin manuscripts expand the text to explicitly read "another servant-girl," making it unnecessary to look back for the referent of *αλλη*.

Matt 26:71

ουτος **ⲛ B D sy^s sa mae [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT]**

και ουτος **A C K L W Γ Δ Θ 0281 f^{1.13} 33. 565. 579. 700. 892. 1241. 1424. l 844 m latt sy^{p.h} bo [RP]**

The majority of manuscripts have the second servant girl say "This one [Peter] was *also* with Jesus of Nazareth," while a handful of significant manuscripts and early versions omit the

“also” portion. While *και* is itself a small word, making it easier for a scribe’s eye to miss, there is no specific scribal error that would account for its accidental omission. Two factors are significant for this variant. First, the first and third people to assert Peter’s association with Jesus in this pericope (vv. 69, 73) each begin their statement with *και συ* (“also you”). This could either indicate that the author of Matthew would have been more likely to open the second assertion with *και* also (though the use of *ουτος* instead of *συ* could argue against this), or that scribes would have been more likely to conform this second statement to the form of the other two. Second, the parallels at Luke 22:56 and 22:59 both begin with *και ουτος*, making harmonization to Luke a possibility.¹⁰⁶ There seems to be no good reason that *και* would have been omitted if present originally, though multiple reasons for its addition later, making it most likely that *και ουτος* is the later form.

Matt 26:73

και συ **⋈ A B W pm** [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT RP]

omit **D Θ** *f*¹ *sy*^s *sa*^{ms}

There is no demonstrable scribal error that would result in the accidental omission of *και συ*. This variant appears to be an omission motivated by the desire to harmonize Matthew’s text to Mark 14:70, which has the exact same wording, though without *και συ* (“*αληθως εξ αυτων ει*”).¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 54 only lists Luke 22:59 as a parallel text exhibiting influence on this variant, probably due to the closer verbal parallel of this verse (*και ουτος μετ αυτου ην*) than 22:56 (*και ουτος συν αυτω ην*) to Matt 26:71.

¹⁰⁷ NA²⁸ apparatus marks the omission as a reading influenced by a parallel passage.

Matt 26:73

δηλον σε ποιει **⋈ A B W pm** [NA²⁸ UBS⁵ WH SBLGNT RP]

ομοιαζει **D** it sy^s

Here, D has simplified the original reading (and slightly modified the meaning), changing the third statement to Peter from “your speech makes you plain” to “your speech is similar [to Jesus’].”¹⁰⁸ Both versions remain concerned with Peter’s distinct accent, though only D draws an explicit connection between Peter and Jesus’ speech here. None of the parallel passages have the same wording or meaning here, ruling out harmonization. Neither does D’s text conform this phrase to another portion of text in Matthew. The limited manuscript support for this reading makes it unlikely to have been the original reading, and there is nothing to commend it on internal grounds. There is nothing about the original reading that would make it inherently problematic, only that it is grammatically more “roundabout,” thus prompting D’s simplification.

3.3. Conclusions

This case study has served two primary functions. First, it has approached several significant New Testament manuscripts in order to see what scribal phenomena arise when their texts are looked at individually and what differences arise when their texts are compared. Wherever possible, an attempt has been made to understand the motivations behind each change and/or divergence, keeping an eye to how this data can inform the question of a “canonical text” of the New Testament. As mentioned above, canonical criticism has hastily assumed the existence of a distinct canonical textform when making proposals concerning textual criticism, though without having put forth the necessary historical evidence to support such a text as a lost

¹⁰⁸ Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 804, n. 74.

artifact in need of reconstruction.¹⁰⁹ Since the existence of such a text cannot be demonstrated from the external evidence of church history, it must be inferred from the manuscripts themselves if one is to affirm its existence. Though this investigation of the text in Matt 26 is necessarily limited, and thus cannot conclusively confirm or rule out the existence of such a text, it represents the type of “from the ground up” historical inquiry that is lacking in the arguments for the restoration of a “canonical text” of the New Testament. While Letis should be commended for attempting to put Childs’ method into practice, he nevertheless replicated Childs’ error by adopting his assumptions, namely that there is a “canonical text” to begin with.

Second, it has yielded data from the manuscripts that is useful for understanding how scribes approached their task when making their copies. Though the corrections discussed above are only a small sample of the total manuscript tradition, some tentative conclusions can be made. The correcting activity found in these manuscripts demonstrates that most of these corrections were undoubtedly motivated by a concern to transmit the text without introducing error or nonsense. Scribes felt free to alter the spelling of a word to conform to their orthographic habits, though even this was not a thoroughgoing revision. There does not appear to be any large-scale revision, either of the text on its own or of one textual tradition towards that of another.

Returning to the three criteria given above concerning indicators of a “canonical consciousness,” the following observations can be made. First, the vast majority of these corrections either corrected a demonstrable scribal error or changed the text in a way that did not effect the meaning of the text in any significant way (i.e., changes in orthography, use of a

¹⁰⁹ This is generally put in terms of “the final form” of the text. However, “final form” is a polyvalent term in canonical criticism, either referring to (1) the eventual collection of canonical books (i.e., 27 book New Testament canon—no more or less, and in a specific order), (2) the overall form of the text of a book at the end of its literary/redactional development (i.e., inclusion and ordering of specific pericopes, editing together of sources, etc.), and (3) the specific textual form of the New Testament books at the level of specific readings. See James Barr, *Holy Scripture*, 75-104, for a discussion of these various formulations of “final form” (though he tends to focus on the first two of the three above listed nuances).

conjunction, etc.). Second, only one correction indicates that it may have been influenced by another book in the New Testament canon (Matt 26:33 in κ , with an emphatic $\kappa\alpha\iota$ being added under the influence of Mark 14:29), with this addition being a part of a larger correction that was needed because of a scribal error in κ (see discussion above). Third, there is no clear evidence that any of these corrections indicate that a scribe consciously considered the corrected reading to be distinct from, and superior to, that of the presumed author. Therefore, we can say that the corrections in this text of these manuscripts do not betray a “canonical consciousness” operating in the mind of the scribe. Limiting the transmission or creation of nonsense is, of course, what we would expect to be the basic task of a scribe in a manuscript culture.¹¹⁰

From examining the significant variants we can see that, from simply a phenomenological perspective, significant changes introduced into this portion of text were generally motivated by the desire to harmonize the text to either the immediate context or to more remote parallels in the other gospels. This does indicate that some scribes believed parallel passages should agree with each other textually. Harmonizations (especially to parallel texts in other canonical books) do meet the first two criteria for indicating a “canonical consciousness” because (1) they are almost certainly intentional and (2) they utilize other parts of the canon when copying the text of a given work.

It is the third criterion that creates problems for how we interpret harmonizations. Why scribes believed that parallel passages should agree textually is harder to determine than it is to simply observe that this was a tendency for some scribes. It may have been that these scribes believed that emendations were really corrections of faulty exemplars, assuming that the New

¹¹⁰ On its own, this can only tell us so much, since we do not know whether a scribe considered the text of his exemplar to represent the text of the author or a “canonical” textform. Loyalty to an exemplar can only indicate confidence that its text is the preferred text—it tells us nothing definite about *why* the scribe believed that text to be preferred. Even so, we can say that from this limited investigation we do not find evidence of the *creation* of a new textform, “canonical” or otherwise.

Testament authors would not have written texts that disagreed. If so, this would point to an “author consciousness.” However, scribes could have also believed that departing from authorial wording by conflating the readings of multiple texts was permissible in order to present a collection of authoritative texts that did not disagree. Such a motivation would point towards a certain level of a “canonical consciousness,” or at least to a limited respect for authorial wording. And herein lies the problem: we cannot be certain of all that was going through a scribe’s head when they were making their copy. Depending on the assumptions of the scribe concerning the text’s composition, its transmission up to that point, and its function within the church, the same type of scribal behavior could be the result of different “textual consciousnesses.”

Therefore, it seems best to limit the use of value judgments concerning the inner-consciousness of a scribe’s motivations unless there is clear textual evidence to support such a claim. Instead, a primarily descriptive form of analysis is preferable. Thus we can say that there is some textual evidence revealed from this investigation that points to a canonical-consciousness on the part of scribes, though none that does so unequivocally. If there is such a consciousness, it is generally due to a belief that like texts should read alike, thus promoting harmonizations. This much seems clear. That the text was often emended in order to conform similar texts to each other, whatever the underlying assumptions about the text, is self-evident.

While making statements concerning a scribe’s “textual consciousness” as revealed by their harmonistic tendencies may be beyond our grasp, we can speak more confidently as to the effect this scribal behavior has on the text. When separate gospels are changed to resemble each other, the distinct features of each text are obscured, concealing differences and thus making a smoother and more uniform text. This is true for each of the gospels involved in the harmonization, not just the one that is changed to match another. When one gospel is conformed

to another, both lose their distinct character. If, for example, Matthew is changed to look more like Mark, it becomes much more difficult to identify and appreciate the distinct ways in which either Matthew or Mark craft their narratives. Therefore, even if we concede that some scribes operated under the influence of a “canonical consciousness,” which allowed them to emend the text of a work based on the wording of another member of the New Testament canon in order to create a “canonical text,” the question still remains whether we wish to accept the results of such emendation as our text of the New Testament today.¹¹¹ This question will be addressed in greater detail in the next chapter.

One final point should be made. However much this data supports the existence of a “canonical-consciousness” of ancient scribes or not, one wonders how the “canonical” method of textual criticism would approach making textual decisions at each of these variation-units. Even if one only focuses on the significant variants, it is unclear how canonical criticism would arbitrate between the various textual options. Would the “truth” of a reading be invoked as a criterion, or its overall proportional representation in the manuscripts (i.e. majority vs. minority), or its presence in certain types of manuscripts (i.e. lectionaries)? None of the significant variants discussed here are such that the choice of reading means choosing between an orthodox reading and a heretical one. Each form is orthodox, though some may be later expansions and confections. The orthodoxy of these alterations allowed some of them to continue to be copied into what became the majority of manuscripts, irrespective of their antiquity. Even the lectionary evidence is not itself uniform, often dividing along the same lines as continuous text manuscripts, making it difficult to rely on lectionary use as a criterion. So, how would canonical

¹¹¹ It should also be recognized that if such a “canonical” impulse was at work in the mind of a scribe, motivating them to emend the text in order to resolve an apparent discrepancy, this textual move actually undermines the church’s judgment on matters of canon formation, since the church ultimately canonized *four* gospels while simultaneously recognizing their differences.

criticism go about making decisions at each of these variation-units? It seems that unless one is willing to adopt an accretive approach, allowing all readings whose meaning is “true” and sensible to be included,¹¹² you are forced to resort to more standard historical methods that emphasize determining the historical priority of readings. In other words, canonical method of textual criticism reveals itself to be of limited use when faced with the number and nature of variants facing the text critic.

¹¹² If one takes this approach, the problem of additions and expansions gets easier, though when faced with equally “true” substitutions, the truth of the reading ceases to be a helpful criterion.

CHAPTER 4:

THE CANONICAL TEXT: PREFERABLE?

The previous two chapters have been primarily concerned with one overarching question: Is the “canonical text” of the New Testament, as envisioned by Brevard Childs and others, an historical text? In other words, is there historical evidence that supports the existence of such a text as an actual artifact, and therefore a potential object of reconstruction? The evidence consulted indicates that the church fathers did not conceive of such a text (ch. 2), and the case study of Matt 26 (ch. 3) indicates that if scribes operated from a desire to create a “canonical text,” this was done primarily through harmonizations. While these findings do raise serious questions for any proposal for the reconstruction of a “canonical” text, they really only address one side of the issue.

4.1. The Need for a Different Question

Though any historical discipline (in this case textual criticism) must be concerned first with the proper examination of historical evidence, there remains a more fundamental, philosophical question to be answered: If there is a “canonical text” of the New Testament, is this the text that scholars and exegetes should prefer over earlier, perhaps “more original,” forms of text? In other words, if we assume the existence of a “canonical text” as envisioned by Childs, is this the text that text critics should be pursuing in their reconstructions? When one recognizes that this “canonical text” is by nature a reworking of an earlier form of text, two questions arise. First, why did the text need to be reworked in the first place? What was so objectionable about the earlier form of text that this form could not be “canonized” and used throughout the church? Second, what purpose can this newly edited text serve that the previous form could not? In other words, why was the text changed, and what was accomplished by this change?

Perhaps no textual problem is more widely known than the ending of Mark's gospel.¹ Only the *pericope adulterae* could compete with Mark 16:9-20 for the title of "most discussed variation-unit." In a 2003 article, Robert Wall, a canonical critic himself,² engages the textual problem of the ending of Mark's gospel from the perspective of canonical criticism.³ Though he does not quote or otherwise refer to Childs' proposed method of textual criticism, the way that he goes about dealing with this textual problem has much in common with Childs' perspective. Therefore, Wall's article will serve as a useful conversation partner at several points in this chapter as we explore these philosophical issues.

Adopting the pursuit of a "canonical text" as the goal of New Testament textual criticism has the potential for significant impact on New Testament research. This is due to two factors.

The first is that the adoption of the canonical approach to textual criticism will necessarily result

¹ Detailed arguments concerning the originality of Mark 16:9-20 are not necessary for the discussion in this chapter, though I accept the general critical consensus that Mark 16:9-20 is a secondary addition and that Mark 16:8 was the original ending to Mark's narrative. For arguments that Mark originally ended at 16:8, see Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2d ed.; Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1994), 102-6; and Daniel B. Wallace, "Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel," in *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark: 4 Views* (ed. D. A. Black; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2008), 1-39. For arguments that Mark 16:9-20 is original, see Maurice A. Robinson, "The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity," in *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark: 4 Views* (ed. D. A. Black; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2008), 40-79; William R. Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark* (SNTSMS 25; London: Cambridge University Press, 1974); and John W. Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to Mark: Vindicated Against Recent Critical Objectors and Established* (Oxford: James Parker and Co., 1871). For arguments that Mark neither ended originally at 16:8, nor are any of the extant endings original (indicating that either the original ending has been lost, or that the author never finished the work), see Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (4th ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 322-6; and J. K. Elliott, "The Last Twelve Verses of Mark: Original or Not?" in *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark: 4 Views* (ed. D. A. Black; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2008), 80-102. Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort, "Notes on Selected Readings," in *Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1882; repr., Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988), 46-51, consider it possible that Mark either ended originally at 16:8, or that the original ending perished early on, thus not being preserved in any extant copies. J. K. Elliott, "The Text and Language of the Endings to Mark's Gospel," *TZ* 27 (1971): 255-62; repr. in *The Language and Style of the Gospel of Mark: An Edition of C. H. Turner's "Notes on Marcan Usage" Together with Other Comparable Studies* (ed. J. K. Elliott; NovTSup 71; Leiden: Brill, 1993), provides several distinctive linguistic elements of Mark 16:9-20 when compared to the other material from the Gospel of Mark.

² See Robert W. Wall and Eugene E. Lemcio, *The New Testament as Canon: A Reader in Canonical Criticism* (JSNTSup 76; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992); and Robert W. Wall, "The Canonical View," in *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views* (ed. S. E. Porter and B. M. Stovell; Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2012), 111-30.

³ Robert W. Wall, "A Response to Thomas/Alexander, 'And the Signs are Following' (Mark 16:9-20)," *JPT* 11 (2003): 171-83. The article he is responding to is John Christopher Thomas and Kimberly Ervin Alexander, "'And the Signs are Following': Mark 16:9-20—A Journey into Pentecostal Hermeneutics," *JPT* 11 (2003): 147-70.

in different textual choices being made when compared with the results of more traditional methods. In itself, this is not a bad thing. New methods develop, which in turn yield new products.⁴ That a new method calls for different textual decisions cannot be considered sufficient grounds for criticizing the new method—if so, there would never be any progress in the area of methodology. Nevertheless, the fact remains that different textual decisions necessarily alter the shape of the New Testament text, however limited or drastic in fashion, which will naturally affect the way that New Testament research in general progresses. This prospect may be disconcerting for the reader of the New Testament that is unfamiliar with the praxis of textual criticism since it entails a change in the wording of the biblical text. In reality though, this is the more benign of the two factors, as it is unavoidably common to all methods of text-critical decision-making.

The second factor is more significant because the canonical method of textual criticism involves a fundamental shift in how the text's history is engaged and how that history is then used to inform textual decisions. Rather than attempting to move further back in the text's history to the earliest stage of a New Testament work's existence, the canonical method seeks to evaluate the text's history in order to "discern the truest textual rendering."⁵ This procedure must operate under the assumption that later readings can be "truer" than the earliest readings, and therefore posit a text that came into existence somewhere downstream of the text's earliest stage. Though not limited to these areas of New Testament study, three different arenas of New

⁴ One may consider the ways in which the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method (CBGM) has both shaped ideas about how the text was transmitted and how the use of this method has influenced individual textual decisions, as can most readily be seen in the revisions which were made in the text of the Catholic Epistles in NA²⁸ (see NA²⁸, "Introduction," 50-52). See also Gerd Mink, "Contamination, Coherence, and Coincidence in Textual Transmission: The Coherence-Based Genealogical Method (CBGM) as a Complement and Corrective to Existing Approaches," in *The Textual History of the Greek New Testament: Changing Views in Contemporary Research* (ed. K. Wachtel and M. W. Holmes; SBLTCS 8; Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 141-216.

⁵ Brevard S. Childs, "The Hermeneutical Problem of New Testament Textual Criticism," in *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 530.

Testament research would be effected significantly if the canonical method of textual criticism were to be adopted, each of which will be discussed below: (1) text-critical methodology, (2) New Testament exegesis, and (3) the broader historical tasks of textual criticism. A fourth, and final consideration to be discussed is the relative merits of such a text in the use of the contemporary church.

4.1.1. Text-Critical Methodology

Methodologically, Childs' proposals for the pursuit of a "canonical" text are limited on several fronts. The first is that of textual criteria. Though text critics continue to disagree as to which textual criteria should be given greater or lesser weight when doing text-critical analysis, all of these scholars agree that one must develop a system of specific criteria to guide textual decisions.⁶ For Childs, the development of proper criteria becomes a problem due to the altered goal of the analysis. Childs states that "a critical methodology, such as Hort's, which seeks to restore the original autographs of the author is inadequate for establishing the church's received and authoritative text."⁷ However, Childs still maintains that for his proposals, "the criteria by which these judgments are made are precisely those which critical scholarship has developed over the last two hundred years."⁸ What Childs does not account for is that these criteria were not developed for just *any* textual analysis—they were specifically designed in order to discern the original reading at each variation-unit.⁹ Even the criteria that Childs lists explicitly ("the age of a

⁶ Of course, the application of criteria cannot be mechanical. This has probably been put best by Günther Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles: A Disquisition on the Corpus Paulinum* (Schweich Lectures, 1946; London: Oxford University Press, 1953), 12: "It follows that textual criticism, in our field, still can, and must, use the traditional methods (if adapted to its subject); and that it cannot be carried out mechanically. At every stage the critic has to use his brains. Were it different, we could put the critical slide-rule into the hands of any fool and leave it to him to settle the problems of the New Testament text."

⁷ Childs, "Hermeneutical Problem," 527.

⁸ Childs, "Hermeneutical Problem," 528.

⁹ It must be noted that some forms of text-critical inquiry are not primarily concerned with determining original readings, and therefore develop distinct criteria in order to achieve these other goals. One example of a goal-conditioned criterion for achieving a text-critical goal besides the reconstruction of the original text is the use of

text, the quality of its text type [*sic*], the geographical breadth of its witness, the inner relationship of variants, and the inner consistency of style and content”),¹⁰ have each been designed to answer questions of originality, making it unclear how these criteria would effectively serve Childs’ canonical purposes. The most fundamental difficulty is that none of these criteria can be confidently appealed to when seeking to (1) determine which variation-units require a choice between “canonical” and “noncanonical” readings (if such a distinction can be made), and (2) identifying specific readings as “canonical” once these “canonically concerned” variation-units have been selected.

In reality, those who pursue the reconstruction of a “canonical” text supplement these methods with their own criterion: the church’s use of a textual form.¹¹ This criterion introduces a

singular readings for discerning individual scribal habits. Since text critics very rarely consider a singular reading to be a viable option for the original text, the focus on these readings serves a different purpose, though one still legitimately within the realm of textual criticism. For the use of singular readings, see James R. Royse, *Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri* (NTTSD 36; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 39-63; Ernest C. Colwell and Ernest W. Tune, “Method in Evaluating Scribal Habits: A Study of P⁴⁵, P⁶⁶, P⁷⁵,” in *Studies in Methodology in Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (NTTS 9; Leiden: Brill, 1969), 106-24; repr. of “Scribal Habits in Early Papyri: A Study in the Corruption of the Text,” in *The Bible in Modern Scholarship* (ed. J. P. Hyatt; Nashville: Abingdon, 1965), 370-89; Juan Hernández Jr., *Scribal Habits and Theological Influences in the Apocalypse* (WUNT 218; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 41-48; Dirk Jongkind, *Scribal Habits of Codex Sinaiticus* (TS 3/5; Piscataway: Gorgias, 2007), 131-43; and Peter M. Head, “Scribal Behaviour and Theological Tendencies in Singular Readings in P. Bodmer II (P66),” in *Textual Variation: Theological and Social Tendencies? Papers from the Fifth Birmingham Colloquium on Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (ed. H. A. G. Houghton and D. C. Parker; TS 3/6; Piscataway: Gorgias, 2008), 55-74.

