

Liturgy and the Living Text of the New Testament

Papers from the Tenth Birmingham Colloquium
on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament

Edited by

H. A. G. Houghton

GORGIAS
PRESS

2018

Gorgias Press LLC, 954 River Road, Piscataway, NJ, 08854, USA

www.gorgiaspress.com

Copyright © 2018 by Gorgias Press LLC

All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise without the prior written permission of Gorgias Press LLC.

2018

∞



ISBN 978-1-4632-0748-9

ISSN 1935-6927

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication
Data**

A Cataloging-in-Publication Record is available
from the Library of Congress.

Printed in the United States of America



Professor David Parker at the Tenth Birmingham Colloquium
on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament, March 2017.

Image courtesy of Ian Nelson Mills

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	v
List of Contributors	vii
List of Abbreviations	xi
Introduction	xiii
1. Was There an Alexandrian Recension of the Living Text? TOMMY WASSERMAN	1
2. The Living Text of Mark 13:2: Western Witnesses and the Book of Daniel. JEFF CATE	25
3. One or Two Cups? The Text of Luke 22:17–20 Again. THOMAS O’LOUGHLIN	51
4. The Lukan Genealogy (Luke 3:23–38) as a Living Text: The Genealogy of Jesus in the Traditions of Codex Bezae and Aphrahat. PETER E. LORENZ	71
5. A Proposal For a Critical Edition of the Greek New Testament Lectionary. GREGORY S. PAULSON	121
6. Some Notes on the <i>Pericope Adulterae</i> in Byzantine Liturgy. TEUNIS VAN LOPIK	151
7. ‘Full of the Holy Spirit and Wisdom’: Variation in Theological Titles in the Greek Lectionary of Acts. SAMUEL GIBSON	177
8. Is There Evidence For a Lectionary Text in Sahidic Coptic? MATTHIAS H.O. SCHULZ	197
9. The Influence of the Catenae on the Most Recent Modern Greek New Testament Translation of the Hellenic Bible Society. THEODORA PANELLA	225

10. From Inner-Jewish Debate to Anti-Jewish Polemic? The Transformation of the Gospel of John within its Textual Transmission.
HANS FÖRSTER..... 245

11. Inventing New Testaments.
D.C. PARKER..... 269

Index..... 287

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Jeff Cate is Professor of New Testament at California Baptist University in Riverside, California. His teaching and research interests are in textual criticism, the Gospel of Mark, the Revelation of John and the history of the Bible. He is a committee member of the International Greek New Testament Project. His doctoral dissertation at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (1997) was a reconstruction and analysis of 'The Text of the Catholic Epistles and the Revelation of John in the Writings of Origen'.

Hans Förster is currently conducting his research at the Faculty of Protestant Theology (Institute for New Testament) of the University of Vienna. He is Principal Investigator of two research grants funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF Projects P28821 and P29315) focussing on the Coptic version of the Gospel of John. One project is dedicated to the evaluation of all Coptic dialects of this ancient translation for its importance for the Greek New Testament within the *Editio Critica Maior* of the Gospel of John. The aim of the other project is a critical edition of the Sahidic version of the Gospel of John.

Samuel Gibson is a minister in the Church of England and holds degrees from Birmingham and Oxford. He is particularly interested in the relationships between textual criticism, liturgy and theology. He has recently completed a monograph on *The Apostolos: The Acts and Epistles in Byzantine Liturgical Manuscripts*, based on his doctoral work, which is to be published in the Gorgias Press *Texts and Studies* series.

H.A.G. Houghton is Professor of New Testament Textual Scholarship at the University of Birmingham and Director of the Institute for Textual Scholarship and Electronic Editing. He has co-organised the Birmingham Colloquia on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament since 2007. His publications include monographs on the gospel text of Augustine and the

Latin New Testament. He is currently Principal Investigator of the European Research Council CATENA Project.

Teunis van Lopik is a retired staff member of the National Library of the Netherlands, where he was working in the fields of bibliography and book history. His research focusses on the history of New Testament textual criticism and biblical paratexts.

Peter E. Lorenz is a doctoral candidate at the University of Münster in Germany, where his research on the textual tradition of Codex Bezae in Mark is currently funded by a grant from the *Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes*. He has published and presented on a range of topics related to Codex Bezae and the so-called ‘Western’ Text, with a particular focus on digital humanities and fourth-century Christianity.

Thomas O’Loughlin is the Professor of Historical Theology in the University of Nottingham and the Director of *Studia Traditionis Theologiae*. He is currently engaged in an extended study of the gospel comparison apparatus of Eusebius of Caesarea. From 2016–18 he served as the President of the Catholic Theological Association of Great Britain and in December 2017 he was elected an Honorary Member of the Royal Irish Academy.

Theodora Panella is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung in the University of Münster. Prior to that she held an AHRC Midlands3Cities doctoral scholarship at the University of Birmingham, where she also worked on the ERC-funded COMPAUL project. She is co-chair of the European Association of Biblical Studies unit on the textual criticism of the New Testament, the Old Testament and the Qur’an.

D.C. Parker is Professor of Digital Philology at the University of Birmingham and co-founder of the Institute for Textual Scholarship and Electronic Editing. He has written and edited a number of books on New Testament textual criticism and is currently working on the International Greek New Testament Project’s critical edition of the Gospel of John for the *Editio Critica Maior*.

Gregory S. Paulson is a researcher at the Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung in the University of Münster. He holds a doctorate from the University of Edinburgh and is the author of *Scribal Habits and Singular Read-*

ings in Codex Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Ephraemi, Bezae, and Washingtonianus in the Gospel of Matthew (2018). He recently completed a postdoctoral fellowship contributing to the preparation of the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* 29th edition and the United Bible Societies' *Greek New Testament* 6th edition and is currently revising the *Kurzgefaßte Liste der griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments*.

Matthias H.O. Schulz is a Research Fellow in the Evangelisch-Theologische Fakultät at the University of Vienna, where he is working on the Sahidic tradition of the Gospel according to John. Formerly he was a Research Associate at the Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung in the University of Münster, where he completed a master's thesis in Coptology on the Manichaean Psalm Book.

