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The Textual History of the Greek New Testament

The Textual History of the Greek New Testament

Changing Views in Contemporary Research

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and
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ABBREVIATIONS

AGLB	Vetus latina; die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel: Aus der Geschichte der lateinischen Bibel
ANTF	Arbeiten zur neutestamentliche Textforschung
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
Bib	*Biblica*
BT	*The Bible Translator*
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CCL	[AQ: Supply]
CCSG	Corpus Christianorum. Series graeca
CPG	*Clavis patrum graecorum.* Edited by M. Geerard. 5 vols. Turnhour: Brepols, 1974–87.
CSEL	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum
EKKNT	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
ETL	*Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses*
ExpTim	*Expository Times*
GCS	Die griechische christliche Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
GNT[4]	*The Greek New Testament.* Edited by Kurt Aland et al. 4th rev. ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2001.
HibJ	*Hibbert Journal*
HSCP	*Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
ICC	International Critical Commentary
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JECS	*Journal of Early Christian Studies*
JGRChJ	*Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament

[AQ: CCL -- is t
Corpus christia
rum latinorum?
something else

NA[27]	Nestle, Eberhard, and Erwin Nestle. *Novum Testamentum Graece.* Edited by Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland. 27th rev. ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1993.
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NTGF	New Testament in the Greek Fathers
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et orbis antiquus
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
NTTS	New Testament Tools and Studies
NTTSD	New Testament Tools, Studies, and Documents
PG	J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia cursus completus: Series graeca.* 162 vols. Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857–86.
RB	*Revue biblique*
SBLTCS	Society of Biblical Literature Text-Critical Studies
SD	Studies and Documents
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
StPatr	*Studia Patristica*
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TZ	*Theologische Zeitschrift*
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungsn zum Neuen Testament

3
THE NEED TO DISCERN DISTINCTIVE EDITIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THE MANUSCRIPT TRADITION

David Trobisch

The role of printed critical editions of literary works written and published in antiquity is twofold. On the one hand, they are expected to present a scholarly reconstruction of the initial text, and, on the other hand, they have to document the manuscript evidence used to reconstruct the initial text.

A few decades ago the manuscript evidence of the New Testament was accessible to the scholar only through printed photographs of a handful of the most important codices. With the advent of digital photography and the inexpensive dissemination of visual information through the Internet, however, the ultimate goal of making images of every page of every manuscript accessible anywhere in the world is within reach today.[1]

In the past, critical editions had to be selective about the places where variants were noted, and they had to concentrate on the witnesses considered crucial to the history of the text. By doing so, editions gave scholars a rudimentary sense of what the manuscript evidence looked like. In the near future, however, one will have access to the data through electronic editions, and it will not be necessary to limit the collation of readings to only a few places and only a selection of manuscripts. No printed edition will be able to provide this kind of access to the evidence. So what will the role of printed critical editions like the *Editio Critica Maior* become? In the

1. David Trobisch, "From New Testament Manuscripts to a Central Electronic Database," in *Bible and Computer: The Stellenbosch AIBI-6 Conference. Proceedings of the Association Internationale Bible et Informatique 'From Alpha to Byte,'* (ed. Johann Cook; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 427–33.

following I suggest that their role will be to describe not only the initial text but to provide information about the editorial features of different editions as they are documented in the manuscripts.

Although it is undoubtedly accurate that the transmission of a literary work over time is the transmission of an initial text, it is at the same time true that this text is packaged in ever-changing ways as it is handed down from generation to generation and that the editorial package considerably modifies the message of the text.

Any page of a printed modern translation of the New Testament will contain textual and nontextual elements that originated at different stages during the production and transmission of literature. Some of these elements will have been provided by the translator, but typesetters, editors, publishers, and readers will have left their mark as well. Manuscripts that were published in antiquity, that is, that were produced in numbers and with the intent to be distributed to a reading public, show comparable textual and nontextual features.[2]

Looking at the end of Paul's letter to the Romans in a printed translation of the New Testament, one might find any or all of the following elements: a footnote, which reflects the work of contemporary editors; verse numbers, which originated in the sixteenth century; the famous doxology Rom 16:25–27, which is missing in some manuscripts and might be the result of second-century editors; the layout of the page and the page numbers, reflecting redactional decisions of the publisher of the print edition; perhaps marks and notes added by readers, if the examined exemplar was used heavily; and the "text" itself, a translation from the Greek reflecting modern vernacular and thought.