¹⁰ Childs, “Hermeneutical Problem,” 528. Each of these is a generally accepted criterion, though “the inner relationship of variants” is somewhat imprecise.

¹¹ This should not be confused with a traditional text critic’s emphasis on the diverse geographic distribution of a reading. Geographic distribution is used as an indicator of a reading’s antiquity, presuming that readings that lack such distribution are more likely to reflect late, regional alterations. For this criterion, including a brief history of its conception and use within New Testament textual criticism, see Eldon Jay Epp, “Traditional ‘Canons’ of New Testament Textual Criticism: Their Value, Validity, and Viability—Or Lack Thereof,” in *The Textual History of the Greek New Testament: Changing Views in Contemporary Research* (ed. K. Wachtel and M. W. Holmes; SBLTCS 8; Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 100-103. See Tommy Wasserman, “Criteria for Evaluating Readings in New Testament Textual Criticism,” in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis* (ed. B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes; 2d ed.; NTTSD 42; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 586-8, for the relationship between this criterion and theories of text types, as well as some of its limitations.

new way to evaluate the evidence that emphasizes the church's value judgment concerning a reading rather than its historical priority.¹² This claim is made explicitly by Wall:

[T]he canonical authority of a biblical text is discerned by the church not in consideration of its originality when critically appraised, but by its performance in Christian formation when spiritually attested. The test of the canonicity of Mk 16:9-20, then, is not handed out to scholars who investigate the point of its origin for evidence of its originality; but it is handed to faithful readers who teach and preach it in an ecclesial setting for evidence of increased wisdom and good works consistent with God's redemptive purposes.¹³

This criterion effectively claims that a textual form the church has found to be useful has thus become immune to the possibility of excision.¹⁴ However, the "criterion of use" becomes problematic when one is faced with actually making textual decisions. This criterion's implementation is especially unhelpful when it comes to addition/omission variation-units. In these cases the criterion of use is inherently predisposed to *including* readings when the manuscripts disagree. Thus, in these instances, the emphasis is consistently placed on the *inclusion*, and therefore *use*, of one reading, while the evidence of the *omission*, and therefore *disuse*, of this reading is not adequately considered.¹⁵ In other words, the church's *disuse* of a particular reading remains a witness to the church's *use* of the overall text of the respective

¹² Though the criterion of use may result in the same textual conclusions being made by canonical critics and Majority Text theorists, each takes their own separate road to this end. Majority Text theorists make an historical claim in their arguments, namely that the original wording is, all other things being equal, most likely to be represented in the majority of surviving witnesses (a claim criticized by Childs, "Hermeneutical Problem," 524). See Zane C. Hodges, "The Greek Text of the King James Version," *BSac* 125 (1968): 344-5; Maurice A. Robinson, "The Case for Byzantine Priority," in *Rethinking New Testament Textual Criticism* (ed. D. A. Black; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 126, 135-36; Maurice A. Robinson and William G. Pierpont, *The New Testament in the Original Greek: Byzantine Textform* (Southborough: Chilton Book Publishing, 2005), v; Harry A. Sturz, *The Byzantine Text-Type and New Testament Textual Criticism* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984), 32-36; Wilbur N. Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text* (rev. ed.; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1980), 110-20, 140-42. By contrast, the canonical critic's appeal to the church's use of a reading as evidence for its canonical status can be made in conjunction with the conviction that the reading is secondary; see Wall, "A Response to Thomas/Alexander," 172; and Childs, "Hermeneutical Problem," 527.

¹³ Wall, "A Response to Thomas/Alexander," 177.

¹⁴ See also Merrill M. Parvis, "The Goals of New Testament Textual Studies," 402.

¹⁵ I have found no examples of scholars who emphasize the incorporation of "canonical" concerns into textual analysis advocating for the omission of text. See Kent D. Clarke, "Original Text or Canonical Text? Questioning the Shape of the New Testament Text We Translate," in *Translating the Bible: Problems and Prospects* (ed. S. E. Porter and R. S. Hess; *JSNTSup* 173; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 313-6, for a critique of Parvis in this respect, especially related to the use of the church fathers' citations as evidence.

literary work, yet this evidence is not interpreted as such by those seeking to include these readings as part of the “canonical text.”¹⁶

This problem cuts to the very heart of the issue of a “canonical text” that is comprised of “canonical readings.” Whenever a piece of literature is deemed canonical, one is immediately prompted to ask, “Canonical for whom?” This rightly demands a connection between authoritative literature and the community that has determined or accepted its authoritative status.¹⁷ In the same way, if there is an attempt to designate a specific reading within a larger variation-unit as “canonical,” we will do right to similarly ask, “Canonical for whom?” Naturally, the reading chosen by the critic will have been the “canonical” reading for each community that has used a text with that reading as part of its Scriptures. Yet, what of the other readings that make up the variation-unit that were not chosen? Were these any less “canonical” for the communities in which they were used?¹⁸

Surely we will say no; each manuscript’s text would have been seen as the authoritative text for the community that used it, without differentiation between which words or phrases were or were not “canonical.”¹⁹ In this case, then, what are we really claiming if we deem one reading

¹⁶ When one grapples with the problem of substitutions, the problem only gets more difficult from a canonical perspective. While the choice to include an addition may be made with relative ease, choosing between mutually exclusive textual options (which all substitutions are by nature, unless one decides to conflate multiple readings) requires a greater engagement with the evidence and ultimately demands the excision of *some* reading that has had some (however limited or extensive) currency in the church. See ch. 3 for a critique of Letis’ treatment of a substitution from a canonical perspective.

¹⁷ Paul Ellingworth, “Text, Translation, and Theology: The New Testament in the Original Greek?” *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 13 (2000): 67.

¹⁸ One could claim that some readings were “canonical” for their respective community, but that these communities supported heterodox beliefs, thus disqualifying their “canonical,” though heterodox, readings from consideration by communities of the church that maintain historic orthodoxy (see Wall, “A Response to Thomas/Alexander,” 177). The problem is that variation units that would qualify as exhibiting such a situation are quite rare, with the more frequent (though still rather rare) situation being that scribes took readings that were already orthodox and made them *unequivocally* orthodox in order to prevent potential misconstrual by heretics; see Ehrman, *Orthodox Corruption*, 274-80.

¹⁹ Eldon Jay Epp, “Textual Criticism in the Exegesis of the New Testament, with an Excursus on Canon,” in *Handbook to Exegesis of the New Testament* (ed. S. E. Porter; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 81-2; Epp, *Theological Tendency*, 13; Epp, “The Multivalence of the Term ‘Original Text’ in New Testament Textual Criticism,” *HTR* 92 (1999): 274. See also Tommy Wasserman, “The Implications of Textual Criticism for Understanding the ‘Original

to be “canonical” and another reading “noncanonical”? It is this consideration that reveals Childs’ method to be equally as problematic as he perceived Westcott and Hort’s method to be for “establishing the church’s received and authoritative text.”²⁰ Westcott and Hort made the claim that each manuscript’s text is in need of criticism because every manuscript has, to some extent, departed from the original wording. This is an historical claim that does not say anything about the authoritative status of that text for its community. In other words, one can consider each manuscript’s text to have been fully authoritative and “canonical” for its community, while at the same time preserving the original wording of that text imperfectly. Childs, on the other hand, by wishing to extend the bounds of canonicity to include specific readings, must conclude that the communities that used texts that contained readings that were not chosen by his method were using a text that was only canonical and authoritative in part. This has the practical effect of marginalizing the witness of Christian communities that followed texts with different readings, while simultaneously elevating other Christian communities that were (supposedly) using a more complete, “canonical” text. This calls into question whether the canonical method of textual criticism respects the canonical function of the church’s text any more so than do more traditional methods that pursue the goal of restoring the original, or earliest attainable, text.²¹

Text,” in *Mark and Matthew I: Comparative Readings: Understanding the Earliest Gospels in their First-Century Settings* (ed. E. Becker and A. Runesson; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 80; David C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 188-9; J. K. Elliott, “Manuscripts, the Codex and the Canon,” in *New Testament Textual Criticism: The Application of Thoroughgoing Principles: Essays on Manuscripts and Textual Variation* (NovTSup 137; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 620-21; Elliott, “The Last Twelve Verses of Mark,” 100-101; Clarke, “Original Text or Canonical Text?” 299-301; and Lee Martin McDonald, *The Biblical Canon: Its Origin, Transmission, and Authority* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2007), 360.

²⁰ Childs, “Hermeneutical Problem,” 527.

²¹ Compare the implications of Childs’ method as just stated with his critique of Hort: “[T]he issue of establishing a normative text cannot be separated from how the text was received, which involves the subject of canon. Hort seeks to recover the text as it was originally written by an author. . . . However, the crucial hermeneutical issue at stake is whether Hort’s approach does justice to the New Testament text which has been formed into a normative collection of received tradition.” Childs, “Hermeneutical Problem,” 522. For community reception to truly be accounted for in a text-critical context requires that the entire textual tradition be seen as canonical and authoritative for each manuscript’s respective community.

Thus we can see how the preference for readings supported by “the church’s use” is expressed with very little reflection as to the actual implications of such a statement. Appeal to the “church’s use” is made without nuance and without acknowledgment that when textual variation is concerned, any use of a reading by *the* church is really use by *a portion of* the church. Since the manuscripts used by the church disagree, the church’s use is likewise divided. Thus the church’s use can only be appealed to when there is textual uniformity, and is thus of little use in a text-critical context. One might respond by appealing to the great proportion of manuscripts supporting a reading, as well as its place within a lectionary system (as did Letis), yet both of these forms of evidence necessarily privilege relatively late communities, downplaying the witness of earlier communities whose texts are less likely to have survived due to mere material deterioration.

4.1.2. *New Testament Exegesis*

The choice of a base text from which to interpret the New Testament necessarily makes a difference in how one will interpret the text. Though published editions of the Greek New Testament are themselves “working texts” that change from one edition to the next, many scholars, students, ministers, etc. view the text in the main body of the edition before them as *the* text, often ignoring the information in the critical apparatus.²² This means that the choices of a published edition’s editor are likely to have far-reaching implications for interpretation (perhaps even more than the editor would wish in places where a textual decision is especially difficult).²³ Thus, the question becomes, do we want a “canonical text” as the object of New Testament exegesis?

²² Daniel B. Wallace, “Challenges in New Testament Textual Criticism for the Twenty-First Century,” *JETS* 52 (2009): 79; and Zuntz, *Text of the Epistles*, 2.

²³ The clearest example of this concerns variation units for which the editorial committee determined that there could be no textual decision, thus equating the status of the reading found in the main body with that in the apparatus; these variation units are marked by black diamonds (◆) in both UBS⁵ and NA²⁸.

The most significant consideration for this question is the inherent move away from the words of an author (or authors) in the establishment of a “canonical text.”²⁴ The proper role of the author in literary interpretation has been a major question in recent years.²⁵ Texts are increasingly seen as autonomous entities, whose origin may have come from an author, but whose existence becomes its own as soon as it is composed and made available to the public.²⁶ Many scholars no longer see the intention of the author as discoverable, desirable, or as a valid interpretive control.²⁷ This has resulted in a greater focus on the place of the reader and their reception of the text, rather than the author and their intention for it. These developments in literary criticism have likewise undermined the necessity of establishing the author’s words when the text exhibits variation. If the author’s intentions for a text are not to be seen as the locus of

²⁴ See Childs, “Hermeneutical Problem,” 527. Compare, however, Childs’ continued affirmation of the need to “take seriously a writer’s expressed intentionality” (*The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984], 49), despite the fact that the writer’s words are permissibly traded for the words of later, unknown amenders of the text by Childs’ method of textual criticism as expressed in his excursus (to which he directs readers in the previous paragraph, p. 48), thus calling into question whose “intentionality” is being expressed. Though most specifically addressing the problem of “whose meaning” is derived when a text is interpreted, E. D. Hirsch’s words are also applicable to this problem of a text’s wording: “[E]ven if we assumed that a critic did have access to the divine criteria by which he could determine the best reading, he would still be left with two equally compelling normative ideals—the best meaning and the author’s meaning. Moreover, if the best meaning were not the author’s, then it would have to be the critic’s—in which case the critic would be the author of the best meaning. Whenever meaning is attached to a sequence of words it is impossible to escape an author.” E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 5.

²⁵ See Roland Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” in *Image, Music, Text* (trans. S. Heath; New York: Noonday Press, 1977), 142-8; Michel Foucault, “What is an Author?” in *The Foucault Reader* (ed. P. Rabinow; New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 101-20; repr. of “What is an Author?” in *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism* (trans. and ed. J. V. Harari; Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979).

²⁶ For the influence of developments in literary criticism on canonical criticism, see Stephen G. Dempster, “The Prophets, the Canon and a Canonical Approach,” in *Canon and Biblical Interpretation* (ed. C. G. Bartholomew et al.; SHS 7; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 313-5. For a view that is more critical of this tendency, see James Barr, *Holy Scripture: Canon, Authority, Criticism* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), 77-78.

²⁷ See the programmatic essay, W. K. Wimsatt Jr. and Monroe C. Beardsley, “The Intentional Fallacy,” in *The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1970), 3-18. For the place of authorial intent in canonical criticism, see Robert W. Wall, “The Canonical View,” in *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views* (ed. S. E. Porter and B. M. Stovell; Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2012), 113, 120 n. 19 (see also his “The Canonical Response,” 191-2, in the same volume); Stephen B. Chapman, “Reclaiming Inspiration for the Bible,” in *Canon and Biblical Interpretation* (ed. C. G. Bartholomew et al.; SHS 7; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 174-89; and Childs, *New Testament as Canon*, 49. For a critique of canonical criticism’s conception of authorial (as well as “canonical”) intent, see Barr, *Holy Scripture*, 77-78, 140, 161-2. For a critique of the general move away from seeing authorial intent as providing proper interpretive parameters, see Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 1-23.

meaning, then the need for the author's precise words quickly deteriorates.²⁸ This tendency is amplified in the case of texts that change through the course of manual transmission, with textual alterations being affected by scribes and readers, whose reading and understanding of the text has (for many) become the new locus of meaning.

These are significant hermeneutical issues that should not be taken lightly, and it is certainly beyond the scope of this thesis to resolve all of the difficulties that these issues present. Even so, text critics must consider how textual criticism fits into the more general interpretive enterprise that seeks to derive meaning from texts, thus prompting a few comments here. While textual criticism may be predisposed to maintaining the prominence of the author, this is not necessary for the discipline to continue its work. Textual criticism is, by nature, a discipline that traces the history of texts, mapping their development based on analysis of extant manuscripts and the knowledge of factors that influenced the text's change over time. While text critics may wish to establish the earliest attainable form of the text in order to have properly restored the text of a particular author, thus providing the best text for discerning that author's intent, this is not the only possible motivation for such a procedure.²⁹ The desire to reconstruct an early text can be equally motivated by a suspicion of later emendations as it could be a loyalty to an author's wording. For example, one could wish to restore the original wording of one of Paul's letters because it was written by Paul as an apostle, thus securing a uniquely authoritative status for his

²⁸ Wallace, "Challenges," 81, n. 5.

²⁹ I am willing to grant that discerning an author's intent is a valid (even if not the sole, nor decisive) interpretive procedure. However, to rehash the arguments related to this question here is not likely to resolve such a considerable hermeneutical problem, and would not ultimately address the ways in which textual criticism is effected by, and factors into, these issues. If one places a high value on authorial intent and sees such intent as accessible through a writer's literary product, then little defense for the reconstruction of the earliest textual form is necessary. It is only when interpreters place little value on authorial intent that early textual forms are likewise devalued. Therefore, rather than provide a thorough defense of the place of an author's intent in interpretation, I choose to focus here on how the reconstruction of early textual forms is still valuable and desirable, regardless of what camp interpreters identify themselves with concerning authorial intent. For a review of the major positions on authorial intent, see Grant D. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (2d ed.; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 465-99 (see 500-521 for his arguments for the possibility and necessity of retrieving authorial intent).

words; though one could also go about reconstructing the earliest text of the letter based on the conviction that alterations by later copyists are likely to obscure a message that had been present in the text of the letter from its earliest stage. One can wish to approach the text simply as an autonomous text, without reference to external factors such as authorship, and yet still desire to work from a textual form that has not been modified by later readers. This is a subtle, though significant, distinction.³⁰

One of Wall's arguments regarding the longer ending of Mark will serve to better flesh out this distinction. Wall seeks to demonstrate that the critical conclusions that relegate the longer ending of Mark's gospel to a secondary position are due to an unjustified loyalty to the "fallacy of originality" and the "fallacy of authorship." It will be helpful to quote his comments at length:

The fallacy of originality, like the fallacy of authorship, supposes that a text's continuing authority for the church is predicated upon who wrote it (or the mechanics of production) rather than upon what is written. While questions of authorship do bear upon whether what is written is "apostolic" and apropos [*sic*] for "the one holy and apostolic church," such an identification is hardly an historical matter. In particular, Mark's Gospel is an anonymous narrative and the actual identity of the narrator is historically indeterminate. What then is meant when a Gospel passage is referred to as "non-Markan" and thus "inauthentic"? On what basis is the anonymous narrator of this Gospel granted authority, which is then insinuated on those portions of "his" Gospel that "he" wrote? What if the biblical Gospels are the literary products of a team effort, perhaps none of whom was an eyewitness to Jesus as some now think is true of Matthew and John? Who then is the "author" of the Gospel? What does the exegete actually gain if we all agree the narrator's identity is "Mark"? Not much. My questions press for the practical difficulty of linking Scripture's authority with its human authorship.³¹

Unfortunately, Wall has missed the real historical issue here by hastily equating issues of textual originality with the accurate determination of literary authorship. Critical scholars are

³⁰ In a sense, each new copy that introduces textual alterations can then be interpreted as an autonomous text, distinct from the text of the author (this is the basic point made by Epp, "Multivalence," 263, when he refers to "successor 'originals'" that displace "original 'originals'"). However, to do this requires the interpreter to adopt a diplomatic approach that does not rely on the text of other manuscripts to influence an understanding of the text being interpreted. By nature, any external reference, even if only to point out how and why the text was changed in the production of the manuscript being studied, negates the autonomy of that manuscript's text.

³¹ Wall, "A Response to Thomas/Alexander," 174-5.

more than willing to recognize the anonymity of Mark (and all of the other canonical gospels), allowing the attribution of authorship to be a concern primarily of church tradition and reception of these writings, as well as an editorial need for titles.³² In fact, it is quite rare that a scholar will insist that the authoritative place of Mark's narrative in the church depends on the narrative having actually been written by Mark and only Mark. Therefore, the real issue facing text critics and exegetes, as it pertains to textual criticism, is not whether we can know how many people wrote Mark's gospel or how well we can establish their historical identities. Instead, the real problem concerns whether the textual witness contained in our extant manuscripts represents an *altered* composition or not. When the text is changed, its meaning can be changed, regardless of who wrote it to begin with. Thus, for critical scholars it is precisely a concern about "what is written" rather than "who wrote it," contrary to Wall's claim.³³

If one were to take Wall's argument here to its logical conclusion, one would be forced to say that valuing unaltered textual forms of a composition is only valid if that composition's author is known and can be confirmed. If applied to the New Testament corpus, that would immediately exclude all four gospels, Acts, Hebrews, and 1 John since these works are all anonymous. Beyond these, much of the Pauline corpus is thought to be pseudonymous, thus making the historical author of these books obscure in many scholars' eyes. Even more, the

³² Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26* (WBC 34A; Dallas: Word Books, 1989), xxix, closes his section on the Gospel of Mark's authorship with the statement, "the identity of the author is more a historical curiosity than an exegetical necessity." For discussion of gospel titles, see Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 153-4; and Martin Hengel, "The Titles of the Gospels and the Gospel of Mark," in *Studies in the Gospel of Mark* (trans. J. Bowden; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 64-84.

³³ The thinness of Wall's argument shows through in his query about the meaning of the term "non-Markan." Of course "non-Markan" is not a statement about authorship by an historical man named Mark. "Non-Markan" is merely a term (however rarely) used out of convenience because the gospel was given that title and is generally referred to in that way. How awkward would it be to use a term like "Non-Gospel that has been traditionally called Mark but is actually anonymous and there may be reasons to doubt the early church's attribution to an historical Mark" (see Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007], 6, for a similar distinction in terms)? For the critical scholar, the whole gospel can be "non-Markan" when it comes to authorship. Therefore, the issue of nomenclature here is really an insignificant point.

author of 2-3 John is unknown by name (only identified as “the elder”), 2 Peter is often believed to be pseudonymous, and most scholars see Revelation as written by a “John,” but some otherwise unknown John besides the apostle. If we were to follow the logic of Wall’s criticism, we would have to conclude that textual criticism of most of the New Testament is unnecessary because so little is known about these books’ historical authorship. Yet this conclusion is hardly tenable. In each instance of variation, regardless of how much we can know about the work’s author, the question becomes whether we have a later, altered form, or an earlier, (presumably) unaltered form. This is to say that how one conceives of the role of authorship in the interpretive enterprise is not a determinative factor for the praxis of textual criticism.