Tommy Wasserman is Professor of Biblical Studies at Ansgar Teologiske Høgskole in Kristiansand, Norway. He has published a major critical edition of the Epistle of Jude, a co-authored introduction to the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method, several edited volumes and numerous articles for leading journals. His major book with Jennifer W. Knust, *To Cast the First Stone: The Transmission of a Gospel Story*, is to be published by Princeton University Press in the coming year.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACCS	Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers
AGLB	Aus der Geschichte der lateinischen Bibel
ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers
ANTF	Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Textforschung
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
CBM	Catalogue of Byzantine Manuscripts
CCSG	Corpus Christianorum series graeca
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum series latina
CEV	Contemporary English Version
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
CUP	Cambridge University Press
ECM	Editio Critica Maior
<i>ExpT</i>	<i>The Expository Times</i>
GA	Gregory–Aland (see also <i>Liste</i>)
<i>GCS</i>	<i>Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte</i>
GNB	Good News Bible
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
IGNTP	International Greek New Testament Project
INTF	Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung
ITSEE	Institute for Textual Scholarship and Electronic Editing
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KJV	King James Version
<i>Liste</i>	Kurt Aland, <i>Kurzgefasste Liste der griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments</i> . (2 nd edn, ANTF 1. Berlin & New York: de Gruyter, 1994). The most up-to-date version is found at http://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/liste .
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LXX	Septuagint
MS(S)	manuscript(s)

NA28	E. Nestle, K. Aland et al., <i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> (28 th edn; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012).
NETS	New English Translation of the Septuagint
NIV	New International Version
NKJV	New King James Version
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NPNF	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
ns	new series
NT	New Testament
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
NTTS	New Testament Tools and Studies
NTTSD	New Testament Tools, Studies and Documents
NTVMR	New Testament Virtual Manuscript Room, hosted online at http://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/
os	old series
OUP	Oxford University Press
<i>PG</i>	<i>Patrologia Graeca</i> [= <i>Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca</i>]. Edited by J.-P. Migne (161 vols; Paris, 1857–1866).
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia Latina</i> [= <i>Patrologiae cursus completus: Series latina</i>]. Edited by J.-P. Migne (217 vols; Paris, 1841–1855).
<i>SC</i>	<i>Sources Chrétiennes</i>
SBL	Society for Biblical Literature
SD	Studies and Documents
SNTS	Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas
T&S	Texts and Studies
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
UBS	United Bible Societies
UBS4	United Bible Societies, <i>Greek New Testament</i> (4 th edn; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993).
UBS5	United Bible Societies, <i>Greek New Testament</i> (5 th edn; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2014).
VL	Vetus Latina
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZAC</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

INTRODUCTION

How is the textual tradition of the New Testament to be characterised? For much of its history, extending back into antiquity, the presence of multiple variant readings has been seen as a problem to be addressed in order to recover a single authoritative form. The subtitle to Bruce Metzger's introduction to *The Text of the New Testament*, first published in 1964, enumerates the three stages of *Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* and serves to illustrate this enduring attitude.¹ Indeed, Metzger's own work as a member of the committee responsible for the United Bible Societies' *Greek New Testament*, producing a text widely accepted as standard for almost four decades at the end of the twentieth century, undoubtedly contributed to the idea that the task of New Testament textual criticism was largely accomplished.

Yet at the same time as these volumes were successively reprinted and updated, other textual scholars began to articulate an alternative approach to the manuscripts of the New Testament which saw the tradition itself as of inherent value rather than simply a means to an end. One of the earliest was Eldon Jay Epp, whose monograph on *The Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae in Acts* showed how the characteristic readings of an individual witness could shed light on early Christian approaches to biblical tradition.² Bart Ehrman, a student of Metzger, became the most famous exponent of approaching textual variation through a theological lens with *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*.³ For many, however, it was the publication of David Par-

¹ Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament. Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration* (Oxford: OUP, 1964; fourth edition with Bart D. Ehrman, 2005).

² Eldon J. Epp, *The Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis in Acts* (Cambridge: CUP, 1966).

³ Bart D. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (New York: OUP, 1993; updated edition 2011).

ker's *The Living Text of the Gospels* in 1997 which has come to characterise this approach to New Testament textual criticism.⁴

For Parker, the New Testament is not to be found in an abstract editorial reconstruction of an 'original text'—a term which literary criticism and the study of textual history has rendered highly problematic, if not unusable. Rather, it is constituted by the entirety of the surviving documentary evidence, the individual copies which were produced in each generation and treated as Scripture. The discrepancies between their texts are all part of the tradition of these writings, a complex history which bears witness to continual engagement with the wording as well as the interpretation of the New Testament. This is neatly summarised in the phrase which is quoted by several contributors to this volume, 'Scripture is tradition'.⁵ Nevertheless, Parker is quick to point out that this does not mean that all variant readings have equal authority: rather, 'there is no authoritative text beyond the manuscripts which we may follow without further thought'.⁶ Again, while it has more than once been suggested that—despite his appointment as Executive Editor of the IGNTP and of the ECM of John—Parker has no interest in reconstructing a single form of text, he explicitly denies this in *The Living Text*:

the attempt to recover early text forms is a necessary part of that reconstruction of the history of the text without which, as this book has been at some pains to demonstrate, nothing can be understood.⁷

The issue is not one of form but of authority: whatever an editor may say that their reconstructed text represents, there can be no exclusive claim to authenticity given the diverse forms of New Testament text which have concurrently been accepted as Scripture by Christians over the course of the centuries.

Parker's description of this whole tradition as the 'living text' of the Bible is one which has caught the imagination of his readers and passed into academic discourse.⁸ Yet is it worth noting that this is not the only image

⁴ D.C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997).

⁵ Parker, *Living Text*, p. 207; see also pp. 209–210. This was also the title of an earlier article: D.C. Parker, 'Scripture is Tradition', *Theology* 94 (1991) 11–17.

⁶ Parker, *Living Text*, p. 212.

⁷ Parker, *Living Text*, p. 211.

⁸ See further the observations throughout Yü-Jan Lin, *The Erotic Life of Manu-*

which he offers in this book for the diversity of the transmitted text: on page 206, he speaks both of ‘confluences in the stream’ and ‘stars in the expanding universe’. Such illustrations find their echoes, appropriately, in earlier and later writings: back in 1953, Günther Zuntz offered ‘An Attempt at a Graphic Presentation of the “Stream of the Tradition”’ inside the back cover of *The Text of the Epistles*, while Eldon Epp has more recently spoken of text-types as ‘constellations’.⁹ More broadly, this approach to the textual tradition of the New Testament has been described as ‘narrative textual criticism’, in which every variant reading (or, better still, forms of text embodied in individual manuscripts) may be seen as telling a story about the reception and interpretation of Scripture at one or more points in its history.¹⁰ Combined with the striking increase in the availability of high-quality images of complete New Testament manuscripts in recent years, thanks to the development of digital technology and the internet, this new emphasis on the value of the whole textual tradition has led to a renaissance in New Testament textual scholarship in the two decades since the publication of *The Living Text of the Gospels*. The evidence for this is seen not just in the establishment of the study of manuscripts and other witnesses to the biblical text as a key part of theology programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, but also in the remarkable profusion of new editions of the New Testament in Greek.