Likewise a page from an ancient manuscript will contain editorial elements reflecting the work of scribe, editor, and publisher in addition to the text of the author. Variants may originate on each of these levels: authors in antiquity have sometimes overseen more than one edition of their own works, creating significant variants in the manuscript traditions.[3] Readers might add marginal notes that could find their way into the text as the next scribe copies the manuscript. Scribes are aware that they make mistakes and might create new variants by attempting to cor-

2. For images of examples in printed editions and in manuscripts, see David Trobisch, "Structural Markers in New Testament Manuscripts with Special Attention to Observations in Codex Boernerianus (G 012) and Papyrus 46 of the Letters of Paul," in *Layout Markers in Biblical Manuscripts and Ugaritic Tablets* (ed. Marjo C.A. Korpel and Josef M. Oesch; Pericope: Scripture as Written and Read in Antiquity 5; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2005), 177–90.

3. Hilarius Emonds, *Zweite Auflage im Altertum: Kulturgeschichtliche Studien zur Überlieferung der antiken Literatur* (Klassisch-Philologische Studien 14; Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1941). Eusebius and Jerome are well-documented examples.

rect what they perceive as an error in their *Vorlage*. Editors often refuse to choose when they discover competing variants in the manuscript tradition; instead they tend to combine them to conflate readings.[4] Publishers create variants by trying to satisfy a perceived need of the marketplace; they may produce editions for lectionary purposes, which completely rearrange the text, or they may provide interlinear translations or commentaries or introductory material.

One is well advised to distinguish who caused a specific variant—author, reader, scribe, editor, or publishers—in order better to assess its value for the history of the text. If the creation of a stemma is intended, it is crucial to distinguish variants that are created during the process of production from variants that document a manuscript tradition.

The history of a literary text, therefore, is the history of its editions, and a critical edition of a literary text will want to document at least the first edition, the *editio princeps*.[5] But because the reconstruction of the *editio princeps*, like the reconstruction of the initial text, is the product of ever-changing scholarly consensus and thus ultimately elusive, a critical edition can fulfill its descriptive function only by describing the oldest documented editions as well.

For example, it has long been established that D/06, F/010, G/012, 0319, and 0320 witness a Greek edition of the Letters of Paul that was produced in antiquity, maybe even as early as the second century.[6] The decisive features of this archetype Z[7] are the colometric arrangement of the text, the absence of the Letter to the Hebrews, and a large number of shared variants that are missing from the rest of the manuscript tradition.

Some of these unique readings are the product of a deliberate editorial effort. Romans 16 contains several examples. In archetype Z the greetings to the congregation that met in the house of Prisca and Aquila is moved from the end of the sentence to the beginning (Rom 16:3–5):

> Ἀσπάσασθε Πρίσκαν καὶ Ἀκύλαν τοὺς συνεργούς μου ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ τὴν κατ᾽ οἶκον αὐτῶν ἐκκλησίαν, οἵτινες ὑπὲρ τῆς ψυχῆς μου τὸν

4. B. F. Westcott and F. J. A Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek,* vol. 2, *Introduction, Appendix* (2nd ed.; London: Macmillan, 1896), 47–52.

5. David Trobisch, "Das Neue Testament im Lichte des zweiten Jahrhunderts," in *Herkunft und Zukunft der neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft* (ed. Oda Wischmeyer; Neutestamentliche Entwürfe zur Theologie 6; Tübingen and Basel: Francke, 2003), 119–29.

6. Hermann Josef Frede, *Altlateinische Paulus-Handschriften* (AGLB 4; Freiburg: Herder, 1964).

7. Frede (*Altlateinische Paulus-Handschriften*, 94–97) proposed to refer to the archetype as Z.

ἑαυτῶν τράχηλον ὑπέθηκαν, οἷς οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνος εὐχαριστῶ ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσαι αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῶν ἐθνῶν~~, καὶ τὴν κατ' οἶκον αὐτῶν ἐκκλησίαν~~.

In 16:16b a whole sentence is removed and placed after 16:21: ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς αἱ ἐκκλησίαι πᾶσαι τοῦ Χριστοῦ. And the standard Pauline letter ending (cf. 2 Thess 3:18) ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν ἀμήν is added after the final greetings to finish Romans.