The exegetical difference in working from altered vs. unaltered forms is most acute when separate works have been harmonized to conform to each other textually. When discussing the relation of Mark’s longer ending to the other Gospels, Wall notes, “the narrator’s dependence upon antecedent Gospel traditions is apparent. Echoing other texts in no way erases or replaces them but recalls the other three Gospels as conversation partners in bearing witness to the risen Lord Jesus.”³⁴ On the one hand, this is undeniably true. If not, we would have to conclude that the replication of much of Mark’s material by Matthew and Luke effectively “replaced” Mark’s gospel. On the other hand, the addition of material to an existing gospel with content that relies on the other gospels has the effect of negating the distinct voice of any one of the gospels. In other words, if there is an intentional meaning to ending Mark’s gospel at 16:8, this is obscured by the additional material.³⁵ This has the effect of making Mark resemble the other gospels,

³⁴ Wall, “A Response to Thomas/Alexander,” 182 (see 181, n. 14 for the specific “echoes” of the other gospels in the longer ending).

³⁵ For attempts to understand the conclusion of Mark’s gospel at 16:8 as meaningful and intentional, see Larry Hurtado, “The Women, the Tomb, and the Climax of Mark” in *A Wandering Galilean: Essays in Honour of Sean Freyne* (ed. Z. Rodgers and M. Daly-Denton; JSJSup 132; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 427-50; David R. Catchpole, “The Fearful Silence of the Women At the Tomb: A Study in Markan Theology,” *JTSA* 18 (1977): 3-10; Norman Petersen, “When is the End not the End? Literary Reflections on the Ending of Mark’s Narrative,” *Int* 34 (1980):

while simultaneously blurring the distinct message of the other gospels from which the additional material was derived.³⁶ For Wall, these are unimportant considerations, and any attempt to understand Mark's gospel without the longer ending is misguided since the church has

151-66; Thomas E. Boomershine and Gilbert L. Bartholomew, "The Narrative Technique of Mark 16:8," *JBL* 100 (1981): 213-23; Thomas E. Boomershine, "Mark 16:8 and the Apostolic Commission," *JBL* 100 (1981): 225-39; T. C. Skeat, "St. Mark 16:8: A Modern Greek Parallel," *JTS* 50 (1949): 57-58; repr. in *The Collected Biblical Writings of T. C. Skeat* (ed. J. K. Elliott; NovTSup 113; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 252-3; Paul L. Danove, *The End of Mark's Story: A Methodological Study* (BIS 3; Leiden: Brill, 1993); Richard F. Ward, "The End is Performance: Performance Criticism and the Gospel of Mark" in *Preaching Mark's Unsettling Messiah* (ed. D. Fler and D. Bland; St. Louis: Chalice, 2006), 99-101; Robert Stephen Reid, "Finishing the Story We Find Ourselves In: Mark 16:1-8" in *Preaching Mark's Unsettling Messiah* (ed. D. Fler and D. Bland; St. Louis: Chalice, 2006), 175-81. The following commentaries end their formal exegesis at 16:8, restricting comments regarding the meaning and interpretation of the alternative endings to an appendix, excursus, etc., or omitting them altogether: William Lane, *The Gospel according to Mark* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974); Collins, *Mark*; M. Eugene Boring, *Mark: A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006); Mary Ann Beavis, *Mark* (Paideia; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011); Philip Carrington, *According to Mark: A Running Commentary on the Oldest Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960); James A. Brooks, *Mark* (NAC 23; Nashville: Broadman, 1991); R. Kent Hughes, *Mark: Jesus, Servant and Savior* (2 vols.; Preaching the Word series; Westchester: Crossway Books, 1989); R. Alan Culpepper, *Mark* (Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary 20; Macon: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2007); Ben Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001); Ronald J. Kernaghan, *Mark* (IVPNTC 2; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2007); Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002); R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993); and Robert H. Stein, *Mark* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008).

³⁶ This act of harmonization is placed in a positive light by Childs, who claims that the addition of a longer ending after Mark 16:8 was done to "provide a specific canonical function to Mark's Gospel...[F]or Mark's Gospel to function within the fourfold collection *it had to be brought into conformity with the larger evangelical corpus*. The effect of this canonical shaping is to provide a check against any idiosyncratic reading that would set Mark in open conflict with the other three Gospels in respect to the resurrection." Brevard S. Childs, "The One Gospel in Four Witnesses," in *The Rule of Faith: Scripture, Canon, and Creed in a Critical Age* (ed. E. Radner and G. Sumner; Harrisburg: Morehouse, 1998), 55, emphasis mine. See also his comments on the longer ending with respect to harmonization of gospel resurrection narratives in Brevard S. Childs, *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 94-95, 205-9, esp. 206. Though Childs posits the necessity of such a reading if Mark is going to exist in a codex with the other gospels, he fails to note that there are codices with all four gospels whose copies of Mark do end at 16:8 (⌘ B 304), a fact that calls into question the true necessity of an additional ending for Mark as a member of the canon. Moreover, to look at another place where a fourfold gospel collection could potentially set the gospels in "open conflict" with each other, both Mark and John lack a birth narrative for Jesus, though neither of these books "had to be brought into conformity with the larger evangelical corpus" by expanding their texts to include an account of Jesus' birth. Childs himself (*New Testament as Canon*, 160) criticizes attempts at harmonizing the birth narratives in Matthew and Luke, stating that "from a literary perspective, regardless of how one decides on synchronizing the two accounts, the combination of passages which the harmonists suggest effects a major distortion within each of the discrete cycles. A new context is established which severely blurs the witness of the separate Gospels." It seems that there is no reason why this quote should not equally apply to the ending of Mark's gospel. Obviously early scribes were dissatisfied with Mark ending so abruptly at 16:8 and provided what they believed was a more suitable ending—but this choice was not a *necessity* for a suitable Gospel collection.

authorized its inclusion by longstanding and fruitful use.³⁷ Though he recognizes Mark 16:9-20 as secondary, he nevertheless encourages ministers to proceed as if there were no implications as to the text's secondary status.³⁸ In doing so, he is in effect choosing to advocate for the later church's interpretive and harmonistic rewriting of Mark's gospel rather than the intentional function of the narrative's original ending.

One final argument made by Wall concerning the longer ending of Mark and authorship must be noted:

[T]he move from critical analysis to de-canonizing passages deemed unoriginal or pseudepigraphical involves a meta-theological claim by which an appeal to an original text's authority is warranted; the real issue at stake is epistemological. The meta-theological move to authorize only original texts for Christian proclamation would make sense if the authors of those texts were granted special authority by God (or as God's agent, the church); that is, an original text has authority if God 'inspires' or if the church authorizes a particular author to compose it—a religious claim most biblical critics are deeply suspicious of making. This or similar claims about the *production* of a canonical text justifies, then, the de-canonization of any subsequent addition to a text, such as the "non-Markan" longer ending to this Gospel.³⁹

The primary problem with Wall's argument here is that when shifting authority away from the author of a work, one is forced to ask which later person or group can lay claim to that authority. What evidence is there that this later community, anonymous and historically obscure in its own right, should be considered authorized to determine the textual form of the books of the New Testament any more than the authors? Even more, on what grounds are these communities distinguished from more recent communities that likewise wish to "canonize" (to use Wall's terminology) textual forms that differ from other forms that different communities have "canonized"?⁴⁰ It seems that Wall's wish to preserve readings that are "deemed unoriginal

³⁷ Wall fails to recognize that the conclusion of Mark at 16:8 was *the* authoritative form of Mark's gospel for the communities utilizing copies that lacked the other endings. A meaningful interpretation of Mark's conclusion at this point would have been a necessity for these communities as they sought to understand their Scriptures.

³⁸ Wall, "A Response to Thomas/Alexander," 177.

³⁹ Wall, "A Response to Thomas/Alexander," 176, italics original.

⁴⁰ Clarke, "Original Text or Canonical Text?" 316.

or pseudepigraphical” as “canonical” also demands a “meta-theological claim” about the transmission and preservation of texts.

In order to justify this claim, Wall appeals to 2 Tim 3:15-17, saying that this text “suggests that God inspires the *performance* rather than the production of Scripture.”⁴¹ He goes on to say that “the evidence of God’s inspiration is not propositional but existential: believers are made wise for salvation (3:15) and equipped for God’s work (3:17) whenever these inspired texts are appropriated ‘for teaching, correcting, reproving and training’ other believers (3:16).”⁴² Wall reads this in such a way that these aspects of Scripture’s “performance” become criteria for its status as Scripture. Doing so allows Wall to then apply such criteria to textual alterations in order to evaluate their “performance,” which is taken to be determinative for their “canonicity.”⁴³ However, this interpretation of the performative aspects of Scripture in 2 Tim 3:15-17 is questionable. Second Timothy 3:15-17 does not provide a list of “evidence” so that Timothy may be able to know what is Scripture and what is not. Rather, these qualities are *descriptive* of what Scripture *is*, not *prescriptive* of what a writing *must be* to rightly be called Scripture.⁴⁴ This makes suspect Wall’s theological justification for utilizing these aspects of a variant reading’s “performance” in the life of the church as evidence for its canonicity.

⁴¹ Wall, “A Response to Thomas/Alexander,” 176, italics original.

⁴² Wall, “A Response to Thomas/Alexander,” 177.

⁴³ Wall uses the terms “Scripture/scriptural” and “canon/canonical/canonicity” interchangeably, as is most evident when he states his general agreement with traditional text-critical analysis of the endings of Mark, while still objecting to the final product of this analysis: “I accept Mk 16.9-20 as divinely inspired *Scripture* and formative of Christian faith and practice. This conclusion results not because I challenge the critical consensus about its production as a non-Markan text, with which I mostly agree; but because I privilege the ecclesial experiences of this text’s performance as word of God when determining its *canonicity*.” Wall, “A Response to Thomas/Alexander,” 172, italics mine.

⁴⁴ Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (trans. P. Buttolf and A. Yarbro; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 120; trans. of Martin Dibelius, *Die Pastoralbriefe* (4th, rev. ed. by H. Conzelmann; HNT; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1955); William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles* (WBC 46; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 569-70; I. Howard Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 795; Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles* (2d ed.; TNTC 14; Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1990), 176; Gordon D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus* (NIBC 13; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988), 279; and Walter Lock, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1924), 110.

4.1.3. *Broader Tasks of Textual Criticism*

Questions concerning the ability to reconstruct the original text of the New Testament (or even the existence of such a text) have in many ways ushered in a greater appreciation for studies devoted to individual scribal habits and seeing the text as a witness to Christianity's social history.⁴⁵ These new emphases have rightly expanded the boundaries of New Testament text-critical inquiry to include examination of the text's development rather than a myopic pursuit of the "original" that sees little value in variant readings. However, it can be argued that these approaches have not ultimately supplanted the pursuit of the "original text" as the primary goal of New Testament textual criticism.⁴⁶ In reality, these other forms of inquiry necessarily presuppose the ability to distinguish between original readings and later scribal alterations. If this were not possible, if there was no presupposed baseline of originality from which to start, the distinctive features of individual manuscripts or readings would be impossible to discern. It is in the divergence from the original form that a given manuscript betrays the motivations of its scribe.⁴⁷

Though this might be a legitimate apology for the continued pursuit of the original text of the New Testament, it is equally an indictment of the approach advocated by the canonical approach to textual criticism. The canonical approach elevates readings "received" by the

⁴⁵ Bart D. Ehrman, "The Text as Window: New Testament Manuscripts and the Social History of Early Christianity," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis* (ed. B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes; SD 46; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 361-79.

⁴⁶ For a balanced treatment of this dialectic that appreciates both lines of inquiry, see Eldon Jay Epp, *The Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis in Acts* (SNTSMS 3; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 12-21.

⁴⁷ Moisés Silva, "Response," in *Rethinking New Testament Textual Criticism* (ed. D. A. Black; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 149, points to the impossibility of a work like Ehrman's *Orthodox Corruption* if the notion of an original text is abandoned or dissolved. Ehrman explicitly states how the establishment of the earliest textual form serves as the first step in his method: "At every point of variation I work to establish the earliest form of the text, employing standard kinds of text-critical argumentation. . . . Once I have established—or at least contended for—one form of the text as antecedent to the others, I evaluate the variant readings in relation to the christological debates of the second and third centuries" (*Orthodox Corruption*, 31). Even David Parker's *The Living Text of the Gospels* repeatedly assumes the need to reconstruct the original form, even if only as the first part of the larger text-critical task. See also Wallace, "Challenges," 81, n. 5.

church, allowing these readings to displace earlier forms, even in places where the earliest form can be known with some confidence. Yet, one must consider how this procedure would affect the broader tasks of textual criticism that seek to discern the factors that led to textual alterations, thus situating the text's transmission within the life of the church. If one's starting place is a "canonical" textform, is this a useful text for evaluating scribal habits, theological tendencies, and social history as it relates to the transmission of the New Testament? If a manuscript differs from a "canonical text" that is self-consciously composed of various scribal aberrations, however piously motivated for their introduction and preservation, how does such a finding contribute to an historical understanding of the New Testament's transmission or of the idiosyncrasies of the manuscript in question?⁴⁸ One must say that establishing such a "canonical" text is of limited, if any, use for such investigations.

One could potentially argue that scholars could carry out such tasks by using an edition that emphasized the historical priority of readings, while the church operated from a "canonical" edition whose text was not concerned with establishing an "original" or otherwise early text. However, it is hard to imagine Childs (or any other critic) supporting the use of different Bibles by the church and academy. And herein lies the problem: the use of a "canonical" text does not serve the needs of scholars who investigate the historical development of the New Testament

⁴⁸ This is not advocating for a return to practicing collation of manuscripts against the text of a critical edition, as was sufficiently refuted by Ernest C. Colwell and Ernest W. Tune, "Method in Classifying and Evaluating Variant Readings," in *Studies in Methodology in Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1969), 96-105. It is merely to say that textual variation from an original form is a useful data point, and comparison with the text of a critical edition is a reasonable place to begin such an investigation. For recent textual studies that assume the originality of the text of a critical edition of the New Testament, see Karen H. Jobes, "The Septuagintal Textual Tradition in 1 Peter," in *Septuagintal Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures* (ed. W. Kraus and R. G. Wooden; SCS 53; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 311-33; Johannes de Vries, "The Textual History of the Scriptural Quotations in the New Testament: An Examination of Papyrus 46," in *Textual History and the Reception of Scripture in Early Christianity* (ed. J. de Vries and M. Karrer; SCS 60; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 79-92; Ronald H. van der Bergh, "The Influence of the Greek OT Traditions on the Explicit Quotations in Codex E08," in *Textual History and the Reception of Scripture in Early Christianity* (ed. J. de Vries and M. Karrer; SCS 60; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 131-50.

text. Therefore, the introduction of such a “canonical” edition would likely result in furthering the gap between university and pew.⁴⁹

4.1.4. Does a “Canonical” Text Best Serve the Church?

Though the terminology of “canon” naturally implies a positive reception in, and function for, the church, it is by no means a foregone conclusion that a reconstructed “canonical text” of the New Testament would serve the church especially well compared to more traditional reconstructions. As has been argued above, the establishment of such a text is truly a construction rather than a reconstruction since it cannot claim, even on a theoretical level, to be restoring the text of a lost manuscript. The determination that certain readings are “canonical” in order to collectively present a “canonical” New Testament text has the effect of insulating the church from the history of its Scriptures. Textual variation becomes less of a problem because the uniquely authoritative, “canonical” text has been established. By implication, one may approach this text with total confidence that its contents are truly the text of the church, with little need to pay attention to variation, and thus “noncanonical” readings.

However, the church’s interaction with its Scriptures, especially as it develops a theology of Scripture, is not limited to what the text says. Instead, the church has consistently sought not only to understand what the text says, but also the circumstances of its composition and the reasons for its authoritative status. To be sure, the church has always looked to the text of Scripture as it seeks to answer these questions, though few would say that all one need do is sit down with only a Bible to come to a complete understanding of these complex issues. Instead, the external factors of Scripture’s history must also be accounted for. These factors include the scriptural books’ relation to other ancient texts (both within and without Christianity), their

⁴⁹ For a discussion of how text-critical decisions as reflected in published Bible translations relates to the gap between church and academy, see Wallace, “Challenges,” 99.

reception and use within the church (including their agreement with orthodox teaching and early Christian tradition), as well as their transmission to the present time. In a text-critical context, the transmission of these texts naturally receives the greatest attention. One must ask, though, how an understanding of Scripture's transmission does (or should) influence the beliefs that the church holds about the Bible. More specifically, how might the method (and product) of "canonical" textual criticism influence the church's conception of its Scriptures? By positing a text that employs late textual readings, which are consciously chosen over those of the earliest attainable form, as the "canonical text" of the New Testament, one must wonder whether the need for historically informed conclusions about the text's role for the church has been undermined. By introducing concepts of "canon" into text-critical methodology, problems of transmission are masked that could contribute to a healthy understanding of the text's composition and preservation, which can likewise inform the church's conception of inspiration and providence.⁵⁰

This is not without practical effect. Take, for example, the "Lord's Prayer" as found at Matt 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4. In NA²⁸, the Lucan form is considerably abbreviated when compared to the Matthean form. However, when one consults the apparatus, we see that many manuscripts of Luke actually conform quite closely to Matthew's wording. Thus, while the main body of NA²⁸ (following the early witness of P⁷⁵ & B) opens the prayer in Luke simply with "Father" (πάτερ), we can see that the majority of Greek manuscripts (+ it sy^{c.p.h} co), support the expanded form, "Our Father in heaven" (πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς), matching the Matthean form. Furthermore, whereas NA²⁸ prints the Lucan form as moving directly from "Your kingdom come" to "Give us each day our daily bread," the majority of Greek manuscripts (+ it vg^s sy^{p.h}

⁵⁰ For ways in which insufficient attention to the historical data concerning the New Testament's transmission has led to faulty theological conclusions amongst Majority Text theorists concerning the text's preservation, see Daniel B. Wallace, "Inspiration, Preservation, and New Testament Textual Criticism," *GTJ* 12 (1992): 21-50.

bo), support the insertion of “Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου, ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς) between the two, again matching the Matthean form. Finally, whereas NA²⁸ closes the Lucan form with “And do not bring us to the time of trial” (καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν), the majority of Greek manuscripts (+ it, vg^{mss} sy^{c.p.h} bo^{pt}), support the addition of “but deliver us from the evil one” (ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ), also matching Matthew.

In these variation-units we can see that there was a scribal tendency to harmonize the two prayers in Matthew and Luke, ultimately with the result that the expanded form of Luke’s prayer became dominant.⁵¹ One cannot help but wonder how Childs’ method would determine the “canonical” form of Luke’s prayer. Given that the textual expansions (1) had significant currency and use in the church, (2) reflect a multi-gospel canon, and (3) seek to resolve an intracanonical textual tension, it seems likely that Childs would support the expanded text as “canonical.” At the very least, one could see how his method could be used to support such a conclusion.⁵² But what is the effect of such a decision on the church’s conception of Scripture and its history? When the Christian who is unaware of the textual complexities involved, reads the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew, and turns to its parallel in Luke, finding only minor differences, how will the near-uniformity of these passages influence their thoughts on inspiration, gospel-formation, the role of tradition in early Christianity, etc., compared to if they had read the earliest form of each prayer, which reveals more significant differences?⁵³ While the late-imposed conformity of Luke may be

⁵¹ This dominance still has lingering effects today, as can be seen by a comparison of Matthew and Luke’s prayers in the KJV/NKJV (whose textual base is the Textus Receptus), which differ in only minor respects of word choice (“sins” vs. “debts”) and the inclusion of the closing doxology in Matthew compared to its absence in Luke (for which the doxology had no textual currency).

⁵² Again, it is unfortunate that Childs does not provide his own examples to demonstrate his method, forcing one to conjecture as to how his method would engage the actual textual data.

⁵³ The primary issues here concern literary dependence and the influence of early Christian worship practices upon the composition of Matthew and Luke. I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*

comforting to the reader, one must ask if they have really been served well by the limited (and somewhat artificial) picture of the text's history as presented in their "canonical" text of the New Testament. In other words, if a "canonical" text of the New Testament smooths over textual difficulties revealed in the transmission history, it has the effect of presenting the church with a distorted picture of that history, which may contribute to distorted beliefs about how the biblical text came into existence and has acted as Scripture for the church throughout its history.⁵⁴ Instead, it is argued here that the church is best served by the most accurate history of its scriptural texts as is possible, accounting for both the establishment of the earliest textual forms, as well as an awareness of the subsequent modifications and their causes.