At the same time, the most obvious domain in which the biblical text continues to have a living voice is in the context of Christian worship. The liturgical reading of the Bible transforms the written letters into the spoken word, a word which has authority by virtue of the participation of its speakers and hearers in the tradition which they share in continuity with previous generations, a tradition which stretches back beyond even the composition of these texts. This point is also made by Parker in *The Living Text* in his

scripts: New Testament Textual Criticism and the Biological Sciences (New York: OUP, 2016), especially p. 101.

⁹ G. Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles. A Disquisition upon the Corpus Paulinum* (London: OUP for the British Academy, 1953); Eldon Jay Epp, ‘Textual Clusters: Their Past and Future in New Testament Textual Criticism’ in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research. Essays on the Status Quaestionis*, ed. Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes (2nd edn, NTTSD 42; Leiden, Brill, 2012) 519–577.

¹⁰ On ‘narrative textual criticism’, see for example Lin, *The Erotic Life of Manuscripts*, chapter 3.

comments about how ‘the written and oral tradition have accompanied, affected and followed one another’.¹¹ The context for the public reading of the New Testament epistles as the gathering of the Christian congregation for worship, and the description of the canonical gospels as the products of sustained reflection by particular Christian communities, perhaps with dramatised performance at least partly in mind (as continues to be the case for many traditions in the reading of the Passion Narrative on Palm Sunday) underlines the interrelationship of Bible and liturgy.¹²

The liturgical use of the New Testament has also made an important contribution to its textual transmission. Almost half of the surviving manuscripts of the Greek New Testament are lectionaries, copies in which the passages appointed to be read during worship are presented in the order of the cycle of the Christian year rather than their original context. Adjustments to the text of these extracts in order to enable them to stand by themselves are numerous, yet these are not confined solely to lectionaries but are also found in continuous-text witnesses. What is more, the familiarity of copyists with the evangelists’ differing versions of the same episode, or alternative texts of a single work, is often attributed to their encounter with the Bible during the liturgy and invoked as a strong contributory factor to variants involving harmonisation. Nevertheless, despite several research projects on the lectionary tradition in recent decades, this remains an underexplored area for textual scholarship.¹³

In marking the twentieth anniversary of the publication of *The Living Text of the Gospels*, the significance of the liturgy for the textual tradition of the New Testament therefore provides an obvious complementary topic, both in the original context in which these papers were first presented and in the present volume of text-critical studies.

¹¹ Parker, *The Living Text*, p. 210; see also pp. 203–204. This aspect of Parker’s argument has been taken up in the research and publications of Werner Kelber.

¹² This connection has been taken even further, notably in the liturgical structuring of the Gospels identified by Michael Goulder in, for example, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew* (London: SPCK, 1974) and *The Evangelists’ Calendar: A Lectionary Explanation of the Development of Scripture* (London: SPCK, 1978).

¹³ Further details of the number of surviving lectionaries and the history of research in this area are given in Paulson’s contribution to the present volume.

Contents of the Present Volume

The chapters have been grouped according to the principal themes of this collection. Beginning with studies relating to *The Living Text of the Gospels*, **Tommy Wasserman** considers scribal practice in the oldest surviving gospel manuscripts. Taking into account recent developments in the dating of papyri, he offers a counterbalance to Parker's description of the uncontrolled aspects of early Christian textual tradition by observing that some manuscripts reflect a strict approach to the transmission of the Gospels which must also go back to the earliest period. **Jeff Cate** addresses a variant reading in the Gospel according to Mark whose attestation is restricted to 'Western' witnesses. He shows that the longer form of text in Mark 13:2, found in a number of very early sources, corresponds to the evangelist's use of Daniel in the same passage and may thus have a claim to be original. **Thomas O'Loughlin** offers further reflections on the many variations concerning the number of cups at the Last Supper, a notorious textual crux with liturgical as well as text-critical significance. His observations about the importance of tradition and the problem of the quest for an 'original' echo Parker's statements in *The Living Text of the Gospels*. **Peter Lorenz** uses the framework set out by Parker to investigate the form of the genealogy of Luke in Codex Bezae. After an extensive consideration of patristic interpretation of this passage, Lorenz shows that the reorganisation of the text, which matches that found in Aphrahat, reflects concerns in the latter part of the fourth century. This is also in keeping with the date suggested by Parker for the copying of Codex Bezae.

The next four contributions focus on lectionary manuscripts and the influence of liturgy on the New Testament text. First, **Gregory Paulson** provides a history of the use of lectionaries in editions of the Greek New Testament. He goes on to propose how a scholarly edition of the lectionary could be made using the electronic tools currently available, detailing how this might be laid out on the printed page. **Teunis van Lopik** then considers the well-known passage of the Woman Taken in Adultery. Although it did not form part of the liturgical lection for Pentecost, it was one of the series of gospel readings used in Byzantine times, appointed for the feast days of several female saints and certain other liturgical contexts. Van Lopik concludes, however, that the asterisks found alongside this passage in certain continuous-text manuscripts do not relate to its absence from the Pentecost lection but celebrate the inclusion of the passage in Byzantine tradition. **Samuel Gibson**, building on his recent monograph on the Greek *Apostolos* lectionary, examines textual variants in Acts which involve divine names. He shows that there is usually no single form of text which charac-

terises lectionary tradition and that the variations are also paralleled in continuous-text witnesses. This casts doubt on the idea of a distinctive 'lectionary text'. **Matthias Schulz** offers the first overview of the text of lectionary manuscripts in Sahidic Coptic, focussing on the books for which the *Editio Critica Maior* has appeared or is in preparation. He finds no trace of textual variants indicative of a separate lectionary tradition, although most of the witnesses are fragmentary: the only complete Sahidic lectionary manuscript, sa 15^L, has a poorly-copied and often unique text.

Two chapters follow which consider translation as an instance of the ongoing life of the biblical text. **Theodora Panella** explains the need for translation of the New Testament into Modern Greek and its religious, linguistic and political significance. Even though the most recent translation, first published in 1985, initially met with opposition for its adoption of the principles of dynamic equivalence, it is in continuity with the explanations provided by the compilers of catenae and has now become widely accepted. **Hans Förster**, in his examination of translations of the Gospel according to John, notes the importance of personal pronouns and other *verba minora* in reflecting interpretative assumptions. In particular, he suggests that the anti-Judaism often detected in this Gospel is at least in part due to certain translational choices.