These rearrangements are of a stylistic nature and may have been intended to increase the readability. To understand that the editors of the archetype Z tried to make the text flow better is crucial when a rearrangement at another place in this edition might invite the interpreter to speculate about a programmatic theological reason behind the change. A good example is 1Cor 14:34–35, where the famous passage "the women should be silent in churches" was removed and placed at the end of the chapter after v. 40. As standard commentaries will show, the rearrangement has sometimes been interpreted as an indication that these verses were not in the original "Pauline" text but were added later.[8] Although the point that theses sentences were not part of the letter that Paul sent to Corinth is well taken, it should not be argued on text-critical grounds citing the evidence reflected in archetype Z. The argument will have to be carried by other exegetical considerations such as structural-critical observations (the sentences interrupt the flow of thought, which is why the editors of archetype Z probably moved it) or by apparent discrepancies in the immediate context (in 1Cor 11:5 Paul has no problem with women praying and prophesying in church as long as they cover their heads).[9]

Usually new editions of familiar texts make an effort to be easily identified by their readers. One could, for example, distinguish the 26th edition of the Nestle text from the 25th edition by comparing their reconstructions of the initial text. However, one is better advised simply to look at the title sheet. Further, the extensive editorial introductions will tell us more about the intention of the editions than an analysis of the critical decisions that led to the variations in text could do. Even a casual reader could distinguish these editions by noticing the different Greek fonts used.

8. For example, "Here it is better to assume an interpolation in the form of an early marginal gloss. This is suggested by the positioning of vv. 34–35 at the end of the chapter in the codices D, F, and G" (Marlene Crüsemann, "Irredeemably Hostile to Women: Anti-Jewish Elements in the Exegesis of the Dispute about Women's Right to Speak (1 Cor. 14.34–35)," *JSNT* 79 [2000]: 19–36, here 22). Cf. Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 699–701; Wolfgang Schrage, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther* (4 vols.; EKKNT 7; Zurich: Benziger, 1999), 481-82.

9. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor ("Interpolations in 1 Corinthians," *CBQ* 48 [1986]: 81–94, esp. 90–92) puts little weight on the text-critical argument.

Apparent differences between editions apply to manuscripts as well. Different Byzantine editions in minuscule manuscripts can be distinguished by looking at the material added in the introductions, the appendixes, and in the margins.[10]

If the history of a literary text is the history of its editions, what then is the function of a critical edition of a literary work from antiquity? It is easier to say what a critical edition should not attempt to do: it should not try to reconstruct the author's text. Other methods—such as forgery criticism, or redaction criticism in combination with source and tradition criticism—aim to reconstruct the author's text before it was edited for publication.

Instead, a critical edition of an ancient text should try to provide pertinent information needed to reconstruct the text in its earliest published form, the *editio princeps*. Present editions of the New Testament are so focused on the text line, the initial text, that the larger picture is easily missed. For example, it is beyond reasonable doubt, that Acts was part of the volume containing the General Letters, serving as a sort of introduction to these letters and to the Pauline Corpus.[11] The editions of Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort, and von Soden reflected this order. But with the advent and popular success among Bible translators of the Nestle edition, which followed the Byzantine manuscripts by placing the Corpus Paulinum between Acts and General Letters, the arrangement of the *editio princeps* has been lost in almost every current edition of the New Testament.

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10. Hermann von Soden, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt hergestellt auf Grund ihrer Textgeschichte,* I, *Untersuchungen,* II, *Abteilung: Textformen* (Berlin: Arthur Glaue, 1907) 717: "Unter der grossen Zahl von Codd., die sich als Zeugen der *K* zu erkennen, gaben, gilt es nun Ordnung zu schaffen, die besonderen Spielarten des Textes oder der Ausstattungen herauszustellen, diese zu beschreiben und womöglich in den Gang der Entwicklung einzugliedern." Examples of characteristics used by von Soden to distinguish editions are the presence and form of Eusebius's letter concerning his canons, the titles and numbering of κεφάλαια, the numbering of sections and canons, and the notes marking the lectionary readings (pp. 719–20). Von Soden's description and transcriptions of "*Beigaben*" that define the different "*Ausstattungen*" are an invaluable resource to the student of New Testament minuscule manuscripts (pp. 292–485). Von Soden did not have the possibility of collating the text of Byzantine manuscripts extensively in order to support his assessment of differing historical editions of the Koine. Klaus Wachtel's seminal study, *Der byzantinische Text der katholischen Briefe: Eine Untersuchung zur Entstehung der Koine des Neuen Testaments* (ANTF 24; Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1995), which is based on the now available documented variants, strongly supports von Soden's classifications (especially K^r).

11. David Trobisch, *The First Edition of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 26–28.

A critical edition of the Greek New Testament should strive to provide more than the reconstructed initial text. It should provide information about the title of the book and the titles of the individual writings, about the collection units, about nontextual features such as the *nomina sacra* and codex form, which were part of the first edition and which informed later editors and publishers as they adapted the text for their readership. In addition to describing the editorial features of the the first edition, it should document the text in the framework of its historical editions as they are reflected in the extant manuscript tradition.