4.2. Conclusions

For argument's sake, the discussion in this chapter has assumed that there is a "canonical" textform of the New Testament in order to consider whether or not text critics and

(NIGTC 3; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 454-5, considers it likely that the author of Matthew substituted the form of the prayer that his church used in worship for the form he encountered in Q, whereas the author of Luke has mostly preserved the form of the prayer that he found in Q. Mark Goodacre, *The Case Against Q: Studies in Markan Priority and the Synoptic Problem* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2002), 64-65, argues that the oral recitation of the Lord's Prayer in worship allowed for regional variations, and that while the author of Luke uses Matthew as a source, he edits the prayer he finds there in light of his own worship experience. Though these are certainly not the only theories about the formation of the Lord's Prayer, they do represent attempts to explain both the similarities and differences of the earliest form of each version of the prayer, with each theory likewise locating the processes of composition within the larger framework of early Christian tradition, worship practices, and literary culture. Without advocating for one theory or the other, we can say that either one calls attention to the historically-conditioned nature of the Gospels. An awareness of these factors can place an effective check on the "dropped out of the sky" view that many Christians have about the biblical text. See Craig D. Allert, *A High View of Scripture?: The Authority of the Bible and the Formation of the New Testament Canon* (Evangelical ressourcement series; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 10-15, for the ways in which a lack of understanding concerning the historical processes of the New Testament canon's formation have allowed many to hold to this "dropped out of the sky" view of the Bible.

⁵⁴ This also relates to the difficulty posed by the church both utilizing the biblical text as a source of authority while also altering that text by adopting so-called "canonical" readings. Though specifically discussing the process of canon formation in the sense of a definite list of authoritative books, Paul Ricoeur's description of this process's circularity is especially relevant for the present question of a "canonical text": "Does not the whole thing appear as if the community decides on the authority of certain texts, basing its own authority on the content of those very texts, which designate it as the authority competent to define these founding texts? In short, the community would be deciding in an arbitrary and sovereign way about what gives it its authority. To make the paradox more vivid, I will express it in the form of a circle: the Church, as a textual authority, would be making a decision on a question of textual authority, basing its authority on the text itself that authorizes it." Paul Ricoeur, "The Canon between the Text and Community," in *Philosophical Hermeneutics and Biblical Exegesis* (ed. P. Pokorný and J. Roskovec; WUNT 163; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 7-8.

exegetes should prefer this textform. In doing so, several difficulties associated with choosing such a textform have been uncovered. These include the largely ahistorical way in which the textual data is engaged and interpreted, as well as the methodological limitations for making textual decisions using the canonical method. Based on the instances in which scholars have sought to make textual decisions based on canonical concerns, the shape of the final textual product of the canonical method of textual criticism has also been considered, with the conclusion being that such a text does not reveal itself to be especially useful for academic study of the New Testament, nor does it serve the church well as it seeks to understand its Scriptures and their history.

As can be seen, these challenges do not pose problems for only a small segment of Bible users, but rather extend to include both members of the church and academy, regardless of their level of engagement with text-critical issues. Since the canonical approach to textual criticism would necessarily alter readings of the New Testament at many places, such changes would be felt by any person seeking to study the New Testament closely. As was said above, the fact that a proposed text-critical method results in different textual decisions cannot, by itself, substantiate a critique of that method. However, for one to adopt such changes, the analytical principles underlying the method responsible for those changes must be sound. When one considers the complexities of the New Testament's transmission history, the canonical approach to textual criticism reveals several weaknesses in its method.

This does not mean that notions of canon cannot or should not factor into textual criticism at all. The formation of individual collections (Gospels, Pauline corpus, etc.), and the larger New Testament canon in general, did play a role in how the texts of the books that made

up those collections were transmitted.⁵⁵ Therefore, the textual influence of the canon is a real factor which must be reckoned with. Furthermore, the canon exerts a distinct influence that justifies specialization in textual criticism of the New Testament as one segment of the larger world of ancient literature. In other words, the fact that there is a New Testament canon presents the text critic of the New Testament with different challenges compared to that of Philo or Homer. However, to acknowledge that the canon's existence exercised its own influence on the transmission of the New Testament is not to say that the critic must accept the results of that influence *en bloc*. If anything, the text critic is charged with identifying those influences and reversing their operation, for each of the reasons given above in the main discussion.

One can be sure that Childs would object to such a claim, arguing that such a procedure improperly divorces the text from its reception.⁵⁶ However, textual reception is by no means a neutral process, and its effects must be examined critically. To refer to textual reception as an inherently positive force at the outset is to decide the matter before engaging the data. Yes, the church has continuously had its Scriptures, and it has continually found those Scriptures useful for its needs. However, the transmission of those texts has introduced certain changes, changes which surely cannot be given any special credit for the text's usefulness to the church. In other words, the church has made use of the various forms of New Testament text, therefore no one form can command the title of singularly useful text. So it is not a question of one form being *useful* and an alternative form being *useless*. It is merely a question of which form is the *most useful* to the church and academy. In this chapter, it has been argued that the construction of a

⁵⁵ The multiple examples of harmonizations between the canonical gospels discussed in ch. 3 illustrate well the textual influence exerted by a fourfold gospel collection. For the Pauline corpus, one could cite the arguments marshaled by Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 699-708, that the prohibition against women speaking found at 1 Cor 14:34-35 is a non-Pauline interpolation which began as a marginal gloss in order to reconcile 1 Cor 14 with 1 Tim 2:9-15. If Fee is right, then this interpolation is the direct result of a collection of Pauline epistles.

⁵⁶ Childs, "Hermeneutical Problem," 522-4.

“canonical text” presents many difficulties, and is itself not as useful as a text that seeks to reconstruct the text of the New Testament in its earliest form.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1. A Window as Text¹

If you go to York Minster cathedral today and wish to look at the Great East Window, revered as “the largest expanse of medieval stained glass in Britain,”² you are likely to be both disappointed and impressed all at the same time. Disappointed because looking at the complete window means looking at a very large printed image of the window hung in its place (itself an impressive achievement of modern printing). This is because this stained glass window is currently under construction. The glass of this window is being restored, panel by panel, as part of a project entitled “York Minster Revealed.” As this restoration progresses, an exhibit known as *The Orb* has been set up onsite to showcase newly restored panels for visitors to view up close. Each month, a new panel is put on display, accompanied with an image of what the panel looked like prior to its restoration. The restoration seeks to repair damage that has been done to the window since its initial creation in 1408.

As the window has aged, portions of the glass have broken and been repaired. In the event of simple cracks, this has meant the addition of new lead joints to reinforce the glass. In these cases, the restorationists have either inserted new glass of the same color, greatly decreasing the segmentation of the panel by the added lead, or they have removed the old lead and used more advanced methods to add in new lead (or clear epoxy) that does not obscure the glass as much. Sometimes portions of a panel had been broken and lost, with past efforts at repair inserting new glass to replace those portions, often failing to replicate accurately the lost

¹ This heading intentionally plays off of the title of Bart D. Ehrman, “The Text as Window: New Testament Manuscripts and the Social History of Early Christianity,” in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis* (ed. B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes; SD 46; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 361-79.

² <http://www.yorkglazierstrust.org/?idno=996>. Accessed March 6, 2015.

glass. In these cases, the restorationists have relied on art-historical evidence to determine what the window previously looked like in order to restore it to that original form. Sometimes this means retroverting to match original color schemes, while other changes require the relocation, addition, or removal of figures that were displaced (or improperly added) during past repairs.

Though the restoration of the Great East Window concerns a piece of visual art, it shares much in common with the process of textual criticism. In a way, the scars of damage and repair are evidence of the window's "transmission history" from one generation to the next. Some of these repairs have been carried out faithfully, others have not been so careful. Whatever the case, the window has changed over time as a result of these repairs. Though the change has not been drastic, surely going unnoticed by nearly all who have viewed the window over the centuries, the change has been real.

Yet, should the window be restored? Is it right to disassemble this window, use critical judgment to determine the earliest form of its images, and reassemble it in the way the art historian believes most closely approximates the original window? To put it in the terms of this investigation, is there a *canonical* form of this window? Surely the window has never ceased to be an object of wonder, meditation and teaching since it was first installed. Admittedly, the people in charge of the Minster's upkeep have made certain emendations as necessary in order to maintain the window's place in the cathedral. Yet the changes introduced over time have not made its images unrecognizable or useless. After all, the church has been using the window on a daily basis for the last six centuries. In fact, it very well may be that this restoration will remove or rearrange portions of the window that have been the legitimate object of Christian contemplation in the past.

Now, it must be admitted that this is not a perfect analogy, as none are. Some will be quick to point out that a window is not a source of authority for Christian life and practice. Windows may be inspiring, but few are ever called inspired. Windows are repaired, rarely are they consciously edited. These are valid points that are conceded gladly. However, the central point remains: something has been lost to time. Alteration has obscured the original craft. The resources and manpower being devoted to this restoration demonstrates that the original window is preferable to the altered window. This does not mean that the stages of the window's development should be looked on with disdain. The past acts of preservation and restoration should be celebrated because it is those acts that have allowed each new generation the chance to gaze upon a beautiful example of Christian art. Yet none of these considerations nullifies the desire to restore the window to its original condition.

The same applies for the reconstruction of the text of the New Testament. Like this window, the New Testament has never ceased to fulfill its role for the church, regardless of which textual form it has taken. No amount of textual alteration has rendered any of the New Testament writings useless for teaching the central doctrines of the Christian faith. This is not to say that the changes that have occurred have not been real or significant, only that none of the changes have been detrimental or insurmountable to the church's teaching and study of Scripture. Even so, saying that the New Testament text has served as Scripture for the Christian church in all of its various textual forms does not prevent one from wishing to ascertain the original form for use by both the church and academy. These are not mutually exclusive perspectives.

5.2. A Question of What Should Be Read

Many have understood canon and textual form as connected, primarily because they both concern what we *read* (and, ultimately, what we *do not* read); one at the macro-level of books, the other at the micro-level of readings. When a list of scriptural books is drawn out, a literary fence has been built to demarcate what should and should not be read. Such lists are relatively inflexible. Generally, a book is either in or out. In this way, a list of canonical books can provide the reader with a certain amount of security, indicating a level of reliability and solidarity that can only be claimed for books that are “in.”

However, when one turns to the specific contents of the books that make up such a well-defined canon, such a sense of solidarity can begin to erode. Whereas the list of books seemed to have already answered the question of which series of words (which, by nature, any literary work is) should be read, any comparison of these books as preserved in the manuscript tradition reveals that there is no uniformity to their words. Therefore, when one encounters textual variation, the same question is seemingly brought to the fore again, though in a different sense: What do I read? Which *reading* is Scripture? In this way, what seemed a settled matter once again requires the reader to make decisions, though now they must do so multiple times for each page of their Bible. It is no wonder that textual variation (and the discipline of textual criticism) is seen by many as disconcerting, and even threatening.³

Even so, we must not be so shortsighted as to only be concerned with what *I* should read *now*. Instead, we should likewise be concerned with what has been read as Scripture by the church in the centuries leading up to the present day, even if we do not ultimately accept these

³ Eldon Jay Epp, “The Multivalence of the Term ‘Original Text’ in New Testament Textual Criticism,” *HTR* 92 (1999): 280, has called attention to the ways in which textual criticism has wrongly been seen by some as “a ‘safe’ discipline . . . that can be practiced without challenge to theological convictions or without risk to faith commitments or truth assertions.”

historic textual forms as authentic in all of their specifics. In doing so, we can maintain a level of “critical continuity” with the church in each age, which can contribute to our understanding of the church’s transmission of the text, as well as its interaction with it.

While it has been argued throughout this thesis that the establishment of earlier forms of text is preferable to designating later forms as “canonical,” it has not been argued that these early forms should then be automatically labeled “canonical” themselves. If anything, the matter of how textual criticism and textual authority intersect has been further problematized rather than resolved. One of the central claims of this thesis is that multiple readings, if not all of them, have each been “received” as Scripture by the Christian church, which should then give us pause when wishing to designate any one reading (or collective set of readings) as “canonical.”

Instead, I contend that textual criticism cannot ultimately arbitrate matters of scriptural authority. As an historical discipline, it is ill-equipped to answer the question “What is Scripture?” independent of “Which textual form is earliest?” Many may see the answer to the first question as inseparable from that of the second, though this is incidental to textual criticism’s processes and methods. In fact, such a conclusion is really the outworking of a particular presupposition, namely that the earliest reading and “Scripture” are one and the same.

This point is given helpful expression by Epp:

Though some textual *critics* may be searching for such an authoritative “original” text of the New Testament and may wish to identify it with the authoritative canon (as a normative guide to faith and practice), that purpose is not intrinsic to textual *criticism* as a historical-critical discipline. That is, it is not of the essence or within the domain of New Testament textual criticism to accommodate a theological overlay upon its goals and results. Anyone, of course, may exercise the privilege of placing the discipline within such an ideological framework, but that constitutes a separate and further step, one not intrinsic to the discipline itself.⁴

⁴ Eldon Jay Epp, “Textual Criticism in the Exegesis of the New Testament, with an Excursus on Canon,” in *Handbook to Exegesis of the New Testament* (ed. S. E. Porter; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 91, italics original. See Michael W. Holmes, “From ‘Original Text’ to ‘Initial Text’: The Traditional Goal of New Testament Textual Criticism in

When, however, one considers the “canonical” method of textual criticism (especially as expressed by Brevard Childs), we can see that it is precisely this move that the text critic is expected to make. The canonical method asks the text critic to operate with a “theological overlay” in order to define what is Scripture, though disallows concerns about origins, composition, or general historical priority to occupy a central influence. In short, textual criticism simply does not possess, and really *cannot* possess, the tools required to make such a determination.

5.3. Where Do We Go from Here?

In light of the previous discussion of this thesis, two broad conclusions can be made. First, terminology of “canon” should be avoided when engaging matters of textual transmission, especially when choosing amongst specific readings evidenced by the manuscript tradition. Language of “canon” should only enter the discussion in cases where the eventual collection of books into the New Testament has demonstrably exerted a textual influence upon these books, and even then one should not use such terms in order to designate one of the several competing forms as “canonical.” Given the limits of textual criticism and its methods, language of “canon” injects a new set of concerns into the discipline—concerns for which textual criticism cannot adequately account. Furthermore, such terminology provides little help for the problems that face text critics, while simultaneously introducing a whole host of new problems.

Second, the recognition that the entire textual tradition of the New Testament has served as authoritative Scripture for the Christian church in its various times and locations should further encourage text critics to study the text’s transmission in a broader sense, rather than focusing solely on the restoration of the original wording. If all of the various textual forms that

Contemporary Discussion,” in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis* (ed. B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes; 2d ed.; NTTSD 42; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 642-3, for a similar point.

have been preserved in the manuscript tradition have served as the church's Scripture, it follows that diligent study of those forms—original or not—is a worthwhile and valuable endeavor. This conclusion should not only be limited to text critics, but should likewise extend to exegetes, theologians, and church historians. While these interpreters may wish to work from a reconstructed original text as a baseline for their research (probably a sound, if somewhat limiting, principle in itself), a greater engagement with, and appreciation for, the various textual forms in existence can only serve to better fill out their interpretations and historical reconstructions.

APPENDIX A

CHURCH FATHERS VARIANT CATEGORIES

Greek MSS

Ambrose, *Exp. Luc.* 6.6
Ambrose, *Fid.* 5.16.193
Ambrosiaster, *Comm. Gal.* 2:5
Ambrosiaster, *Comm. Rom.* 12:11
Ambrosiaster, *Comm. Rom.* 5:14
Anastasius Abbot of Sinai, *Viae Dux* 22.3
Augustine, *C. Jul.* 3.62
Augustine, *Cons.* 2.31
Augustine, *Cons.* 3.29
Augustine, *Ep.* 157.19
Augustine, *Pecc. merit.* 1.13
Augustine, *Retract.* 1.19.4
Augustine, *Serm. Dom.* 2.9
Augustine, *Trin.* 1.13
Hilary, *Trin.* 10.41
Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 4:19
Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 4:29
Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 5:22
Jerome, *Comm. Gal.* 2:1-2, 3-5
Jerome, *Comm. Gal.* 5:26
Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 24:36
Jerome, *Comm. Tit.* 3:15c
Jerome, *Ep.* 119.2, 12
Jerome, *Ep.* 119.5 [Didymus?]
Jerome, *Ep.* 120.3
Jerome, *Ep.* 27.3
Jerome, *Ep.* 27.3
Jerome, *Ep.* 27.3
Jerome, *Jov.* 1.26
Jerome, *Pelag.* 2.15
Jerome, *Pelag.* 2.16
Jerome, *Pelag.* 2.17
Marius Victorinus, *Comm. Gal.* 2:5
Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 3.1.6, 12 [Rufinus?]
Origen, *Hom. Jes. Nav.* 8.3 [Rufinus]
Pseudo-Jerome, *Interpolation* 85

Numerous/Majority

Acacius of Caesarea, *Συμμίκτων ζητημάτων*
(*Miscellaneous Questions*; quoted by
Jerome, *Ep.* 119.6-7)
Ambrose, *Exp. Luc.* 6.6
Anastasius Abbot of Sinai, *Viae Dux* 22.3
Augustine, *Cons.* 2.106
Augustine, *Cons.* 3.29

Augustine, *Ep.* 157.19
Augustine, *Ep.* 193.10-11
Augustine, *Pecc. merit.* 1.13
Augustine, *Trin.* 1.13
Basil, *Asceticon, Shorter Responses* 251
Eusebius, *Quaest. Marin.* 1.1-2
Hilary, *Trin.* 10.41
Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 16:2-3
Jerome, *Ep.* 119.5 [Didymus?]
Jerome, *Ep.* 120.3
Jerome, *Pelag.* 2.17
Jerome, *Pelag.* 2.5
Marius Victorinus, *Comm. Gal.* 2:5
Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.40(24) [6.204-207]
Origen, *Comm. ser. Matt.* 121
Origen, *Comm. ser. Matt.* 134
Origen, *Fr. Matt.* 104
Peter of Laodicea, *Comm. Matt.* 27:15-18
Victor of Antioch, *Comm. Mark* 16:8-9

Preference Due to Meaning/Context

Acacius of Caesarea, *Συμμίκτων ζητημάτων*
(*Miscellaneous Questions*; quoted by
Jerome, *Ep.* 119.6-7)
Ambrosiaster, *Comm. Gal.* 2:5
Ambrosiaster, *Comm. Rom.* 12:11
Ambrosiaster, *Comm. Rom.* 5:14
Augustine, *Trin.* 1.13
Didymus, *Fr. 1 Cor.* 15:51; Jerome, *Ep.*
119.5
Euthymius Zigabenus, *Comm. on the*
Gospels, Matt 7:24
Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 3:14
Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 4:19
Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 4:29
Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 5:14
Jerome, *Jov.* 1.26
Marius Victorinus, *Comm. Gal.* 2:5
Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 6.7.17 [Rufinus?]
Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 9.10 [Rufinus]
Origen, *Comm. ser. Matt.* 121
Origen, *Fr. Eph.* 4:31
Origen, *Fr. Matt.* 194
Pseudo-Jerome, *Interpolation* 85
Theodore of Mopsuestia, *catena*
Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Comm. Eph.* 5:14

Theodoret, *Comm. Eph.* 5:14

Latin MSS

Ambrosiaster, *Comm. Rom.* 5:14
Augustine, *Pecc. merit.* 1.13
Augustine, *Trin.* 1.13
Hilary, *Trin.* 10.41
Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 1:6
Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 3:14
Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 4:19
Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 4:29
Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 5:22
Jerome, *Comm. Gal.* 2:1-2, 3-5
Jerome, *Comm. Gal.* 5:19-21
Jerome, *Comm. Gal.* 5:26
Jerome, *Ep.* 119.2, 12
Jerome, *Pelag.* 2.16
Jerome, *Pelag.* 2.17
Marius Victorinus, *Comm. Gal.* 2:5
Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 3.1.6, 12 [Rufinus?]
Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 9.10 [Rufinus]
Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 9.12 [Rufinus]

Ancient/Earlier MSS

Ambrose, *Fid.* 5.16.193
Arethas of Caesarea, catena
Augustine, *Cons.* 2.31
Augustine, *Cons.* 3.29
Augustine, *Serm. Dom.* 2.9
Basil, *Eun.* 2.19
Irenaeus, *Haer.* 2.30.1
Isidore, *Ep.* 1576
Jerome, *Ep.* 127.6
Jerome, *Hom.* 11 on Psalm 77 (78 Eng)
[Origen?]
Jerome, *Pelag.* 2.5
Origen, *Comm. ser. Matt.* 121
Peter of Laodicea, *Comm. Matt.* 27:15-18
Pseudo-Athanasius, *De sancta trinitate* 3.20
[Didymus?]
Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 7.32

Accurate MSS

Arethas of Caesarea, catena [Romans 3:9,
D101]
Augustine, *Cons.* 2.31 [D65]