Finally, following his retirement from a full-time academic post, **David Parker** contributes the inaugural lecture he gave on his appointment to a personal chair in New Testament Textual Criticism and Palaeography at the University of Birmingham on 11 March 2003. Although the accompanying Powerpoint presentation has been made available on the internet, the full text of the lecture has never before been published. Despite the passage of time, this description of developments in New Testament textual criticism a few years after the publication of *The Living Text of the Gospels* retains its value. What is more, the enumeration of his projects which were then current at Birmingham and have subsequently had a significant impact, such as the *Digital Codex Sinaiticus*, serves to illustrate his continued activity in keeping the tradition alive.

The Tenth Birmingham Colloquium

With the exception of the final chapter, all the contributions in this volume were originally delivered as papers at the Tenth Birmingham Colloquium on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament, and subsequently revised and developed for publication. In addition to celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the appearance of David Parker's *The Living Text of the Gospels*, the tenth of these biennial gatherings also marked twenty years since the found-

ing of the Birmingham Colloquia by David Parker and David Taylor in 1997. It continued the recent trend of this event towards ever greater numbers of participants and geographical diversity, with almost fifty people in attendance and presenters from the United Kingdom, USA, Germany, Sweden, Austria, Holland, Georgia and Japan.



*Some of the participants at the Tenth Birmingham Colloquium
(Image by Hugh Houghton)*

Held at the University of Birmingham and Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre on 20–22 March 2017, the title of the tenth colloquium was ‘Lives of the Text’. It consisted of eighteen papers along with a final session which included a presentation of photographs from previous colloquia and reflections by David Parker on the reception of *The Living Text of the Gospels*. He observed not only that he continued to maintain the positions articulated in this book, but also that reactions to *The Living Text* and subsequent publications had confirmed to him the value and importance of this approach.

The traditional colloquium excursion on the Tuesday afternoon was to the city of Coventry, where delegates saw the fifteenth-century wall painting of the Last Judgment in Holy Trinity Church, followed by an extensive guided tour of the two cathedral buildings. After evening prayer, the party had a meal at the sixteenth-century Bear Inn in the Anglo-Saxon village of Berkswell. The conference dinner on the Wednesday, held in the University’s Staff House, included a presentation from Dr Alba Fedeli on the Qur’anic fragments held in the Mingana Collection and the media reaction to the announcement in July 2015 that radiocarbon dating had indicated that the so-called ‘Birmingham Qur’an’ was among the oldest surviving fragments of this work.

The organisers would like to put on record their gratitude to the many people who contributed to another enjoyable and memorable colloquium. These include Mauro Ghiani, Richard Ainsworth and the other members of

Woodbrooke; Carla Crawley, Peter Littlewood and the guides at Coventry Cathedral; Louise Burridge and her team at the University of Birmingham Staff House and Imelda Stevens in the room bookings department. We are also grateful to members of ITSEE for their help with practical arrangements, especially Dr Catherine Smith who once again went beyond the call of duty in ensuring that everything ran according to plan.

As editor, I would like to thank the contributors for their attention both to details and to deadlines in the preparation of this volume. The Syndics of Cambridge University Library generously permitted the reproduction of pages from Codex Bezae in the chapter by Peter Lorenz and the University of Salzburg has kindly allowed the reproduction of the painting discussed by Hans Förster. Dr Brice C. Jones and Dr Melonie Schmierer-Lee have been instrumental in the publication of this fifth set of proceedings from the Birmingham Colloquium to appear in the Gorgias Press *Texts and Studies* series and it is a pleasure to work with them. Finally, while this book is emphatically not intended as a *Festschrift* for David Parker, it provides an opportunity to join the participants of the Birmingham colloquia in thanking him for presiding over twenty years of stimulating conversations and congratulating him on his distinctive and lasting contribution which has encompassed New Testament textual criticism and palaeography, theology and digital philology.

H.A.G. Houghton
Birmingham, 20 March 2018

1. WAS THERE AN ALEXANDRIAN RECENSION OF THE LIVING TEXT?

TOMMY WASSERMAN¹

THE STATUS OF THE EARLIEST RECOVERABLE TEXT IN THE CURRENT DEBATE

Traditionally, textual critics have pointed to the wealth of evidence for the text of the New Testament, not least to the fact that so many early manuscripts close to the time the writings originated are preserved. This rich textual evidence has been used optimistically in the reconstruction of the original text of the New Testament.² During the last decades, however, a number of scholars, in particular Bart Ehrman, Eldon Epp, Helmut Koester, David Parker and William Petersen, have questioned the value of the extant textual evidence for the reconstruction of the so-called ‘original text’, including the earliest evidence, mainly because it is still too far removed from the authors.³ Furthermore, they have emphasised the great freedom and

¹ I would like to thank Mohr Siebeck for granting permission to reuse some material from my previous article, ‘The Implications of Textual Criticism for Understanding the “Original Text”’, in *Mark and Matthew I: Comparative Readings: Understanding the Earliest Gospels in their First-Century Settings*, ed. E.-M. Becker and A. Runesson (WUNT 271; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 77–96.

² For a detailed historical survey of this classical pursuit of textual criticism, see Eldon J. Epp, ‘The Multivalence of the Term “Original Text” in New Testament Textual Criticism’, *HTR* 92 (1999) 245–281.

³ Bart D. Ehrman, ‘The Text of the Gospels at the End of the 2nd Century’, in *Codex Bezae: Studies from the Lunel Colloquium June 1994*, ed. D.C. Parker and C.-B. Amphoux (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 95–122; Epp, ‘The Multivalence’, pp. 245–281; Helmut Koester, ‘The Text of the Synoptic Gospels in the Second Century’, in

fluidity of the text in the earliest period of transmission. This is reflected in the so-called ‘Western’ text and in the loose and fluid patristic citations of the New Testament in early second-century authors. From this perspective, the classical task of textual criticism—the reconstruction of the ‘original text’—is an impossible and useless undertaking.⁴

David Parker has pointed to the fact that the gospel texts were subject to the effects of textual transmission from the very beginning of their literary history in his aptly-titled study *The Living Text of the Gospels*, which appeared in 1997. He regards the wealth of textual variation that developed mainly during the first two centuries of the manuscript tradition of the gospels as proof that early Christian users of these writings treated them as *living texts* which could be reworded, expanded and reduced in various places. In his study, he gives examples from a number of key passages in order to demonstrate the apparent diversity in the early textual tradition. Such textual freedom implies that the early church was not concerned with transmitting a controlled, authoritative and reliable text.⁵ Parker takes Codex Bezae as a prime example of the kind of free text that must have been typical during the second century before standardisation and recension occurred.⁶

Gospel Traditions in the Second Century, ed. W.L. Petersen (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 19–37; D.C. Parker, ‘Textual Criticism and Theology’, *ExpT* 118 (2007) 583–589; W.L. Petersen, ‘The Genesis of the Gospels’, in *New Testament Textual Criticism and Exegesis*, ed. Adelbert Denaux (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 33–65; W.L. Petersen, ‘What Text Can New Testament Textual Criticism Ultimately Reach?’, in *New Testament Textual Criticism, Exegesis and Church History*, ed. B. Aland and J. Delobel (Kampen: Kok-Pharos, 1994), 136–152.