Chronicon Paschale [John 19:14//Mark
15:25]

Eusebius, *Comm. Ps.* 77
Eusebius, *Quaest. Marin.* 1.1-2
Euthymius Zigabenus, *Comm. on the
Gospels*, John 7:52
Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 21:28-32
Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 5:22
Jerome, *Comm. Tit.* 3:15c
John Chrysostom, *Hom. Jo.* 17
Pseudo-Athanasius, *Epistulae ad Castorem*
2
Severus, *Hom.* 77 [Mk 16:2]
Severus, *Hom.* 77 [Mk 16:9-20]
Titus of Bostra, *Fr. Luc.* 8:26
Victor of Antioch, *Comm. Mark* 16:8-9

Specific Copies/Authors

Ambrosiaster, *Comm. Rom.* 5:14
Athanasius [2 Thess 2:8]
Chronicon Paschale [John 19:14//Mark
15:25]
Epiphanius, *Anc.* 31.4-5
Euthymius Zigabenus, *Comm. on the
Gospels*, John 7:52
Jerome, *Comm. Gal.* 3:1b
Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 24:36
Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.40(24) [6.204-207]
Theophylact, *Comm. 2 Thess.* 3:14

Non-Textual Evidence

Jerome, *Qu. hebr. Gen.* 48:22
John Chrysostom, *Hom. Jo.* 17
Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.40(24) [6.204-207]
Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.41(24) [6.208-211]
Titus of Bostra, *Fr. Luc.* 8:26

Mention

Ambrose, *Spir.* 1.5.65-66
Ammonius, catena on Acts 14:23; or
Pseudo-Oecumenius, *Comm. Acts* 22
Andrew of Caesarea, *Comm. Apoc.* 15:5-6
Apollinaris, *Fr. Matt.* 19
Apollinaris, *Fr. Matt.* 26; or Origen, *Fr.
Matt.* 113
Apollinaris, *Fr. Matt.* 46

Arethas of Caesarea, *Comm. Apoc.* 1:2
 Augustine, *C. Jul.* 3.62
 Augustine, *Ep.* 205.14
 Augustine, *Tract. Ev. Jo.* 96.4; 100.1
 Basil, *Asceticon, Shorter Responses* 251
 Didymus, *Comm. Eccl.* 7:21-22
 Didymus, *Comm. Ps.* 38:10 (39:9 Eng)
 Epiphanius, *Pan.* 5.35.6
 Epiphanius, *Pan.* 51.11.6
 Epiphanius, *Pan.* 51.13.1
 Epiphanius, *Pan., De Fide* 8.3
 Eusebius, *Quaest. Marin.* 2.7
 Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 1:6
 Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 3:5-7
 Jerome, *Comm. Gal.* 3:10
 Jerome, *Comm. Gal.* 5:19-21
 Jerome, *Comm. Gal.* 5:2
 Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 6:25
 Jerome, *Ep.* 121.10.5
 Jerome, *Pelag.* 2.16
 John Chrysostom, *Hom. Eph.* 18
 Macarius Magnes, *Apokritika* 2.31(20)
 Origen, *Cels.* 1.62
 Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.19(13) [2.131-132]
 Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 28.18(14) [28.154]
 Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 12.15
 Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 13.14
 Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 13.19
 Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 16.14
 Origen, *Fr. Matt.* 104
 Origen, *Hom. Luc.* 7.3 [Jerome]
 Peter of Laodicea, *Comm. Matt.* 5:43-48
 Peter of Laodicea, *Comm. Matt.* 6:9-13
 Rufinus, *Symb.* 41
 Theodore (of Heraclea or of Mopsuestia),
Fr. Matt. 15
 Theodoret, *Comm. Rom.* 16:3

Exegete Multiple Readings

Ambrose, *Exp. Luc.* 6.6
 Ambrose, *Fid.* 5.16.193
 Ambrosiaster, *Comm. 2 Cor.* 5:2-3
 Andrew of Caesarea, *Comm. Apoc.* 3:7
 Augustine, *Cons.* 2.31
 Augustine, *Ep.* 149.28
 Cyril of Alexandria, *Comm. Jo.* 12:28

Cyril of Alexandria, *Fr. Matt.* 36; or Origen,
Fr. Matt. 74
 Eusebius, *Quaest. Marin.* 1.1-2
 Euthymius Zigabenus, *Comm. on the*
Gospels, John 7:52
 Hilary, *Trin.* 10.41
 Isidore, *Ep.* 1576
 Jerome, *Comm. Gal.* 2:1-2, 3-5
 Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 11:19
 Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 11:23
 Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 16:2-3
 Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 21:28-32
 Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 24:36
 Jerome, *Ep.* 119.5 [Didymus?]
 Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 1.35(40) [1.255-256]
 Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 5.1.37
 Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 7.4.7, 14 [Rufinus?]
 Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 9.12 [Rufinus]
 Origen, *Fr. Luc.* 212
 Pelagius, *Comm. Rom.* 12:13
 Peter of Laodicea, *Comm. Matt.* 27:15-18
 Primasius, *Comm. Apoc.* 1.4 (4:11)
 Pseudo-Oecumenius, *catena*
 Pseudo-Oecumenius, *catena*; or Origen,
 margin of 1739
 Severus, *Hom.* 77
 Theophylact, *Comm. 2 Thess.* 3:14
 Theophylact, *Comm. Heb.* 10:1
 Theophylact, *Comm. Heb.* 2:9

No Meaning Change

Arethas of Caesarea, *Comm. Apoc.* 3:7
 Augustine, *Adult. conj.* 1.10 (11)
 Augustine, *Cons.* 2.106
 Augustine, *Cons.* 2.70
 Augustine, *Cons.* 3.71
 Augustine, *Ep.* 157.19
 Augustine, *Ep.* 193.10-11
 Augustine, *Pecc. merit.* 1.13
 Augustine, *Retract.* 1.19.4
 Cyril of Alexandria, *Comm. Jo.* 12:28
 Diodore of Tarsus, *Comm. Ps.* 8:6b-7
 Origen, *Fr. Jo.* 48
 Pseudo-Oecumenius, *Comm. 2 Pet.* 1:1
 Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Fr. Rom.* 12:13

Cause of Variation Proposed

Ambrosiaster, *Comm. Gal.* 2:2
Augustine, *Adult. conj.* 2.7.6
Epiphanius, *Pan.* 1.8.1-4
Eusebius, *Dem. ev.* 10.4.13
Irenaeus, *Haer.* 2.30.1
Isidore, *Ep.* 1576
Jerome, *Comm. Gal.* 5:26
Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 13:35
Jerome, *Hom.* 11 on Psalm 77 (78 Eng)
[Origen?] [Matt 13:35]
Jerome, *Hom.* 11 on Psalm 77 (78 Eng)
[Origen?] [Matt 27:9]
Origen, *Comm. Ps.* 8
Origen, *Comm. ser. Matt.* 134
Theophylact, *Comm. Heb.* 10:1

Heretics/Orthodox

Ambrose, *Fid.* 5.16.193
Ephraem Graecus, *Sermo adversus
haereticos*
Epiphanius, *Anc.* 31.4-5
Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 10.43.2
Origen, *Comm. Rom.* 10.43.2

Pseudo-Oecumenius, *catena*
Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* 7.32
Theophylact, *Comm. Heb.* 2:9

Canonical Terms for Variant Readings?

Anastasius Abbot of Sinai, *Viae Dux* 22.3
Basil, *Eun.* 2.19
Epiphanius, *Anc.* 31.4-5
Eusebius, *Quaest. Marin.* 1.1-2
Pseudo-Athanasius, *De sancta trinitate* 3.20
[Didymus?]
Victor of Antioch, *Comm. Mark* 16:8-9

Excluded from Analysis

Ammonius, *Fr. Jo.* 596
Epiphanius, *Ep. Eus.* 238^v- 239^r
Eusebius, *Supp. qu. Marin.* 4
Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 27:9-10
Jerome, *Hom.* 11 on Psalm 77 (78 Eng)
[Origen?] [John 19:14//Mark 15:25]
Macarius Magnes, *Apokritika* 2.23(12)
[Porphyry?]
Origen, *Comm. ser. Matt.* 117
Theophylact, *Comm. Jo.* 19:12-14

APPENDIX B

MATT 26 IN PARALLEL LINES:

CODICES κ , A, B, D, W

Types of Variation:

A/O = Addition/Omission SE = Scribal Error NS = *Nomina Sacra*
 Or = Orthography WO = Word Order Sub = Substitution Ab = Abbreviation

“{ }” indicates places where non-adjacent readings should nevertheless be counted as constituting one variation-unit due to their relation to each other

| Text | SE (2) ¹ | NS | SE | Or | MSS | |
|------------------|---------------------|-------------|---|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 26.1 και εγενετο | οτε εοτελεσεν | ο ις | παντας τους λογους | τουτους ειπεν | κ^* | |
| 26.1 και εγενετο | οτε ετελεσεν | ο ις | παντας τους λογους | τουτους ειπεν | κ^c A B* | |
| 26.1 και εγενετο | οτε ετελεσεν | ο ις | παντας τους λογους | τουτους ειπε | B ^c | |
| 26.1 και εγενετο | οτε λεσεν | ο ιης | παντας τους λογους | τουτους ειπεν | D* | |
| 26.1 και εγενετο | οτε ετελεσεν | ο ιης | παντας τους λογους | τουτους ειπεν | D ^c | |
| 26.1 και εγενετο | οτε ετελεσεν | ο ις | παντας τους λογους | τους ειπεν | W | |
| | A/O | | WO | | Or | |
| τοις μαθηταις | αυτου 2 | οιδατε | οτι μετα δυο ημερας | το πασχα γινεται | και | κ B ^c |
| τοις μαθηταις | αυτου 2 | οιδατε | οτι μετα δυο ημερας | το πασχα γινεται | και | A B* |
| τοις μαθηταις | 2 | | οτι μετα δυο ημερας | το πασχα γινεται | και | D |
| τοις μαθηταις | αυτου 2 | οιδατε | οτι μεθ ημερας δυο | το πασχα γινεται | και | W |
| | NS | NS | Or | | | |
| ο υιος | του ανου | παραδιδοται | εις το σταυρωθηναι 3 | τοτε συνηχθησαν οι αρχιερεις | | κ |
| ο υς | του ανου | παραδιδοται | εις το σταυρωθηναι 3 | τοτε συνηχθησαν οι αρχιερεις | | A |
| ο υιος | του ανθρωπου | παραδιδοται | εις το σταυρωθηναι 3 | τοτε συνηχθησαν οι αρχιερεις | | B D |
| ο υιος | του ανου | παραδιδοτε | εις το σταυρωθηναι 3 | τοτε συνηχθησαν οι αρχιερεις | | W |
| | A/O | | A/O | | | |
| | και οι πρεσβυτεροι | του λαου | εις την αυλην του αρχιερεως του λεγομενου | κ A B ^c D | | |
| | και οι πρεσβυτεροι | | εις την αυλην του αρχιερεως του λεγομενου | B* | | |
| και οι φαρισαιοι | και οι πρεσβυτεροι | του λαου | εις την αυλην του αρχιερεως του λεγομενου | W | | |

¹ SE¹ = οτε εοτελεσεν SE² = οτε λεσεν

| Or | Sub | NS | Or | SE | |
|---------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|----|----------------|
| καιιαφα | 4 και συνεβουλευσαντο | ινα τον <u>ιν</u> | δολω κρατησωσιν και αποκτεινωσιν | | κ A |
| καιιαφα | 4 και συνεβουλευσαντο | ινα τον <u>ιν</u> | δολω κρατησωσιν | | B* |
| καιιαφα | 4 και συνεβουλευσαντο | ινα τον <u>ιν</u> | δολω κρατησωσι και αποκτεινωσιν | | B ^c |
| καιιαφα | 4 και συνεβουλευσαντο | ινα τον <u>ιην</u> | δολω κρατησωσιν και αποκτεινωσιν | | D |
| καιιαφα | 4 και συνεβουλευσαντο | ινα τον <u>ιν</u> | δολω κρατησωσιν και αποκτεινωσιν | | W |

| | | | | | NS |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|---------|----|
| 5 ελεγον δε μη εν τη εορτη | ινα μη θορυβος γενηται εν τω λαω | 6 του δε <u>ιν</u> | γενομενου εν | κ A B W | |
| 5 ελεγον δε μη εν τη εορτη | ινα μη θορυβος γενηται εν τω λαω | 6 του δε <u>ιην</u> | γενομενου εν | D | |

| Or | SE | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| βηθανια εν οικια | σιμωνος του λεπρου | 7 προσηλθεν αυτω γυνη | κ A B |
| βηθανια εν οικεια | σιμωνος του λεπρωσου | 7 προσηλθεν αυτω γυνη | D* |
| βηθανια εν οικεια | σιμωνος του λεπρου | 7 προσηλθεν αυτω γυνη | D ^c W |

| WO | Sub · Or ² | Sub | Or | A/O |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|
| εχουσα αλαβαστρον μυρου | πολυτιμου και κατεχεεν επι | της κεφαλης | αυτου ανακειμενου | κ |
| αλαβαστρον μυρου εχουσα | πολυτιμου και κατεχεεν επι | την κεφαλην | αυτου ανακειμενου | A |
| εχουσα αλαβαστρον μυρου | βαρυτειμου και κατεχεεν επι | της κεφαλης | αυτου ανακειμενου | B* |
| εχουσα αλαβαστρον μυρου | βαρυτιμου και κατεχεεν επι | της κεφαλης | αυτου ανακειμενου | B ^c |
| εχουσα αλαβαστρον μυρου | πολυτειμου και κατεχεεν επι | της κεφαλης | αυτου ανακειμενου | αυτου D |
| αλαβαστρον μυρου εχουσα | βαρυτιμου και κατεχεεν επι | την κεφαλην | αυτου ανακειμενου | W |

| A/O | Or | Or | |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------|------------------|
| 8 ιδοντες δε οι μαθηται | ηγανακτησαν λεγοντες εις τι η απωλια | αυτη 9 εδυνατο γαρ | κ |
| 8 ιδοντες δε οι μαθηται | αυτου ηγανακτησαν λεγοντες εις τι η απωλεια | αυτη 9 ηδυνατο γαρ | A |
| 8 ιδοντες δε οι μαθηται | ηγανακτησαν λεγοντες εις τι η απωλεια | αυτη 9 εδυνατο γαρ | B* |
| 8 ιδοντες δε οι μαθηται | ηγανακτησαν λεγοντες εις τι η απωλεια | αυτη 9 ηδυνατο γαρ | B ^c D |
| 8 ιδοντες δε οι μαθηται | αυτου ηγανακτησαν λεγοντες εις τι η απωλια | αυτη 9 εδυνατο γαρ | W |

| A/O | NS | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| τουτο πραθηναι πολλου και δοθηναι | πτωχοις 10 γνους δε ο <u>ις</u> | ειπεν αυτοις τι κοπους |
| τουτο πραθηναι πολλου και δοθηναι | τοις πτωχοις 10 γνους δε ο <u>ις</u> | ειπεν αυτοις τι κοπους |
| τουτο πραθηναι πολλου και δοθηναι | τοις πτωχοις 10 γνους δε ο <u>ιης</u> | ειπεν αυτοις τι κοπους |

² Sub = πολυτιμου | βαρυτιμου Or = βαρυτιμου | βαρυτειμου

| | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------------|--|
| Or | Or | A/O | Or | |
| παρεχετε | τη γυνεκι | εργον γαρ | καλον ηργασατο | εις εμε 11 παντοτε γαρ τους πτωχους κ* |
| παρεχετε | τη γυνεκι | εργον | καλον ειργασατο | εις εμε 11 παντοτε γαρ τους πτωχους κ ¹ |
| παρεχετε | τη γυνεκι | εργον γαρ | καλον ειργασατο | εις εμε 11 παντοτε γαρ τους πτωχους κ ² |
| παρεχεται | τη γυναικι | εργον γαρ | καλον ειργασατο | εις εμε 11 παντοτε γαρ τους πτωχους A |
| παρεχετε | τη γυναικι | εργον γαρ | καλον ειργασατο | εις εμε 11 παντοτε γαρ τους πτωχους B |
| παρεχεται | τη γυναικει | εργον γαρ | καλον ηργασατο | εις εμε 11 παντοτε γαρ τους πτωχους D W |

| | | |
|--------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Or | Or | |
| εχετε | μεθ εαυτων εμε δε ου παντοτε εχετε | 12 βαλουσα γαρ αυτη το μυρον τουτο επι του κ B D |
| εχετε | μεθ εαυτων εμε δε ου παντοτε εχεται | 12 βαλουσα γαρ αυτη το μυρον τουτο επι του A |
| εχεται | μεθ εαυτων εμε δε ου παντοτε εχεται | 12 βαλουσα γαρ αυτη το μυρον τουτο επι του W |

| | | | | |
|---------------|--|------|----------------|--------------------|
| SE | | A/O | Or | Sub |
| σωματος | μου προς το ενταφιασαι με εποιησεν 13 αμην | λεγω | υμιν οπου | εαν κ A B* W |
| σωματος | μου προς το ενταφιασαι με εποιησεν 13 αμην | δε | λεγω υμιν οπου | εαν B ^c |
| σωματοσωματος | μου προς το ενταφιασαι με εποιησεν 13 αμην | λεγω | υμειν οπου | αν D* |
| σωματος | μου προς το ενταφιασαι με εποιησεν 13 αμην | λεγω | υμειν οπου | αν D ^c |

| | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| | Or | Or |
| κηρυχθη το ευαγγελιον τουτο εν ολω | τω κοσμω λαληθησεται | και ο εποιησεν αυτη εις μνημοσυνον κ |
| κηρυχθη το ευαγγελιον τουτο εν ολω | τω κοσμω λαληθησεται | και ο εποιησεν αυτη εις μνημοσυνον A B W |
| κηρυχθη το ευαγγελιον τουτο εν ολο | τω κοσμω λαληθησεται | και ο εποιησεν αυτη εις μνημοσυνον D |

| | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Or | Ab · Sub ³ | A/O · Or ⁴ | Or |
| αυτης 14 τοτε | πορευθεις εις των | ιβ | ο λεγομενος ιουδας ισκαριωτης | προς τους αρχιερις κ |
| αυτης 14 τοτε | πορευθεις εις των | δωδεκα | ο λεγομενος ιουδας ισκαριωτης | προς τους αρχιερις A B |
| αυτης 14 τοτε | πορευθεις εις των | ιβ | | προς τους αρχιερις D* |
| αυτης 14 τοτε | πορευθεις εις των | ιβ | ο λεγομενος ιουδας σκαριωτης | προς τους αρχιερις D ^c |
| αυτης 14 τοτε | πορευθεις εις των | δεκαδυο | ο λεγομενος ιουδας ισκαριωτης | προς τους αρχιερις W |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----------|--------|----------------|--------|---------------|----------|-----------|------------|-------|----------------|
| A/O | Or | A/O | SE | Or | Or | Sub | Or | Sub | SE | Sub |
| 15 | ειπεν | | ι θελεται μοι | δωνε | και εγω υμιν | παραδωσω | αυτον οι | δε εστησαν | αυτω | κ* |
| 15 | ειπεν | | τι θελεται μοι | δωνε | και εγω υμιν | παραδωσω | αυτον οι | δε εστησαν | αυτω | κ ^c |
| 15 | ειπεν | | τι θελεται μοι | δουναι | καγω υμιν | παραδωσω | αυτον οι | δε εστησαν | αυτων | A |
| 15 | ειπεν | | τι θελετε μοι | δουναι | καγω υμιν | παραδωσω | αυτον οι | δε εστησαν | αυτω | B* |
| 15 | ειπε | | τι θελετε μοι | δουναι | καγω υμιν | παραδωσω | αυτον οι | δε εστησαν | αυτω | B ^c |
| 15 | και ειπεν | αυτοις | τι θελετε μοι | δουναι | και εγω υμειν | παραδωσω | αυτον οις | δε εστησαν | αυτω | D* |
| 15 | ειπεν | αυτοις | τι θελετε μοι | δουναι | και εγω υμειν | παραδωσω | αυτον οι | δε εστησαν | αυτω | D ^c |
| 15 | ειπεν | | τι θελεται μοι | δουναι | και εγω υμιν | παραδω | αυτον οι | δε εστησαν | αυτω | W |

³ Ab = ιβ | δωδεκα/δεκαδυο Sub = δωδεκα | δεκαδυο

⁴ A/O = omit | ο λεγομενος ιουδας ισκαριωτης Or = ισκαριωτης | σκαριωτης

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|--------|-----------|-------------------------|----------------|---|
| Ab | Sub · SE ⁵ | SE | Or | Or | A/O | | |
| <u>λ</u> | αργυρια | 16 και απο τοτε | εζητι | ευκεριαν | ινα αυτον παραδω | 17 τη δε πρωτη | κ |
| τριακοντα αργυρα | | 16 και απο τοτε | εζητει | ευκαιριαν | ινα αυτον παραδω | 17 τη δε πρωτη | A |
| τριακοντα αργυρια | | 16 και απο τοτε | εζητει | ευκαιριαν | ινα αυτον παραδω | 17 τη δε πρωτη | B |
| <u>λ</u> | στατηρας | 16 και αποτε | εζητει | ευκαιριαν | ινα αυτον παραδω αυτοις | 17 τη δε πρωτη | D |
| τριακοντα αργυρια | | 16 και απο τοτε | εζητι | ευκαιριαν | ινα αυτον παραδω | 17 τη δε πρωτη | W |

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------|------------|------------|-------------|---|
| | | WO · NS ⁶ | A/O | Or | A/O | Or | |
| των αζυμων προσηλθον οι μαθηται | τω <u>ιϋ</u> λεγοντες | | | που θελις | | ετοιμασωμεν | κ |
| των αζυμων προσηλθον οι μαθηται | τω <u>ιϋ</u> λεγοντες | | αυτω | που θελεις | | ετοιμασωμεν | A |
| των αζυμων προσηλθον οι μαθηται | τω <u>ιϋ</u> λεγοντες | | | που θελεις | | ετοιμασωμεν | B |
| των αζυμων προσηλθον οι μαθηται | τω <u>ιηϋ</u> λεγοντες | | | που θελεις | | ετοιμασωμεν | D |
| των αζυμων προσηλθον οι μαθηται | λεγοντες τω <u>ιϋ</u> | | | που θελις | απελθοντες | ετοιμασωμεν | W |

| | | | | | | | |
|------------|----------|---------------|----------|------------------------|-------|-----------------|-----|
| | Or | | Or | | Or | | |
| σοι φαγιν | το πασχα | 18 ο δε ειπεν | υπαγετε | εις την πολιν προς τον | δυνα | και ειπατε αυτω | κ |
| σοι φαγειν | το πασχα | 18 ο δε ειπεν | υπαγετε | εις την πολιν προς τον | δυνα | και ειπατε αυτω | A |
| σοι φαγειν | το πασχα | 18 ο δε ειπεν | υπαγετε | εις την πολιν προς τον | δεινα | και ειπατε αυτω | B D |
| σοι φαγειν | το πασχα | 18 ο δε ειπεν | υπαγεται | εις την πολιν προς τον | δυνα | και ειπατε αυτω | W |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------|-------|-------|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| A/O | | Or | Or | Sub | Sub | |
| ο διδασκαλος λεγει | ο καιρος μου | εγγυς | εστιν | προς σε ποιω | το πασχα μετα των μαθητων μου | κ B* |
| | ο καιρος μου | εγγυς | εστιν | προς σε ποιω | το πασχα μετα των μαθητων μου | A |
| ο διδασκαλος λεγει | ο καιρος μου | εγγυς | εστι | προς σε ποιω | το πασχα μετα των μαθητων μου | B ^c |
| ο διδασκαλος λεγει | ο καιρος μου | εγγυς | εστιν | προς σε ποιησω | το πασχα μετα των μαθητων μου | D |
| ο διδασκαλος λεγει | ο καιρος μου | εγγυς | εστιν | προς σε ποιω | τα πασχα μετα των μαθητων μου | W |

| | | | | | | |
|--------|--------------|----------------------------------|------------|------------------------|----------|----------|
| | Sub | | NS | | Or | |
| 19 και | εποιησαν | οι μαθηται ως συνεταξεν αυτοις ο | <u>ις</u> | και ητοιμασαν το πασχα | 20 οψιας | δε κ A B |
| 19 και | εποιησαν | οι μαθηται ως συνεταξεν αυτοις ο | <u>ιης</u> | και ητοιμασαν το πασχα | 20 οψιας | δε D |
| 19 | εποιησαν ουν | οι μαθηται ως συνεταξεν αυτοις ο | <u>ις</u> | και ητοιμασαν το πασχα | 20 οψιας | δε W |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------|---------------|---------|------------------------|-------|-----------------|-----|
| | Or | | Ab | A/O | | Sub | Or |
| γενομενης ανεκειτο | μετα των | <u>ιβ</u> | μαθητων | 21 και εσθιοντων αυτων | λεγι | αμην λεγω υμιν | κ |
| γενομενης ανεκειτο | μετα των | <u>δωδεκα</u> | μαθητων | 21 και εσθιοντων αυτων | ειπεν | αμην λεγω υμιν | A W |
| γενομενης ανεκειτο | μετα των | <u>δωδεκα</u> | | 21 και εσθιοντων αυτων | ειπεν | αμην λεγω υμιν | B |
| γενομενης ανεκειτο | μετα των | <u>ιβ</u> | | 21 και εσθιοντων αυτων | ειπεν | αμην λεγω υμειν | D |

⁵ Sub = αργυρια | στατηρας SE = αργυρα

⁶ WO = τω ιϋ λεγοντες | λεγοντες τω ιϋ NS = ιϋ | ιηϋ

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|--------|------|-----|---------------|-----|
| | Or | | Or | A/O | A/O | A/O | |
| οτι εις εξ υμων | παραδωσι | με 22 και λυπουμενοι σφοδρα ηρξαντο | λεγειν | αυτω | εις | εκαστος | κ |
| οτι εις εξ υμων | παραδωσει | με 22 και λυπουμενοι σφοδρα ηρξαντο | λεγειν | αυτω | | εκαστος αυτων | A W |
| οτι εις εξ υμων | παραδωσει | με 22 και λυπουμενοι σφοδρα ηρξαντο | λεγειν | αυτω | εις | εκαστος | B |
| οτι εις εξ υμων | παραδωσει | με 22 και λυπουμενοι σφοδρα ηρξαντο | λεγειν | | εις | εκαστος αυτων | D |

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------|----------------------|--|----------------------------------|----------------|
| | Or | SE · Or ⁷ | Sub | WO · Or · Sub ⁸ | |
| μητι εγω ειμι | κε 23 ο δε | αποκριθις ειπεν ο | εμβαψας | μετ εμου την χιρα εν τω τρυβλιω | κ |
| μητι εγω ειμι | κε 23 ο δε | αποκριθεις ειπεν ο | εμβαψας | μετ εμου την χειρα εν τω τρυβλιω | A B |
| μητι εγω ειμι | κε 23 ο δε | αποκρεις ειπεν ο | ενβαπτομενος την χειρα μετ εμου εις το τρυβαλιον | | D* |
| μητι εγω ειμι | κε 23 ο δε | αποκριθεις ειπεν ο | ενβαπτομενος την χειρα μετ εμου εις το τρυβαλιον | | D ^c |
| μητι εγω ειμει | κε 23 ο δε | αποκριθεις ειπεν ο | εμβαψας | μετ εμου εν τω τρυβλιω την χειρα | W |

| | | | | | | |
|---------|--------------|----------|-----------------------|--------|-----------------------------|---|
| Sub | | A/O NS | NS | Or | Sub | |
| ουτος | με παραδωσει | 24 ο μεν | υς του ανου | υπαγι | καθως γεγραπται περι αυτου | κ |
| ουτος | με παραδωσει | 24 ο μεν | υς του ανου | υπαγει | καθως γεγραπται περι εαυτου | A |
| ουτος | με παραδωσει | 24 ο μεν | υιος του ανθρωπου | υπαγει | καθως γεγραπται περι αυτου | B |
| ουτος | με παραδωσει | 24 ο μεν | ουν υιος του ανθρωπου | υπαγει | καθως γεγραπται περι αυτου | D |
| εκεινος | με παραδωσει | 24 ο μεν | υιος του ανου | υπαγει | καθως γεγραπται περι αυτου | W |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|------|--------------|-------------|-----------|----------|-----|
| | NS | | NS | NS | Or | A/O | |
| ουαι δε τω ανω | εκεινω δι ου ο | υς | του ανου | παραδιδεται | | καλον ην | κ A |
| ουαι δε τω ανθρωπω | εκεινω δι ου ο | υιος | του ανθρωπου | παραδιδεται | | καλον ην | B |
| ουαι δε τω ανθρωπω | εκεινω δι ου ο | υιος | του ανθρωπου | παραδιδεται | δια τουτο | καλον ην | D |
| ουαι δε τω ανω | εκεινω δι ου ο | υιος | του ανου | παραδιδετε | | καλον ην | W |

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|--------------|------------|---------|---------------|------|---------------------|-----|
| Or | SE | NS | Or | Or | A/O | | |
| αυτω ει | ουκ εγεννηθη | ο ανος | εκεινος | 25 αποκριθις | δε | ιουδας ο παραδιδους | κ |
| αυτω η | ουκ εγεννηθη | ο ανος | εκεινος | 25 αποκριθεις | δε | ιουδας ο παραδιδους | A |
| αυτω ει | ουκ εγεννηθη | ο ανθρωπος | εκεινος | 25 αποκριθεις | δε | ιουδας ο παραδιδους | B W |
| αυτω ει | ουκ εγεννηθη | ο ανθρωπος | εκεινος | 25 αποκριθεις | δε ο | ιουδας ο παραδιδους | D |

| | | | | | |
|-------------|----------------|------------------------|-------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Or | Or | A/O | WO | | |
| αυτον ειπεν | μητι εγω ειμι | ραββει λεγει αυτω ο ις | συ ειπας 26 | εσθιοντων δε αυτων | κ |
| αυτον ειπεν | μητι εγω ειμι | ραββει λεγει αυτω | συ ειπας 26 | εσθιοντων δε αυτων | A B* |
| αυτον ειπε | μητι εγω ειμι | ραββει λεγει αυτω | συ ειπας 26 | εσθιοντων δε αυτων | B ^c |
| αυτον ειπεν | μητι εγω ειμι | ραββει λεγει αυτω | συ ειπας 26 | αυτων δε εσθιοντων | D |
| αυτον ειπεν | μητι εγω ειμει | ραββει λεγει αυτω | συ ειπας 26 | εσθιοντων δε αυτων | W |

⁷ SE = αποκρεις Or = αποκριθις | αποκριθεις

⁸ WO = μετ εμου την χειρα εν τω τρυβλιω | την χειρα μετ εμου εις το τρυβαλιον | μετ εμου εν τω τρυβλιω την χειρα
Or = χιρα | χειρα Sub = εν τω τρυβλιω | εις το τρυβαλιον

| WO · NS ⁹ | A/O | A/O | Sub | Or | {Sub} | Or | {Sub} | |
|----------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|-------------|--------|---------------|-------|-------------------------|
| λαβων ο ις | | αρτον και ευλογησας | | εκλασεν και | εδιδου | τοις μαθητες | | ειπεν κ* |
| λαβων ο ις | | αρτον και ευλογησας | | εκλασεν και | δους | τοις μαθηταις | | ειπεν κ ^c B* |
| λαβων ο ις | τον | αρτον και ευχαριστησας | | εκλασεν και | εδιδου | τοις μαθηταις | και | ειπεν A |
| λαβων ο ις | | αρτον και ευλογησας | | εκλασε και | δους | τοις μαθηταις | | ειπεν B ^c |
| ο ιης λαβων | | αρτον και ευλογησας | | εκλασεν και | δους | τοις μαθηταις | | ειπεν D |
| λαβων ο ις | τον | αρτον ευχαριστησας | | εκλασεν και | εδιδου | τοις μαθηταις | και | ειπεν W |

| | Or | Or | | A/O | | |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------------------|--|----------------|
| λαβετε φαγετε | τουτο εστιν | το σωμα μου | 27 και λαβων | ποτηριον και ευχαριστησας | | κ B* W |
| λαβετε φαγετε | τουτο εστιν | το σωμα μου | 27 και λαβων | το ποτηριον και ευχαριστησας | | A |
| λαβετε φαγετε | τουτο εστι | το σωμα μου | 27 και λαβων | ποτηριον και ευχαριστησας | | B ^c |
| λαβετε φαγεται | τουτο εστιν | το σω[μα μου] | 27 και λαβων | το ποτηριον και ευχαριστ[ησας] | | D |

| | Or | Or | | | |
|---------------------|---------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------|
| εδωκεν αυτοις λεγων | πιετε | εξ αυτου παντες | 28 τουτο γαρ εστιν | το αιμα μου | κ A B* |
| εδωκεν αυτοις λεγων | πιετε | εξ αυτου παντες | 28 τουτο γαρ εστι | το αιμα μου | B ^c |
| εδωκεν αυτοις λεγων | πειεται | εξ αυτου [παντες] | 28 τουτο γαρ εστιν | το αιμα μου | D |
| εδωκεν αυτοις λεγων | πειται | εξ αυτου παντες | 28 τουτο γαρ εστιν | το αιμα μου | W |

| A/O | A/O | Sub | Or | Or | |
|------------|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| της | διαθηκης το | περι πολλων εκχυννομενον | εις αφεσιν αμαρτιων | 29 λεγω δε υμιν | κ B* |
| το | της καινης | διαθηκης το | περι πολλων εκχυννομενον | εις αφεσιν αμαρτιων | 29 λεγω δε υμιν A |
| της | διαθηκης το | περι πολλων εκχυννομενον | εις αφεσιν αμαρτιων | 29 λεγω δε υμιν | B ^c |
| το | της καινης | διαθηκης το | περι πολλων εκχυννομενον | εις αφεσιν αμαρτιων | 29 λεγω δε υμιν W |
| της καινης | διαθηκης το | υπερ πολλων εκχυννομενον | εις αφεσιν αμαρτιων | 29 λεγω δε υμειν | D |

| A/O | Or | A/O | Or | |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| ου μη πιω απ αρτι | εκ τουτου | γεννηματος της αμπελου | εως της ημερας εκινης | κ* |
| ου μη πιω απ αρτι | εκ τουτου του | γεννηματος της αμπελου | εως της ημερας εκινης | κ ^c |
| οτι ου μη πιω απ αρτι | εκ τουτου του | γεννηματος της αμπελου | εως της ημερας εκεινης | A W |
| ου μη πιω απ αρτι | εκ τουτου του | γεννηματος της αμπελου | εως της ημερας εκεινης | B |
| ου μη πιω απ αρτει | εκ τουτου του | γεννηματος της αμπελου | εως της ημερας εκεινης | D |

| | Or | Or | Or | NS | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| οταν αυτο πινω | μεθ υμων κενον | εν τη βασιλεια | του πρς | μου 30 και υμνησαντες | κ |
| οταν αυτο πινω | μεθ υμων καινον | εν τη βασιλεια | του πρς | μου 30 και υμνησαντες | A W |
| οταν αυτο πεινω | μεθ υμων καινον | εν τη βασιλεια | του πατρος | μου 30 και υμνησαντες | B* |
| οταν αυτο πινω | μεθ υμων καινον | εν τη βασιλεια | του πατρος | μου 30 και υμνησαντες | B ^c |
| οταν αυτο πιω | μεθ υμων καινον | εν τη βασειλεια | του πρς | μου 30 και υμνησαντες | D |

⁹ WO = λαβων ο ις | ο ιης λαβων NS = ις | ιης

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|----|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------|----|---|
| | Or | Or | NS | Or | Or | |
| εξηλθον εις το ορος των ελαιων | 31 | τοτε λεγει αυτοις ο ις | παντες υμεις | σκανδαλισθησεσθαι | | κ |
| εξηλθον εις το ορος των ελαιων | 31 | τοτε λεγει αυτοις ο ις | παντες υμεις | σκανδαλισθησεσθαι | | A |
| εξηλθον εις το ορος των ελαιων | 31 | τοτε λεγει αυτοις ο ις | παντες υμεις | σκανδαλισθησεσθε | | B |
| εξηλθον εις το ορος των ελαιων | 31 | τοτε λεγει αυτοις ο ιης | παντες υμεις | σκανδαλισθησεσθαι | | D |
| εξηλθον εις το ορος των ελεων | 31 | τοτε λεγει αυτοις ο ις | παντες υμεις | σκανδαλισθησεσθαι | | W |

Or · Sub¹⁰

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| εν εμοι εν τη νυκτι ταυτη γεγραπται γαρ παταξω τον ποιμενα και διασκορπισθησοντε | κ* |
| εν εμοι εν τη νυκτι ταυτη γεγραπται γαρ παταξω τον ποιμενα και διασκορπισθησονται | κ ^c A B |
| εν εμοι εν τη νυκτι ταυτη γεγραπται γαρ παταξω τον ποιμενα και διασκορπισθησεται | D W |

| | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| | Or | Or | |
| τα προβατα της ποιμνης 32 μετα δε το εγερθηνε | με προαξω υμας εις την γαλιλαιαν | κ | |
| τα προβατα της ποιμνης 32 μετα δε το εγερθηναι | με προαξω υμας εις την γαλιλαιαν | A B ^c D W | |
| τα προβατα της ποιμνης 32 μετα δε το εγερθηναι | με προαξω υμας εις την γαλιλαιαν | B* | |

A/O A/O

| | | |
|---|--|------------------|
| 33 αποκριθεις δε ο πετρος ειπεν αυτω | παντες σκανδαλισθησονται εν σοι εγω ουδεποτε | κ* |
| 33 αποκριθεις δε ο πετρος ειπεν αυτω ει και | παντες σκανδαλισθησονται εν σοι εγω ουδεποτε | κ ^c W |
| 33 αποκριθεις δε ο πετρος ειπεν αυτω ει | παντες σκανδαλισθησονται εν σοι εγω ουδεποτε | A B D |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|---|-------|----------------------|--|
| | Or | NS | A/O | Or | |
| σκανδαλισθησομε | 34 εφη αυτω ο ις | αμην λεγω σοι οτι εν ταυτη τη νυκτι | πριν | κ* | |
| σκανδαλισθησομαι | 34 εφη αυτω ο ις | αμην λεγω σοι οτι εν ταυτη τη νυκτι | πριν | κ ^c A B W | |
| σκανδαλισθησομαι | 34 εφη αυτω ο ιης | αμην λεγω σοι οτι ταυτη τη νυκτ[ε/ι?] πρειν | πρειν | D | |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------|----------------|
| | WO · Or (2) ¹¹ | Or | A/O | Or | |
| αλεκτορα φωνησαι | τρεις με απαρνηση | 35 λεγει αυτω ο | πετρος καν δεη με | συν σοι | κ* |
| αλεκτορα φωνησαι | τρεις απαρνηση με | 35 λεγει αυτω ο | πετρος καν δεη με | συν σοι | κ ^c |
| αλεκτορα φωνησαι | απαρνηση με τρεις | 35 λεγει αυτω ο | πετρος καν δεη μει | συν σοι | A |
| αλεκτορα φωνησαι | τρεις απαρνησει με | 35 λεγει αυτω ο | πετρος καν δεη με | συν σοι | B |
| αλεκτορα φωνησαι | τρεις απαρνηση με | 35 λεγει αυτω ο | πετρος καν δεη με | συν σοι | D |
| αλεκτορα φωνησαι | τρεις απαρνηση με | 35 λεγει αυτω ο | πετρος καν δεη με | συν σοι | W |

¹⁰ Or = διασκορπισθησοντε | διασκορπισθησονται Sub = διασκορπισθησονται | διασκορπισθησεται

¹¹ WO = τρεις με απαρνηση | απαρνηση με τρεις | τρεις απαρνηση με Or¹ = τρεις | τρεις