⁴ Petersen, ‘The Genesis’, p. 62, remarks, ‘To be brutally frank, we know next to nothing about the shape of the “autograph” gospels; indeed, it is questionable if one can even speak of such a thing.’ Thus also D.C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), p. 208: ‘The quest for a single original text of the Gospels is driven by the same forces that have sought a single original saying of Jesus behind the different texts of different Gospels. Both quests are dubious.’

⁵ Nevertheless, I believe that it is vital in this respect to distinguish carefully between the textual variation between the Synoptic Gospels and the textual variation in each textual tradition.

⁶ Parker, *Living Text*, pp. 201–202; cf. Ehrman, ‘The Text of the Gospels’, pp. 100–102.

Today, most textual critics hesitate to use the traditional term ‘original text’ since it has become increasingly problematic: it is too ambiguous and causes confusion.⁷ Instead, they prefer to talk about the earliest recoverable text, or the ‘initial text’ (*Ausgangstext*).⁸ The real difference of opinion, however, concerns the nature of the earliest recoverable text and its relationship to the hypothetical autographs—a term which in turn needs further definition.⁹ Some scholars think that a gulf separates the initial text from the autographs because of extensive corruption that took place during the first hundred years of the transmission history, before the time of our oldest witnesses.¹⁰ Others think it is indeed possible to reconstruct a text that is not far removed from what the authors wrote in the first century.¹¹

⁷ Epp, ‘The Multivalence’, pp. 245–281.

⁸ For definitions of the ‘initial text’ as opposed to ‘autograph’ and ‘archetype’, see Gerd Mink, ‘Problems of a Highly Contaminated Tradition: The New Testament. Stemmata of Variants As a Source of a Genealogy for Witnesses’, in *Studies in Stemmatology II*, ed. P. van Reenen et al. (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2004), 25–27. For a thorough introduction to the debate about the definitions of terms and goals of textual criticism, see 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. Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes (2nd edn; N^oTTSD 42; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 637–688.

⁹ The term ‘autograph’ needs further definition depending on which book is under consideration, since there might be cases of multiple autographs or various stages of production. For example, Günther Zuntz has argued that the goal of textual criticism is to restore not the text of Paul’s letters as he sent them to various destinations, but the text of the collected edition, from around 100 CE (G. Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles: A Disquisition upon the Corpus Paulinum* [London: OUP, 1953], pp. 274–283). For my present purposes, I am content with the general definition of an autograph as the state of a book when it began its literary history through transcription for distribution, as given in Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament* (German, trans. E.F. Rhodes; 2nd edn; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), p. 297.

¹⁰ The view that the age of the extant textual witnesses is not of any particular significance is especially evident in thoroughgoing eclecticism. See J. Keith Elliott, ‘Thoroughgoing Eclecticism in New Testament Textual Criticism’, in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, 745–770 (esp. pp. 745–46).

¹¹ Wasserman, ‘The Implications of Textual Criticism’.

One particular area of controversy concerns the status of the earliest witnesses to the New Testament text, namely those written on papyrus. In the early 1980s Eldon Epp anticipated an ‘*approaching battle* over the papyri’ concerning ‘the *worth* of the papyri as textual witnesses’ and ‘how *representative* of the earliest history of the text these early papyri are’.¹² That battle has definitely begun.

THE EARLY PAPYRI AND A FOURTH-CENTURY ALEXANDRIAN RECENSION

A primary issue when we consider the relative worth of a New Testament papyrus is its date. The dating of such witnesses has become controversial because there are biblical scholars who, sometimes for apologetic reasons, have proposed earlier dates for many of the manuscripts than those that reflect the consensus among papyrologists.¹³ On the other hand, another group of papyrologists have recently put forward later dates for some manuscripts and a wider date range for Christian literary papyri in general. For example, Brent Nongbri has proposed that P. Bodmer II (P⁶⁶) be dated to the early or middle part of the fourth century and P. Bodmer XIV-XV (P⁷⁵) to the fourth century, while Don Barker has argued that the ranges of dates assigned to Christian literary papyri on the basis of palaeography in general have been too narrow.¹⁴

¹² Eldon J. Epp, ‘Decision Points in Past, Present, and Future New Testament Textual Criticism’, in *Studies in the Theory and Method of NT Textual Criticism*, ed. E.J. Epp and G.D. Fee (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), p. 42 (emphasis original; this chapter was based upon presentations given in 1980–3).

¹³ R.S. Bagnall, *Early Christian Books in Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), pp. 25–49; Pasquale Orsini and Willy Clarysse, ‘Early New Testament Manuscripts and Their Dates: A Critique of Theological Paleography’, *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 88.4 (2012) 433–474.

¹⁴ See Brent Nongbri, ‘The Limits of Palaeographic Dating of Literary Papyri: Some Observations on the Date and Provenance of P. Bodmer II (P⁶⁶)’, *Museum Helveticum* 71 (2014) 1–35; Brent Nongbri, ‘Reconsidering the Place of Papyrus Bodmer XIV–XV (P⁷⁵) in the Textual Criticism of the New Testament’, *JBL* 135.2 (2016) 405–437; Don Barker, ‘The Dating of New Testament Papyri’, *NTS* 57 (2011) 571–582; Brent Nongbri, ‘The Use and Abuse of P52: Papyrological Pitfalls in the Dating of the Fourth Gospel’, *HTR* 98 (2005) 23–48.

In Table 1 below I have compiled a list of the earliest manuscript witnesses to the New Testament text based on the dates assigned by Pasquale Orsini and Willy Clarysse in their critique of ‘theological palaeography’, in order to demonstrate that this apologetic tendency is not reflected in the current Nestle-Aland edition. In spite of some significant differences, seven papyri and early majuscules are still dated potentially to the second century (P³⁰, P⁵², P⁴⁺⁶⁴⁺⁶⁷, P⁹⁰, P¹⁰⁴, 0171, 0212). Four manuscripts are dated earlier by Orsini and Clarysse (P³⁰, P⁴⁺⁶⁴⁺⁶⁷, 0171, 0212), four are dated later (P⁷⁷, P⁹⁸, P¹⁰³, 0189). Perhaps the most significant difference is that Orsini and Clarysse date 0171 earlier by 125 years.