Or² = απαρνηση | απαρνησει

| Or | Or (2) ¹² | SE | A/O | | | |
|-----------|----------------------|--------|-----|--------------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| αποθάνει | ου μη σε απαρνησομαι | ομοιως | | και παντες οι μαθηται ειπον 36 | τοτε ερχεται | κ |
| αποθάνειν | ου μη σε απαρνησωμαι | ομοιως | δε | και παντες οι μαθηται ειπον 36 | τοτε ερχεται | A |
| αποθάνειν | ου μη σε απαρνησομαι | ομοιως | | και παντες οι μαθηται ειπον 36 | τοτε ερχεται | B* D |
| αποθάνειν | ου μη σε απαρνησομαι | ομοιω | | και παντες οι μαθηται ειπον 36 | τοτε ερχεται | B ^c |
| αποθάνειν | ου μη σε απαρνησωμε | ομοιως | δε | και παντες οι μαθηται ειπον 36 | τοτε ερχεται | W |

| WO · NS ¹³ | Or | Or | A/O | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|---------------|-------|---|
| μετ αυτων ο ις | εις χωριον λεγομενον γεθσημανι | και λεγι | τοις μαθηταις | αυτου | κ |
| μετ αυτων ο ις | εις χωριον λεγομενον γεθ'σημανει | και λεγει | τοις μαθηταις | αυτου | A |
| μετ αυτων ο ις | εις χωριον λεγομενον γεθσημανει | και λεγει | τοις μαθηταις | | B |
| ο ιης μετ αυτων | εις χωριον λεγομενον γεθσαμανει | και λεγει | τοις μαθηταις | αυτου | D |
| ο ις μετ αυτων | εις χωριον λεγομενον γεθ'σημανι | και λεγει | τοις μαθηταις | αυτου | W |

| Or | A/O | A/O · Sub ¹⁴ | WO · Or (3) ¹⁵ | | |
|-----------------|-----|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| καθισατε | εως | | απελθων εκι προσευξωμε | 37 και παραλαβων τον πετρον και | κ |
| καθεισατε αυτου | εως | ου αν | απελθων προσευξωμαι εκει | 37 και παραλαβων τον πετρον και | A |
| καθισατε αυτου | εως | ου | απελθων εκει προσευξωμαι | 37 και παραλαβων τον πετρον και | B |
| καθισατε αυτου | εως | αν | απελθων εκει προσευξομαι | 37 και παραλαβων τον πετρον και | D |
| καθεισατε αυτου | εως | αν | απελθων προσευξωμαι εκει | 37 και παραλαβων τον πετρον και | W |

| | Or | Or | Or | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------|----|-----------------------------|-----|
| τους δυο υιους ζεβεδου | ηρξατο λυπισθε | και αδημονιν | 38 | τοτε λεγει αυτοις περιλυπος | κ |
| τους δυο υιους ζεβεδαιου | ηρξατο λυπεισθε | και αδημονειν | 38 | τοτε λεγει αυτοις περιλυπος | A |
| τους δυο υιους ζεβεδαιου | ηρξατο λυπεισθαι | και αδημονειν | 38 | τοτε λεγει αυτοις περιλυπος | B D |
| τους δυο υιους ζεβαιδου | ηρξατο λυπισθαι | και αδημονειν | 38 | τοτε λεγει αυτοις περιλυπος | W |

| | Or | Or | Sub | | |
|------------------------------|---------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----|
| εστιν η ψυχη μου εως θανατου | μεινατε | ωδε και γρηγοριτε | μετ εμου 39 και | προσελθων | κ |
| εστιν η ψυχη μου εως θανατου | μεινατε | ωδε και γρηγορειτε | μετ εμου 39 και | προσελθων | A W |
| εστιν η ψυχη μου εως θανατου | μεινατε | ωδε και γρηγορειτε | μετ εμου 39 και | προελθων | B |
| εστιν η ψυχη μου εως θανατου | μεινατε | ωδε και γρηγορειται | μετ εμου 39 και | προσελθων | D |

¹² Or¹ = απαρνησομαι | απαρνησωμαι Or² = απαρνησωμε | απαρνησομαι

¹³ WO = μετ αυτων ο ις | ο ις μετ αυτων NS = ις | ιης

¹⁴ A/O = omit | ου | αν | ου αν Sub = ου | αν | ου αν

¹⁵ WO = προσευξωμαι εκει | εκει προσευξωμαι Or¹ = εκι | εκει Or² = προσευξωμε | προσευξωμαι Or³ = προσευξωμαι | προσευξομαι

| Or | Or | | NS | |
|---------|--------------------|---|----------------|----------------|
| μικρον | επεσεν επι | προσωπον αυτου προσευχομενος και λεγων περ | μου ει δυνατον | κ A |
| μεικρον | επεσεν επι | προσωπον αυτου προσευχομενος και λεγων πατερ | μου ει δυνατον | B* |
| μικρον | επεσεν επι | προσωπον αυτου προσευχομενος και λεγων πατερ | μου ει δυνατον | B ^c |
| μεικρον | επεσεν επει | προσωπον αυτου προσευχομενος και λεγων πατερ | μου ει δυνατον | D |
| μικρον | επεσεν επι | προσωπον αυτου προσευχομενος και λεγων πατερ | μου ει δυνατον | W |

| SE · Or ¹⁶ | Or | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|--|--|--------------------|
| εστιν | παρελθατω | απ εμου το ποτηριον τουτο πλην ουχ ως εγω θελω αλλ ως συ | | κ* |
| εστιν | παρελθατω | απ εμου το ποτηριον τουτο πλην ουχ ως εγω θελω αλλ ως συ | | κ ^c A D |
| εστιν | παρελθετω | απ εμου το ποτηριον τουτο πλην ουχ ως εγω θελω αλλ ως συ | | B* W |
| εστι | παρελθετω | απ εμου το ποτηριον τουτο πλην ουχ ως εγω θελω αλλ ως συ | | B ^c |

| Or | Sub | A/O | Or | Or | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----|---------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| 40 και ερχετε | προς τους μαθητας | | και ευρισκι | αυτους καθευδοντας και λεγι | κ |
| 40 και ερχεται | προς τους μαθητας | | και ευρισκει | αυτους καθευδοντας και λεγει | A B |
| 40 και ερχεται | προς αυτους | | και ευρισκει | αυτους καθευδοντας και λεγει | D* |
| 40 και ερχεται | προς τους μαθητας αυτου | | και ευρισκει | αυτους καθευδοντας και λεγει | D ^c |
| 40 και ερχετε | προς τους μαθητας | | και ευρισκει | αυτους καθευδοντας και λεγει | W |

| | Sub · Or ¹⁷ | Or | Or | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----|---|
| τω πετρω ουτως ουκ ισχυσατε | μιαν ωραν γρηγορησε | μετ εμου 41 γρηγορειτε | και | κ |
| τω πετρω ουτως ουκ ισχυσας | μιαν ωραν γρηγορησαι | μετ εμου 41 γρηγορειτε | και | A |
| τω πετρω ουτως ουκ ισχυσατε | μιαν ωραν γρηγορησαι | μετ εμου 41 γρηγορειτε | και | B |
| τω πετρω ουτως ουκ εισχυσαται | μιαν ωραν γρηγορησαι | μετ εμου 41 γρηγορειται | και | D |
| τω πετρω ουτως ουκ ισχυσατε | μιαν ωραν γρηγορησαι | μετ εμου 41 γρηγοριτε | και | W |

| Or | Or | Or | NS | |
|---------------------|--|----------------------|----------------------|---|
| προσευχεσθε | ινα μη εισελθηται | εις πειρασμον | το μεν πνα | προθυμον η δε σαρξ ασθηνης κ |
| προσευχεσθε | ινα μη εισελθητε | εις πειρασμον | το μεν πνα | προθυμον η δε σαρξ ασθηνης A |
| προσευχεσθε | ινα μη εισελθητε | εις πειρασμον | το μεν πνευμα | προθυμον η δε σαρξ ασθηνης B |
| προσευχεσθαι | ινα μη εισελθηται | εις πειρασμον | το μεν πνα | προθυμον η δε σαρξ ασθηνης D |
| προσευχεσθαι | ινα μη εισερ(χησθε) ¹⁸ | εις πειρασμον | το μεν πνα | προθυμον η δε σαρξ ασθηνης W* |
| προσευχεσθαι | ινα μη εισελθητε | εις πειρασμον | το μεν πνα | προθυμον η δε σαρξ ασθηνης W ^c |

¹⁶ SE = εστιν Or = εστιν | εστι

¹⁷ Sub = ισχυσατε | ισχυσας Or = ισχυσατε | εισχυσαται

¹⁸ See comments on this correction in ch. 3. Since this is an *in scribendo* correction, I do not count this as a substitution in addition to the orthographic variation for this word.

| | A/O | A/O | NS | Or | A/O | |
|---|------|-------|-------|-------------------------------|-----|-----------------|
| 42 παλιν εκ δευτερου απελθων προσηυξατο | | λεγων | περ̄ | μου ει ου δυνατε | | κ* ² |
| 42 παλιν εκ δευτερου απελθων προσηυξατο | ο ις | λεγων | περ̄ | μου ει ου δυνατε | | κ ¹ |
| 42 παλιν εκ δευτερου απελθων προσηυξατο | | λεγων | περ̄ | μου ει ου δυναται | | A |
| 42 παλιν εκ δευτερου απελθων προσηυξατο | | | πατερ | μου ει ου δυναται | | B |
| 42 παλιν εκ δευτερου απελθων προσηυξατο | | λεγων | πατερ | μου ει ου δυναται το ποτηριον | | D |
| 42 παλιν εκ δευτερου απελθων προσηυξατο | | λεγων | πατερ | μου ει ου δυναται | | W |

| | Or | A/O | | | |
|-----------------|---------|-----|--|--|-----|
| τουτο παρελθιν | | | εαν μη αυτο πιω γενηθητω το θελημα σου 43 και ελθω | | κ |
| τουτο παρελθειν | απ εμου | | εαν μη αυτο πιω γενηθητω το θελημα σου 43 και ελθω | | A W |
| τουτο παρελθειν | | | εαν μη αυτο πιω γενηθητω το θελημα σου 43 και ελθω | | B D |

| | WO | | Or | |
|--------------------|---|-------|----|-----|
| παλιν ευρεν αυτους | καθευδοντας ησαν γαρ αυτων οι οφθαλμοι βεβαρημενοι 44 και | αφισ | | κ |
| ευρεν αυτους παλιν | καθευδοντας ησαν γαρ αυτων οι οφθαλμοι βεβαρημενοι 44 και | αφεις | | A W |
| παλιν ευρεν αυτους | καθευδοντας ησαν γαρ αυτων οι οφθαλμοι βεβαρημενοι 44 και | αφεις | | B D |

| {A/O · WO} ¹⁹ | | {A/O · WO} | A/O · WO ²⁰ | {A/O · WO} | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|------------|---------------------------------|------------|------------------|
| αυτους παλιν | απελθων προσηυξατο | | τον αυτον εκ τριτου λογον ειπων | παλιν | κ* |
| αυτους παλιν | απελθων προσηυξατο | | εκ τριτου τον αυτον λογον ειπων | παλιν | κ ^c B |
| αυτους | απελθων προσηυξατο | παλιν | τον αυτον λογον ειπων | | A |
| αυτους παλιν | απελθων προσηυξατο | | τον αυτον λογον ειπων | | D |
| αυτους | απελθων προσηυξατο | παλιν | εκ τριτου τον αυτον λογον ειπων | | W |

| | Or | SE | A/O | Or | Or | A/O | |
|-----------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-------------------|----|------------|----------------|
| 45 τοτε ερχετε | προς τους | μαθητας | και λεγι | αυτοις καθευδετε | το | λοιπον και | κ |
| 45 τοτε ερχεται | προς τους | μαθητας | και λεγει | αυτοις καθευδετε | το | λοιπον και | A |
| 45 τοτε ερχεται | προς τους | μαθητας | και λεγει | αυτοις καθευδετε | | λοιπον και | B |
| 45 τοτε ερχεται | προς του | μαθητας αυτου | και λεγει | αυτοις καθευδετε | το | λοιπον και | D* |
| 45 τοτε ερχεται | προς τους | μαθητας αυτου | και λεγει | αυτοις καθευδετε | το | λοιπον και | D ^c |
| 45 τοτε ερχεται | προς τους | μαθητας αυτου | και λεγει | αυτοις καθευδεται | | λοιπον και | W |

| | Or | A/O | Or | NS | NS | Or | Or | |
|-------------|------|-------------|------------------|--------------|-------------|------------|----|---|
| αναπαυεσθε | ιδου | ηγγικεν | η ωρα και ο υς | του ανου | παραδιδοται | εις χειρας | | κ |
| αναπαυεσθε | ιδου | ηγγικεν | η ωρα και ο υιος | του ανου | παραδιδοται | εις χειρας | | A |
| αναπαυεσθε | ιδου | γαρ ηγγικεν | η ωρα και ο υιος | του ανθρωπου | παραδιδοται | εις χειρας | | B |
| αναπαυεσθαι | ιδου | ηγγικεν | η ωρα και ο υιος | του ανθρωπου | παραδιδοται | εις χειρας | | D |
| αναπαυεσθαι | ιδου | ηγγικεν | η ωρα και ο υιος | του ανου | παραδιδοτε | εις χειρας | | W |

¹⁹ Here, the primary concern is the placement of παλιν. However, the placement of παλιν also effects whether there are one or two occurrences of παλιν in the sentence (though note D).

²⁰ A/O = omit | εκ τριτου WO = τον αυτον εκ τριτου | εκ τριτου τον αυτον

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------|--------|-------|------------------|
| | Or | | Or | Sub | | Sub | |
| αμαρτωλων 46 | εγειρεσθε | αγωμεν ιδου ηγγικεν | ο παραδιδων | με 47 και | ετι | αυτου | κ* |
| αμαρτωλων 46 | εγειρεσθε | αγωμεν ιδου ηγγικεν | ο παραδιδους | με 47 και | ετι | αυτου | κ ^c B |
| αμαρτωλων 46 | εγειρεσθαι | αγωμεν ιδου ηγγικεν | ο παραδιδους | με 47 και | ετι | αυτου | A W |
| αμαρτωλων 46 | εγειρεσθε | αγωμεν ιδου ηγγικεν | ο παραδιδους | με 47 | ετι δε | αυτου | D |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|-------|--------------------------------|----------|----------------|
| | Ab | Or | | Or | |
| λαλουντος ιδου ιουδας εις των | ιβ | ηλθεν | και μετ αυτου οχλος πολυς μετα | μαχερων | κ |
| λαλουντος ιδου ιουδας εις των | δωδεκα | ηλθεν | και μετ αυτου οχλος πολυς μετα | μαχαιρων | A B* |
| λαλουντος ιδου ιουδας εις των | δωδεκα | ηλθε | και μετ αυτου οχλος πολυς μετα | μαχαιρων | B ^c |
| λαλουντος ιδου ιουδας εις των | ιβ | ηλθεν | και μετ αυτου οχλος πολυς μετα | μαχαιρων | D |
| λαλουντος ιδου ιουδας εις των | δωδεκα | ηλθεν | και μετ αυτου οχλος πολυς μετα | μαχερων | W |

και ξυλων απο των αρχιερων και πρεσβυτερων του λαου 48 ο δε παραδιδους αυτον κ A B D W

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|-----|--------------|------------------|---------------------|----|----------------|
| | Or | | Sub | | Or | Or | |
| εδωκεν αυτοις σημιον | λεγων ον | εαν | φιλησω αυτος | εστιν κρατησεται | αυτον 49 και ευθεως | | κ |
| εδωκεν αυτοις σημειον | λεγων ον | εαν | φιλησω αυτος | εστιν κρατησατε | αυτον 49 και ευθεως | | A |
| εδωκεν αυτοις σημειον | λεγων ον | αν | φιλησω αυτος | εστιν κρατησατε | αυτον 49 και ευθεως | | B* D |
| εδωκεν αυτοις σημειον | λεγων ον | αν | φιλησω αυτος | εστι κρατησατε | αυτον 49 και ευθεως | | B ^c |
| εδωκεν αυτοις σημιον | λεγων ον | εαν | φιλησω αυτος | εστιν κρατησατε | αυτον 49 και ευθεως | | W |

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------|----|-------|--------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| {Sub} | NS | {Sub} | Or | Or | | A/O · WO · NS ²¹ | |
| προσελθων τω ιϛ | | ειπεν | χαιρε | ραββει και κατεφιλησεν αυτον 50 | ο δε ειπεν αυτω | κ | |
| προσελθων τω ιϛ | | ειπεν | χαιρε | ραββει και κατεφιλησεν αυτον 50 | ο δε ις ειπεν αυτω | A B* | |
| προσελθων τω ιϛ | | ειπε | χαιρε | ραββει και κατεφιλησεν αυτον 50 | ο δε ις ειπεν αυτω | B ^c | |
| προσελθων τω ιηϛ | | ειπεν | χαιραι | ραββει και κατεφιλησεν αυτον 50 | ειπεν δε αυτω ο ιης | D | |
| προσηλθεν τω ιϛ | | και | ειπεν | χαιρε | ραββει και κατεφιλησεν αυτον 50 | ο δε ις ειπεν αυτω | W |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--------|-----------------|-----|
| WO · Or ²² | | Or | NS | |
| εταιρε εφ ο παρει | τοτε προσελθοντες επεβαλον τας | χιρας | επι τον ιν και | κ |
| εταιρε εφ ο παρει | τοτε προσελθοντες επεβαλον τας | χειρας | επι τον ιν και | A B |
| εφ ο παρει ετεραι | τοτε προσελθοντες επεβαλον τας | χειρας | επι τον ιην και | D |
| ετερε εφ ο παρει | τοτε προσελθοντες επεβαλον τας | χειρας | επι τον ιν και | W |

²¹ A/O = omit | ις WO = ο δε ις ειπεν αυτω | ειπεν δε αυτω ο ιης NS = ις | ιης

²² WO = εταιρε εφ ο παρει | εφ ο παρει εταιρε Or = εταιρε | ετεραι | ετερε

| | Sub | Or | Or | Or | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| εκρατησαν αυτον 51 και ιδου εις των | μετα <u>ιϋ</u> | εκτινας | την χιρα | απεσπασε | κ |
| εκρατησαν αυτον 51 και ιδου εις των | μετα <u>ιϋ</u> | εκτεινας | την χειρα | απεσπασεν | A W |
| εκρατησαν αυτον 51 και ιδου εις των | μετ αυτου | εκτεινας | την χειρα | απεσπασεν | B* |
| εκρατησαν αυτον 51 και ιδου εις των | μετ αυτου | εκτεινας | την χειρα | απεσπασε | B ^c |
| εκρατησαν αυτον 51 και ιδου εις των | μετα <u>ιηϋ</u> | εκτεινας | την χειρα | απεσπασεν | D |

| | {Sub} | | {Sub} | Or | Or | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-----|---------|-----------------|----------------|-----|
| την μαχαιραν αυτου και παταξας | τον δουλον του αρχιερεως | | | αφιλεν | αυτου το ωτιον | κ W |
| την μαχαιραν αυτου και παταξας | τον δουλον του αρχιερεως | | | αφειλεν | αυτου το ωτιον | A B |
| την μαχαιραν αυτου και επαταξεν | τον δουλον του αρχιερεως | και | αφειλεν | αυτου το ωτειον | | D |

| | Sub | NS | WO | | |
|----------------------|--------------|------------|------------------|--------------------------------|-----|
| 52 τοτε λεγει αυτω | ο <u>ις</u> | αποστρεψον | την μαχαιραν σου | εις τον τοπον αυτης παντες γαρ | κ B |
| 52 τοτε λεγει αυτω | ο <u>ις</u> | αποστρεψον | σου την μαχαιραν | εις τον τοπον αυτης παντες γαρ | A |
| 52 τοτε λεγει αυτω | ο <u>ιης</u> | αποστρεψον | την μαχαιραν σου | εις τον τοπον αυτης παντες γαρ | D |
| 52 τοτε λεγει αυτοις | ο <u>ις</u> | αποστρεψον | σου την μαχαιραν | εις τον τοπον αυτης παντες γαρ | W |

| | Or | Sub · Or ²³ | Or | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|----|------------------|
| οι λαβοντες μαχαιραν εν μαχαιρη | απολουντε | 53 η δοκεις οτι ου δυναμαι | | κ* |
| οι λαβοντες μαχαιραν εν μαχαιρη | απολουνται | 53 η δοκεις οτι ου δυναμαι | | κ ^c A |
| οι λαβοντες μαχαιραν εν μαχαιρη | απολουνται | 53 η δοκεις οτι ου δυναμαι | | B* |
| οι λαβοντες μαχαιραν εν μαχαιρα | απολουνται | 53 η δοκεις οτι ου δυναμαι | | B ^c D |
| οι λαβοντες μαχαιραν εν μαχαιρα | αποθανουνται | 53 η δοκεις οτι ου δυναμαι | | W |

| | {WO} | Or | NS | Or | A/O | Sub·Or ²⁴ | A/O | Ab | Or(3)·Sub ²⁵ | |
|------|------|-------------|----------------|------------------------|----------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|----------------|
| | | παρακαλεσε | τον <u>πρα</u> | μου και παραστησει μοι | ωδε αρτι | πλειω | δωδεκα | λεγιωνων | | κ* |
| | | παρακαλεσε | τον <u>πρα</u> | μου και παραστησει μοι | αρτι | πλειους | δωδεκα | λεγαιωνων | | κ ^c |
| αρτι | | παρακαλεσαι | τον <u>πρα</u> | μου και παραστησει μοι | | πλειους | η δωδεκα | λεγεωνων | | A |
| | | παρακαλεσαι | τον πατερα | μου και παραστησει μοι | αρτι | πλειω | δωδεκα | λεγιωνας | | B* |
| | | παρακαλεσαι | τον πατερα | μου και παραστησει μοι | αρτι | πλειω | δωδεκα | λεγεωνας | | B ^c |
| αρτι | | παρακαλεσαι | τον πατερα | μου και παραστησει μοι | | πλειω | <u>ιβ</u> | λεγειωνης | | D* |
| αρτι | | παρακαλεσαι | τον πατερα | μου και παραστησει μοι | | πλειω | <u>ιβ</u> | λεγειονας | | D ^c |
| αρτι | | παρακαλεσαι | τον <u>πρα</u> | μου και παραστησει μοι | | πλιους | η δωδεκα | λεγεωνας | | W |

²³ Sub = απολουνται | αποθανουνται Or = απολουντε | απολουνται

²⁴ Sub = πλειω | πλειους Or = πλειους | πλιους

²⁵ Or¹ = λεγιωνων | λεγα^αιωνων | λεγε^ονων | λεγει^ονας Or² = λεγι^ωνων | λεγε^ονων