MS	P ³⁰	P ⁵²	P ⁴⁺⁶⁴⁺⁶⁷	P ⁷⁷	P ⁹⁰	P ⁹⁸	P ¹⁰³	P ¹⁰⁴	0171	0189	0212
N-A date	200–300	100–150	200–250	150–250	100–200	100–200(?)	150–250	100–200	300–350	150–250	200–300
O-C date	175–225	125–175	175–200	250–300	150–200	200–250	200–300	100–200	175–225	300–400	175–225

Table 1. Dates of Early Greek NT MSS in Nestle-Aland and Orsini & Clarysse

The second vital issue for the history of the text is related to the age not of the physical manuscript but of the text it carries. There is, however, great controversy over the age and status of the *texts* in the earliest papyri. Of course, the issue of dating is closely related to the issue of the textual character of a witness, since the dating provides a *terminus ante quem* for the text.

At the end of the nineteenth century, when few papyri were known, Westcott and Hort attempted to demonstrate the superiority of their ‘Neutral’ text, represented chiefly by Codex Vaticanus.¹⁵ However, the new papyrus discoveries from the 1930s and onwards caused many scholars to question whether the ‘Neutral’ text really represented a pure line of transmission from the earliest time, as Westcott and Hort had assumed. Some papyri did not align clearly with any of the established text-types and thus reflected a more diverse and fluid state of transmission than expected.

¹⁵ Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort, eds, *The New Testament in the Original Greek* (2 vols; London: Macmillan, 1881). Westcott and Hort viewed Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲱ) as very close to Codex Vaticanus (B), but clearly gave priority to the latter: ‘B must be regarded as having preserved not only a very ancient text, but a very pure line of very ancient text’ (Vol. 2, p. 251).

Frederic Kenyon and others therefore suggested that the 'Neutral' text of Codex Vaticanus must be the product of a scholarly recension that probably took place in Alexandria in the fourth century.¹⁶

With the publication of \mathfrak{P}^{75} in 1961, the question of an Alexandrian recension came into a new perspective. Studies of \mathfrak{P}^{75} in Luke by Carlo Maria Martini and in John by Calvin L. Porter demonstrated that the text of \mathfrak{P}^{75} , assigned a date of around 200, was almost identical to the text of Codex Vaticanus.¹⁷ Their texts agree over 90% of the time in Luke and John, and the natural conclusion was that they derive from a common ancestor from at least as early as the second century.¹⁸

The close relationship of \mathfrak{P}^{75} and Vaticanus demonstrated the stability of this kind of text for at least a century and a half during an era of textual transmission that was, presumably, uncontrolled. The central question of whether the 'Neutral' text or text-type was the result of a recension or of a strict transmission was thus pushed back into the second century.¹⁹ As Epp explains, 'the long-standing conviction of a fourth-century recension of what had been called the B-text was freely given up—no struggle, no strife'.²⁰

¹⁶ Frederic G. Kenyon, 'Hesychius and the Text of the New Testament', in *Mémoires de Lagrange*, ed. L.-H. Vincent (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1940), p. 250; cf. Kenneth W. Clark, 'The Effect of Recent Textual Criticism upon New Testament Studies', in *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology*, ed. W.D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: CUP, 1954), 37; Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles*, pp. 271–272; Werner G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (14th rev. edn by P. Feine and J. Behm; Nashville: Abingdon, 1966), p. 384; Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964), pp. 215–216.

¹⁷ Calvin L. Porter, 'A Textual Analysis of the Earliest Manuscripts of the Gospel of John' (unpubl. diss., Duke University, 1961); Calvin L. Porter, 'Papyrus Bodmer XV (\mathfrak{P}^{75}) and the Text of Codex Vaticanus', *JBL* 81 (1962) 363–376; Carlo M. Martini, *Il problema della recensionalità del codice B alla luce del papiro Bodmer XIV* (Analecta Biblica 26; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1966).

¹⁸ Gordon D. Fee, ' \mathfrak{P}^{75} , \mathfrak{P}^{66} , and Origen: The Myth of Early Textual Recension in Alexandria.' in *Studies*, pp. 247–273.

¹⁹ Eldon J. Epp, 'The Twentieth-Century Interlude in New Testament Textual Criticism', *JBL* 93 (1974) 386–414, especially p. 393.

²⁰ Epp, 'Decision Points', p. 42.

More recently, as noted above, Brent Nongbri has reopened the case by challenging the accepted dating of \mathfrak{P}^{75} and, accordingly, the central place occupied by this manuscript in the history of the text.²¹ While Nongbri thinks that the commonly assigned date of 175–225 CE remains possible, he presents arguments in favour of a fourth-century date. First, he argues on palaeographic grounds for a later date by showing the proximity of the hands of \mathfrak{P}^{75} and P. Herm. 4 and 5 (dated to the 320s).²² Second, Nongbri draws attention to the archaeological context of \mathfrak{P}^{75} as one of the Bodmer papyri, most of which ‘are assigned to the third to the fifth century with a clustering in the fourth century’.²³ Third, the physical appearance of \mathfrak{P}^{75} is akin to the Nag Hammadi codices, which are generally dated to the middle of the fourth century or later.²⁴ Finally, Nongbri points to the remarkable level of textual agreement with the fourth-century Codex Vaticanus not as proof against an Alexandrian recension in the fourth century, but rather ‘as an additional piece of evidence in favour of a fourth-century date for the

²¹ Nongbri, ‘Papyrus Bodmer XIV–XV (\mathfrak{P}^{75})’, pp. 405–437.

²² Nongbri suggests that P. Herm. 4 and 5 so far, ‘constitute the closest securely dated paleographic match ... for \mathfrak{P}^{75} ’ (‘Papyrus Bodmer XIV–XV’, p. 421).

²³ Nongbri, ‘Papyrus Bodmer XIV–XV (\mathfrak{P}^{75})’, p. 427. James M. Robinson, who devoted much effort to tracing the provenance of the Bodmer Papyri, identified them as part of a Pachomian monastic library that was discovered in a jar in 1952 north-west of the town of Dishna in Egypt (between ancient Panopolis and Thebes). See James M. Robinson, *The Pachomian Monastic Library at the Chester Beatty Library and the Bibliothèque Bodmer* (Occasional Papers 19; Claremont: Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, 1990). For a discussion of \mathfrak{P}^{72} in this context, see Tommy Wasserman, ‘Papyrus 72 and the Bodmer Miscellaneous Codex’, *NTS* 51 (2005) 137–154. Brent Nongbri has recently offered improvements to the codicological reconstruction in ‘The Construction of P. Bodmer VIII and the Bodmer “Composite” or “Miscellaneous” Codex’, *NovT* 58 (2016) 394–410.