Or³ = λεγει^ωνης | λεγει^ονας Sub = λεγιωνων | λεγιωνας

| | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Sub | Sub | Or | Or | Or | |
| αγγελους 54 πως ουν πληρωθωσιν | αι γραφε | στι ουτως δι | γενεσθε | 55 εν εκεινη | κ* |
| αγγελων 54 πως ουν πληρωθωσιν | αι γραφαι | στι ουτως δει | γενεσθε | 55 εν εκεινη | κ ^c |
| αγγελων 54 πως ουν πληρωθωσιν | αι γραφαι | στι ουτως δει | γενεσθαι | 55 εν εκεινη | A B W |
| αγγελων 54 πως ουν πληρωθησονται | αι γραφαι | στι ουτως δει | γενεσθαι | 55 εν εκεινη | D |
| WO | | Sub | | | |
| τη ωρα ειπεν ο ις | τοις οχλοις ως επι ληστην | εξηλθατε | μετα μαχαιρων και ξυλων | | κ A B W |
| τη ωρα ο ιης ειπεν | τοις οχλοις ως επι ληστην | ηλθατε | μετα μαχαιρων και ξυλων | | D |
| Or | A/O · WO · Sub ²⁶ | | | | |
| συλλαβειν με καθ ημεραν | εν τω ιερω εκαθεζομην | διδασκων | και ουκ | | κ B |
| συλλαβειν με καθ ημεραν | εκαθεζομην προς υμας | διδασκων εν τω ιερω | και ουκ | | A |
| συνλαβειν με καθ ημεραν | προς υμας εκαθημην | εν τω ιερω διδασκων | και ουκ | | D |
| συλλαβειν με καθ ημεραν | προς υμας εκαθεζομην | διδασκων εν τω ιερω | και ουκ | | W |
| Or | Or | Or | | | |
| εκρατησατε με 56 τουτο δε ολον γεγονεν ινα πληρωθωσιν | αι γραφε | των προφητων | | κ* | |
| εκρατησατε με 56 τουτο δε ολον γεγονεν ινα πληρωθωσιν | αι γραφαι | των προφητων | | κ ^c B D W | |
| εκρατησαται με 56 τουτο δε ολον γεγονεν ινα πληρωθωσιν | αι γραφαι | των προφητων | | A | |
| Or | A/O | SE | | | |
| τοτε οι μαθηται | παντες αφεντες αυτον | εφυγον | | κ | |
| τοτε οι μαθηται | παντες αφεντες αυτον | εφυγον | | A | |
| τοτε οι μαθηται αυτου | παντες αφεντες αυτον | εφυγον | οι δε κρατησαντες τον ιν εφυγον | B* | |
| τοτε οι μαθηται αυτου | παντες αφεντες αυτον | εφυγον | | B ^c | |
| τοτε οι μαθηται | παντες αφεντες αυ[τον | εφυγον] | | D | |
| τοτε οι μαθητε | παντες αφεντες αυτον | εφυγον | | W | |
| NS | | Or | | | |
| 57 οι δε κρατησαντες τον ιν | απηγαγον | προς καιαφαν | τον αρχιερα οπου | κ A B W | |
| 57 οι δε κρατησαντες τον ιην | απηγαγο[ν] | προς καιειφαν | τον αρχιερα οπου | D | |
| Or | Or | Or | A/O | | |
| οι γραμματις και οι πρεσβυτεροι | συνηχθησαν 58 ο δε πετρος | ηκολουθι | αυτω | κ | |
| οι γραμματαις και οι πρεσβυτεροι | συνηχθησαν 58 ο δε πετρος | ηκολουθει | αυτω απο | A B* D W | |
| οι γραμματαις και οι πρεβυτεροι | συνηχθησαν 58 ο δε πετρος | ηκολουθει | αυτω απο | B ^c | |
| μακροθεν εως της αυλης του αρχιερεως και εισελθων εσω εκαθητο μετα των υπηρετων | | | | κ A B D W | |

²⁶ A/O = omit | προς υμας WO = All four forms have distinct word order Sub = εκαθεζομην | εκαθημην

| | | | | |
|--------|---|-----|-------------------------------|-----|
| Or | Or | A/O | | |
| ιδειν | το τελος 59 οι δε αρχιερις | | και το συνεδριον ολον εξητουν | κ |
| ιδειν | το τελος 59 οι δε αρχιερις και οι πρεσβυτεροι | | και το συνεδριον ολον εξητουν | A W |
| ιδειν | το τελος 59 οι δε αρχιερις | | και το συνεδριον ολον εξητουν | B |
| ειδειν | το τελος 59 οι δε αρχιερις | | και το συνεδριον ολον εξητουν | D |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Or · SE ²⁷ | NS | WO · Sub ²⁸ | Or | |
| ψευδομαρτυριαν | κατα του <u>ιϋ</u> οπως | αυτον θανατωσωσιν | 60 και ουχ ευρον | κ B ^c |
| ψευδομαρτυριαν | κατα του <u>ιϋ</u> οπως | θανατωσουσιν αυτον | 60 και ουκ ευρον | A W |
| ψευδομαρτυραν | κατα του <u>ιϋ</u> οπως | αυτον θανατωσωσι | 60 και ουχ ευρον | B* |
| ψευδομαρτυρειαν | κατα του <u>ιηϋ</u> οπως | αυτον θανατωσουσιν | 60 και ουκ ευρον | D |

| | | | | | | |
|---------|-----|---------------------------------------|-----|------------------------|---------|----------------|
| {A/O} | A/O | Sub · WO ²⁹ | A/O | A/O · Or ³⁰ | {A/O} | |
| | | πολλων προσελθοντων ψευδομαρτυρων | | | | υστερον δε κ B |
| | | και πολλων προσελθοντων ψευδομαρτυρων | | ουχ ευρον | | υστερον δε A |
| το εξης | και | πολλοι προσηλθον ψευδομαρτυρες | και | ουκ ευρον | το εξης | υστερον δε D |
| | | και πολλων ψευδομαρτυρων προσελθοντων | | ουχ ευρον | | υστερον δε W |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|----------|-------|-------------------------|-------|-----------|---------------------------|----------------|
| {Sub} | Ab | A/O | A/O · Sub ³¹ | {Sub} | Or | Sub | |
| προσελθοντες | <u>β</u> | | | 61 | ειπαν | ουτος εφη | κ |
| προσελθοντες | δυο | | μαρτυρες | 61 | ειπον | ουτος εφη | A* |
| προσελθοντες | δυο | | ψευδομαρτυρες | 61 | ειπον | ουτος εφη | A ^c |
| προσελθοντες | δυο | | | 61 | ειπον | ουτος εφη | B |
| ηλθον | δυο | | ψευδομαρτυρες | 61 | και ειπον | τουτον ηκουσαμεν λεγοντα | D* |
| ηλθον | δυο | | ψευδομαρτυρες | 61 | και ειπον | τουτου ηκουσαμεν λεγοντος | D ^c |
| προσελθοντες | δυο | τινες | ψευδομαρτυρες | 61 | ειπον | ουτος εφη | W |

| | | | |
|-------------------|---|------------------------|-----|
| Or | Or | A/O · WO ³² | |
| δυναμαι καταλυσε | τον ναον του <u>θυ</u> και δια τριων ημερων αυτον | οικοδομησαι | κ |
| δυναμαι καταλυσαι | τον ναον του <u>θυ</u> και δια τριων ημερων | οικοδομησαι αυτον | A W |
| δυναμαι καταλυσαι | τον ναον του <u>θυ</u> και δια τριων ημερων | οικοδομησαι | B |
| δυναμαι καταλυσαι | τον ναον του θυ και δια τρειων ημερων | οικοδομησαι αυτον | D |

²⁷ Or = ψευδομαρτυριαν | ψευδομαρτυρειαν SE = ψευδομαρτυραν

²⁸ WO = αυτον θανατωσωσιν | θανατωσουσιν αυτον Sub = θανατωσωσιν | θανατωσουσιν

²⁹ Sub = πολλων προσελθοντων ψευδομαρτυρων | πολλοι προσηλθον ψευδομαρτυρες WO = προσελθοντων ψευδομαρτυρων | ψευδομαρτυρων προσελθοντων

³⁰ A/O = ουχ/ουκ ευρον | omit Or = ουχ | ουκ

³¹ A/O = μαρτυρες/ψευδομαρτυρες | omit Sub = μαρτυρες | ψευδομαρτυρες

³² A/O = αυτον | omit WO = οικοδομησαι αυτον | αυτον οικοδομησαι

| | | | |
|--|----------|---------------------|--|
| | Or | Sub | |
| 62 και αναστας ο αρχιερευς ειπεν αυτω | | | κ* |
| 62 και αναστας ο αρχιερευς ειπεν αυτω ουδεν αποκρινη | τι ουτοι | σου καταμαρτυρουσιν | κ ^c A ^c B ^c D W |
| 62 και αναστας ο αρχιερευς ειπεν αυτω ουδεν αποκρινη | τι ουτοι | σοι καταμαρτυρουσιν | A* |
| 62 και αναστας ο αρχιερευς ειπεν αυτω ουδεν αποκρινη | τι ουτοι | σου καταμαρτυρουσιν | B |

| | | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| NS | A/O | A/O | Sub | |
| | | | εξορκιζω σε κατα | κ* |
| 63 ο δε ις̄ | εσιωπα και | ο αρχιερευς ειπεν αυτω | εξορκιζω σε κατα | κ ^c B |
| 63 ο δε ις̄ | εσιωπα και αποκριθεις | ο αρχιερευς ειπεν αυτω | εξορκιζω σε κατα | A W |
| 63 ο δε ιης̄ | εσιωπα [...] αποκριθεις ουν | ο αρχιερευς ειπεν αυτω | ορκιζω σε κατα | D |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------------------|--------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| SE | Or | NS | NS | A/O | |
| του θῡ του ζωντος | ινα ημιν | ειπης ει συ ει ο χς̄ | ο υς̄ | του θῡ | 64 λεγει αυτω κ A |
| του θῡ του ζωτος | ινα ημιν | ειπης ει συ ει ο χς̄ | ο υιος | του θῡ | 64 λεγει αυτω B* |
| του θῡ του ζωντος | ινα ημιν | ειπης ει συ ει ο χς̄ | ο υιος | του θῡ | 64 λεγει αυτω B ^c |
| του θῡ του ζωντος | ινα ημειν | ειπης ει συ ει ο χρς̄ | ο υιος | του θῡ | 64 λεγει αυτω D |
| του θῡ του ζωντος | ινα ημιν | ειπης ει συ ει ο χς̄ | ο υιος | του θῡ του ζωντος | 64 λεγει αυτω W |

| | | | | | | |
|--------|--------------------------|-----|-----------------|----------|--------------|-------------|
| NS | Or | A/O | Or | NS | NS | |
| ο ις̄ | συ ειπας πλην λεγω υμιν | | απ αρτι οψεσθε | τον υν̄ | του ανοῡ | καθημενον κ |
| ο ις̄ | συ ειπας πλην λεγω υμιν | | απ αρτι οψεσθαι | τον υν̄ | του ανοῡ | καθημενον A |
| ο ις̄ | συ ειπας πλην λεγω υμιν | | απ αρτι οψεσθε | τον υιον | του ανθρωπου | καθημενον B |
| ο ιης̄ | συ ειπας πλην λεγω υμειν | οτι | απ αρτι οψεσθαι | τον υιον | του ανθρωπου | καθημενον D |
| ο ις̄ | συ ειπας πλην λεγω υμιν | | απ αρτι οψεσθαι | τον υιον | του ανοῡ | καθημενον W |

| | | | |
|--|---------|-----------|----------------------------|
| | NS | A/O | |
| εκ δεξιων της δυναμεως και ερχομενον επι των νεφελων του | ουνοῡ | 65 τοτε | αρχιερευς κ* |
| εκ δεξιων της δυναμεως και ερχομενον επι των νεφελων του | ουνοῡ | 65 τοτε ο | αρχιερευς κ ^c A |
| εκ δεξιων της δυναμεως και ερχομενον επι των νεφελων του | ουρανου | 65 τοτε ο | αρχιερευς B D W |

| Or | Or | Sub | A/O | A/O ³³ | Or | Or | Sub | |
|-----------|----|---------|-------|-------------------|-----|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| διερρηξεν | τα | ιματια | αυτου | και λεγει | ιδε | εβλασφημησεν | τι ετι χριαν εχομεν μαρτυριων | κ* |
| διερρηξεν | τα | ιματια | αυτου | λεγων | | εβλασφημησεν | τι ετι χριαν εχομεν μαρτυριων | κ ^c |
| διερρηξεν | τα | ιματια | αυτου | λεγων οτι | | εβλασφημησεν | τι ετι χριαν εχομεν μαρτυρων | A |
| διερρηξεν | τα | ιματια | αυτου | λεγων | | εβλασφημησεν | τι ετι χριαν εχομεν μαρτυρων | B* |
| διερρηξε | τα | ιματια | αυτου | λεγων | | εβλασφημησε | τι ετι χριαν εχομεν μαρτυρων | B ^c |
| διερρηξεν | τα | ειματια | αυτου | λεγων | | εβλασφημησεν | τι ετι χριαν εχομεν μαρτυρων | D |
| διερρηξεν | τα | ιματια | αυτου | λεγων οτι | | εβλασφημησεν | τι ετι χριαν εχομεν μαρτυρων | W |

| Or | Or | A/O | Or | Sub |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------------------------|-----|
| ιδε νυν ηκουσατε την | βλασφημιαν | 66 τι υμιν | δοκει οι δε αποκριθεντες | κ B |
| ιδε νυν ηκουσατε την | βλασφημειαν | αυτου 66 τι υμιν | δοκει οι δε αποκριθεντες | A |
| ιδε νυν ηκουσατε την | βλασφημειαν | 66 τι υμειν | δοκει οι δε απεκριθησαν παντες και | D |
| ειδε νυν ηκουσατε την | βλασφημιαν | αυτου 66 τι υμιν | δοκει οι δε αποκριθεντες | W |

Or

| | | | |
|-------|-------------------------|---|------------------------|
| ειπαν | ενοχος θανατου εστιν 67 | τοτε ενεπτυσαν εις το προσωπον αυτου και εκολαφισαν | κ* |
| ειπον | ενοχος θανατου εστιν 67 | τοτε ενεπτυσαν εις το προσωπον αυτου και εκολαφισαν | κ ^c A B D W |

| Sub | Or · SE ³⁴ | A/O | Or | NS | Or |
|-------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| αυτον | οι δε εραπισαν | 68 λεγοντες προφητευσον | ημιν | χ ^ε | τις εστιν ο παισας σε κ A B |
| αυτον | αλλοι δε εραπεισαν αυτον | 68 λεγοντες προφητευσον | ημειν | χ ^{ρε} | τις εστιν ο παισας σε D |
| αυτον | οι δε εριπισαν | 68 λεγοντες προφητευσον | ημιν | χ ^ε | τις εστιν ο πεσας σε W |

WO

| | | | |
|----------------|-------------|--|-------|
| 69 ο δε πετρος | εκαθητο εξω | εν τη αυλη και προσηλθεν αυτω μια παιδισκη λεγουσα | κ B D |
| 69 ο δε πετρος | εξω εκαθητο | εν τη αυλη και προσηλθεν αυτω μια παιδισκη λεγουσα | A W |

| | NS | Or | Or | A/O |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| και συ ησθα μετα | ι ^υ | του γαλιλευ | 70 ο δε ηρνησατο εμπροσθεν | παντων λεγων κ |
| και συ ησθα μετα | ι ^υ | του γαλιλαιου | 70 ο δε ηρνησατο εμπροσθεν αυτων | παντων λεγων A W |
| και συ ησθα μετα | ι ^υ | του γαλειλαιου | 70 ο δε ηρνησατο εμπροσθεν | παντων λεγων B* |
| και συ ησθα μετα | ι ^υ | του γαλιλαιου | 70 ο δε ηρνησατο εμπροσθεν | παντων λεγων B ^c |
| και συ ησθα μετα | ι ^{ηυ} | του γαλειλαιου | 70 ο δε ηρνησατο ενπροσθεν | παντων λεγων D |

³³ Despite the fact that both *ιδε* and *οτι* occupy the same place in their respective manuscripts, one cannot be considered a substitution for the other due to their different function in the sentence. In κ*, *ιδε* functions as the first word of the high priest's exclamation, whereas *οτι* in A and W more formally marks the following text as a quotation. Therefore, they each represent a genealogically unrelated Addition/Omission.

³⁴ Or = εραπισαν | εραπεισαν SE = εριπισαν

| | A/O | {Sub} | {A/O·Sub} | Or | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|--|-----|
| ουκ οίδα τι λεγεις | | 71 εξεληθοντα | δε | εις τον πυλωνα ειδεν αυτον αλλη | κ B |
| ουκ οίδα τι λεγεις | | 71 εξεληθοντα | δε αυτον | εις τον πυλωνα ιδεν αυτον αλλη | A W |
| ουκ οίδα τι λεγεις | ουδε επισταμαι | 71 εξεληθοντος | δε αυτου | εις τον πυλωνα ειδεν αυτον αλλη | D |

| A/O | Sub | A/O | NS | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----|
| και λεγει | τοις εκει | ουτος ην μετα τω | του ναζωραιου 72 και παλιν ηρνησατο | κ B |
| και λεγει | αυτοις εκει | και ουτος ην μετα τω | του ναζωραιου 72 και παλιν ηρνησατο | A |
| παιδισκη και λεγει | τοις εκει | ουτος ην μετα την | του ναζωραιου 72 και παλιν ηρνησατο | D |
| και λεγει | τοις εκει και | ουτος ην μετα τω | του ναζωραιου 72 και παλιν ηρνησατο | W |

| Or | SE | A/O · Sub ³⁵ | NS | Or | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| μετα | ορκου | | ουκ οίδα τον ανον | 73 μετα μικρον | δε προσελθοντες οι εστωτες κ |
| μετα | ορκου | οτι | ουκ οίδα τον ανον | 73 μετα μικρον | δε προσελθοντες οι εστωτες A |
| μετα | ορκου | οτι | ουκ οίδα τον ανθρωπον | 73 μετα μεικρον | δε προσελθοντες οι εστωτες B* |
| μετα | ορκου | οτι | ουκ οίδα τον ανθρωπον | 73 μετα μικρον | δε προσελθοντες οι εστωτες B ^c |
| μεθ | ορκου | λεγων | ουκ οίδα τον ανθρωπον | 73 μετα μεικρον | δε προσελθοντες οι εστωτες D |
| μετα | ορκου | οτι | ουκ οίδα τον ανθρωπον | 73 μετα μικρον | δε προσελθοντες οι εστωτες W |

| | A/O | Or | Sub | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----|-------|
| ειπον τω πετρω αληθως και συ | εξ αυτων ει και γαρ η λαλια | σου δηλον σε ποιει | | κ B W |
| ειπον τω πετρω αληθως και συ | εξ αυτων ει και γαρ η λαλεια | σου δηλον σε ποιει | | A |
| ειπον τω πετρω αληθως | εξ αυτων ει και γαρ η λαλεια | σου ομοιαζει | | D |

| | NS | Sub | |
|--|-------------------|-----|---------|
| 74 τοτε ηρξατο καταθεματιζειν και ομνυειν οτι ουκ οίδα τον ανον | και ευθεως | | κ A D W |
| 74 τοτε ηρξατο καταθεματιζειν και ομνυειν οτι ουκ οίδα τον ανθρωπον | και ευθυσ | | B |

| Or | A/O | NS | A/O | A/O | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----|--|
| αλεκτωρ εφωνησεν | 75 και εμνησθη ο πετρος του ρηματος | τω ειρηκοτος | οτι πριν κ B* | | |
| αλεκτωρ εφωνησεν | 75 και εμνησθη ο πετρος του ρηματος | τω ειρηκοτος | αυτω οτι πριν A | | |
| αλεκτωρ εφωνησε | 75 και εμνησθη ο πετρος του ρηματος | τω ειρηκοτος | οτι πριν B ^c | | |
| αλεκτωρ εφωνησεν | 75 και εμνησθη ο πετρος του ρηματος | του τω ειρηκοτος | αυτω οτι πριν W | | |
| αλεκτωρ εφωνησεν | 75 και εμνησθη ο πετρος του ρηματος | την ειρηκοτος | πριν D | | |

| A/O | Or | Or | Or | |
|--|---|--------|----------------|--|
| αλεκτορα φωνησαι τρεις | απαρνηση με και εξελθων εξω εκλαυσεν | πικρως | κ B* D | |
| η αλεκτορα φωνησαι τριεις | απαρνηση με και εξελθων εξω εκλαυσεν | πικρως | A | |
| αλεκτορα φωνησαι τρεις | απαρνηση με και εξελθων εξω εκλαυσε | πικρως | B ^c | |
| αλεκτορα φωνησε τρεις | απαρνηση με και εξελθων εξω εκλαυσεν | πικρως | W | |

³⁵ Sub = οτι | λεγων A/O = οτι/λεγων | omit

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