²⁴ Nongbri, ‘Papyrus Bodmer XIV–XV (\mathfrak{P}^{75})’, p. 430. Nongbri’s additional argument that there are later marginal additions that imply ‘that the codex was in use during the fourth century and possibly the fifth century’ (p. 432) does not oppose the early dating of the codex, but rather tells against the suggestion that, since it was not produced with the books of the monastic library to which it once belonged (the Dishna Papers), \mathfrak{P}^{75} was no longer in use by the fourth century but had rather become a ‘relic’. See Robinson, *Pachomian Monastic Library*, p. 6.

production of \mathfrak{P}^{75} itself.²⁵ Consequently, Nongbri concludes that ‘textual critics of the New Testament may need once again to entertain the idea that the “B Text” is indeed the result of some sort of recensional activity in the fourth century’.²⁶

This is not the place for an evaluation of all of Nongbri’s arguments for a redating of \mathfrak{P}^{75} . Nevertheless, I find his palaeographic analysis compelling.²⁷ Michael W. Holmes has recently spelled out the consequences if we accept a redating of \mathfrak{P}^{75} (and \mathfrak{P}^{66}) as proposed by Nongbri:

At present, however, the dates of our earliest manuscript witnesses, in particular the Bodmer papyri, long taken for granted as a ‘fixed point’, are now the subject of renewed discussion, including proposals to re-date them from the late 2nd/early 3rd century to the late 3rd or mid-4th century. The effects of such a re-dating would be consequential: Origen would once again be viewed as the earliest documentable witness of an important trajectory, rather than merely a point on it, and the size of the ‘gap’ between the earliest circulating copies and the earliest extant manuscripts would increase considerably.²⁸

The question, then, is whether \mathfrak{P}^{75} is our only secure evidence of a ‘B Text’ dating to around 200 CE. Unfortunately, the earliest extant papyri from the turn of the second century are still very few and fragmentary and must be evaluated with caution.²⁹

I would like to draw particular attention to two of these manuscripts that preserve sufficient text to allow for a more secure conclusion: \mathfrak{P}^4

²⁵ Nongbri, ‘Papyrus Bodmer XIV–XV (\mathfrak{P}^{75})’, p. 437.

²⁶ Nongbri, ‘Papyrus Bodmer XIV–XV (\mathfrak{P}^{75})’, p. 437.

²⁷ In this connection, it is interesting to note that Pasquale Orsini too has moved the date of both \mathfrak{P}^{66} and \mathfrak{P}^{75} later. In 2012 he and Willy Clarysse assigned them to the first half of the third century (Orsini and Clarysse, ‘Early New Testament Manuscripts’, pp. 470–471). However, in 2015 he dated them to the 3rd/4th century CE. See Pasquale Orsini, ‘I papiri Bodmer: scritture e libri’, *Adamantius* 21 (2015), p. 77.

²⁸ Michael W. Holmes, ‘Early Writers and Early Text(s) of the New Testament?’ (paper presented at the SNTS Annual Meeting, Montreal, 5 August 2016).

²⁹ The most detailed overview of the text of the New Testament papyri is *The Early Text of the New Testament*, ed. Charles E. Hill and Michael J. Kruger (Oxford: OUP, 2012).

(Luke) and \mathfrak{P}^{64+67} (Matthew), which were copied by the same scribe and possibly belonged to the same codex—an issue I have discussed elsewhere.³⁰ In NA28 these papyri are dated to 200–250 CE, but Orsini and Clarysse date them to 175–200 CE for good reasons.³¹

The text of \mathfrak{P}^4 is strikingly similar to that of \mathfrak{P}^{75} and Codex Vaticanus (B). William Warren has conducted a quantitative analysis in which he compared the text of \mathfrak{P}^4 in Luke to a number of control witnesses representing a spectrum of different texts in 120 genealogically significant variation-units.³² He calculated the following quantitative relationships of \mathfrak{P}^4 , presented in Table 2 in descending order:

³⁰ For an extensive discussion and analysis of \mathfrak{P}^4 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Suppl. Gr. 1120), \mathfrak{P}^{64} (Oxford, Magdalen College, Gr. 18B) and \mathfrak{P}^{67} (Montserrat, Abadia de Montserrat II 1), see Tommy Wasserman, ‘A Comparative Textual Analysis of \mathfrak{P}^4 and \mathfrak{P}^{64+67} ’, *TC* 15 (2010) 1–27. See also C.E. Hill, ‘Intersections of Jewish and Christian Scribal Culture: The Original Codex Containing \mathfrak{P}^4 , \mathfrak{P}^{64} , and \mathfrak{P}^{67} , and its Implications’, in *Among Jews, Gentiles and Christians in Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. R. Hvalvik and J. Kaufman (Trondheim: Tapir Academic Press, 2011), 75–92 and Simon Gathercole, ‘The Earliest Manuscript Title of Matthew’s Gospel (BnF Suppl. gr. 1120 ii 3 / \mathfrak{P}^4)’, *NovT* 54 (2012) 209–235.

³¹ Orsini and Clarysse, ‘Early New Testament Manuscripts’, p. 470. In their case study they state, ‘ $\mathfrak{P}^{64+67+4}$ is written in a biblical majuscule belonging to the early phase of the canon. The writing angle is still uncertain, so that sometimes no shading is visible. This writing is similar to that of P. Vindob. G 29768 (late II-early III; LDAB 2761), as noted by Skeat, and may be attributed, therefore, to a period between the second and third centuries’ (p. 461). See also Pasquale Orsini, *Manoscritti in maiuscola biblica, Materiali per un aggiornamento, Studi archeol., artistici, fil. e storici* (Cassino: Università di Cassino, 2005), pp. 85–86, where P. Vindob. G 29784 is offered as an additional comparison from the end of the second century).

³² William F. Warren, ‘P4 and the P75-B Text in Luke’ (paper presented at the SBL Annual Meeting, Orlando, 22 November 1998), based on a corrected and expanded analysis from that in William F. Warren, ‘The Textual Relationships of P4, P45, and P75 in the Gospel of Luke’ (unpubl. diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1983).

MS	Agreement (%)	Total agreements
B	93%	112/120
ⱱ ⁷⁵	93%	26/28
L	78%	94/120
Ⲁ	72%	86/120
W	65%	77/118
33	58%	70/120
1	49%	59/120
700	48%	58/120
157	44%	53/120
C	41%	29/70
D	39%	47/119
13	39%	47/120
Θ	35%	42/120
Ψ	33%	39/120
565	33%	39/120
P	29%	35/120
Ω	28%	34/120
A	27%	32/120
TR	26%	31/120

Table 2. *Quantitative analysis of ⱱ⁴ (Warren)*

Warren thus demonstrated that ⱱ⁴ was affiliated to witnesses traditionally assigned to the Alexandrian textual cluster, in particular Codex Vaticanus and ⱱ⁷⁵.

I have analysed ⱱ⁴ and ⱱ⁶⁴⁺⁶⁷ using a different method, first devised by Kurt Aland and subsequently developed by Barbara Aland and her student Kyoung Shik Min, which is particularly suitable for fragmentary papyri.³³ In the following, I will summarise the results which show that ⱱ⁴ and ⱱ⁶⁴⁺⁶⁷ reflect a ‘strict’ text and transmission character. Tables 3 and 4 show

³³ Wasserman, ‘A Comparative Textual Analysis’, pp. 1–27; Aland and Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, pp. 96–101; Barbara Aland, ‘Kriterien zur Beurteilung kleinerer Papyrusfragmente des Neuen Testaments’, in *New Testament Textual Criticism and Exegesis: Festschrift J. Delobel*, ed. A. Denaux; (BETL 161, Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 1–13; Kyoung Shik Min, *Die früheste Überlieferung des Matthäusevangeliums (bis zum 3./4. Jh.)* (ANTF 34; Berlin-New York: De Gruyter, 2005), pp. 37–41.

a summary of the textual analysis of \mathfrak{P}^4 and \mathfrak{P}^{64+67} respectively (A=addition; O=omission; WO=word order; SUB=substitutions).

Text	Variation-units in NA28	Lacunose variation-units	Additional variation-units where \mathfrak{P}^4 deviates from NA28	Ratio of deviation	Type of deviation	Singular readings
Luke 1:58–59; 62–2:1; 6–7; 3:8–4:2; 29–35; 5:3–8; 30–6:16	156	33	11	26/134 (19.4%)	3 x A 8 x O 4 x WO 11 x SUB	2 x A 1 x O 1 x WO 4 x SUB

Table 3. Textual analysis of \mathfrak{P}^4

\mathfrak{P}^4 was analysed in 134 selected variation-units (156-33+11). In this sample, \mathfrak{P}^4 agrees with the reconstructed initial text (NA28) in 108 units (80.6%) and deviates in twenty-six (19.4%). If we were to include all variation-units in the textual tradition then the relative agreement between \mathfrak{P}^4 and the printed text would be significantly higher. According to this method, the assessment of the transmission character is based on the character of the deviations, namely whether it is likely that they are creations of the scribe. In my opinion, some ten readings out of 134 (7.5%) are likely to be the creations of the scribe while the other reading were probably in the exemplar. Its transmission character is therefore to be classified as ‘strict’.

Text	Variation-units in N28	Lacunose variation-units	Additional variation-units where \mathfrak{P}^{64+67} deviates from NA28	Ratio of deviation	Type of deviation	Singular readings
Matt 3:9; 15; 5:20–22, 25–28; 26:7–8, 10, 14–15, 22–23, 31–33	26	13	-	2/13 (15.4%)	1 x O 1 x WO/O	1 x WO /O

Table 4. Textual analysis of \mathfrak{P}^{64+67}

\mathfrak{P}^{64+67} was analysed in thirteen variation-units (26-13) for this stretch of text. The manuscript agrees with the reconstructed initial text in eleven variation-units (84.6%), whereas it deviates twice from the initial text (15.4%),

consisting of one omission and one transposition (possibly involving an omission). One reading (7.7%) seems to be the creation of the scribe. I have classified its textual quality and transmission character as ‘strict’, although the classification is based on a limited sample.

A larger analysis of Matthaean papyri dating from the second to the mid-fourth centuries using the same method confirms that the early papyrus witnesses to the gospels represent various points along the spectrum from a ‘strict’ text and transmission reflecting a concern for accurate copying to a ‘free’ text and transmission reflecting a free attitude to the text and more careless copying.³⁴ The proposed redating of \mathfrak{P}^{75} does not alter this picture, nor does it give reason to revive the idea of a fourth-century recension. I propose that \mathfrak{P}^4 and \mathfrak{P}^{64+67} , in particular, offer another ‘fixed point’ around 200 CE for the trajectory of the ‘strict’ text.

Furthermore, there are striking paratextual similarities between $\mathfrak{P}^{4+64+67}$ and \mathfrak{P}^{75} . C.H. Roberts rightly characterised $\mathfrak{P}^{4+64+67}$ as a ‘thoroughgoing literary production’, including a similar system of textual division to that found in the Bodmer codex and the fourth-century codices (\aleph and B).³⁵ The quality of both text and paratext point toward a controlled production of these manuscripts.³⁶ Once again, however, the profound question is

³⁴ Tommy Wasserman, ‘The Early Text of Matthew’, in Hill and Kruger, *The Early Text of the New Testament*, pp. 83–107; Larry W. Hurtado, ‘The New Testament in the Second Century: Text, Collection and Canon’, in *Transmission and Reception: New Testament Text-Critical and Exegetical Studies*, ed. J.W. Childers and D.C. Parker (I&S; Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2006), 7; Peter M. Head, ‘Some Recently Published New Testament Papyri from Oxyrhynchus: An Overview and Preliminary Assessment’, *Tyndale Bulletin* 51 (2000) 10.

³⁵ C.H. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief in Early Christian Egypt* (Hollowbrook: Oxford, 1979), p. 23: ‘In the first, no. 8 [\mathfrak{P}^4 , \mathfrak{P}^{64+67}], the text is divided into sections on a system also found in the Bodmer codex of Luke and John that recurs in some of the great fourth-century codices and was clearly not personal to this scribe ... In its handsome script as well as in its organisation ... it is a thoroughgoing literary production’. See also Charles E. Hill, ‘Rightly Dividing the Word: Uncovering an Early Template for Textual Division in John’s Gospel’, in *Studies on the Text of the New Testament and Early Christianity*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner et al., (NTTSD 50; Leiden: Brill, 2015), 217–238.

³⁶ In Scott Charlesworth’s recent study of *Early Christian Gospels: Their Production and Transmission* (Papyrologia Florentia XLVII; Firenze: Edizioni Gonnelli, 2016),