

Welcome to the Interpreting Ancient Manuscripts Web



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It all started...

The Interpreting Ancient Manuscripts web is adapted from the original Hypercard version. It was developed at [Brown University](#) with the aid of an Educational Computing Grant to the [Religious Studies Department](#). A special acknowledgement goes to the [Computing in the Humanities Users Group \(CHUG\)](#) for their inspiration and encouragement over the years and to the [Scholarly Technology Group](#) for their guidance and assistance.

The main focus of the web is on the process used to study the ancient manuscripts upon which the New Testament is based. While the language discussed is Greek, almost everything is explained with transliterations into English and, where applicable, translations from standard English Bibles.

Navigation

In order to navigate the web, begin by clicking the Paleography icon in the top frame. At the bottom of each subsequent page you will be provided with the option of clicking the next page in the thread. If you should become lost, click the Index icon in the top frame to see a complete listing of the Interpreting Ancient Manuscripts Web. There are also hypertext links to related items within the web and to resources in the World Wide Web.

Sources

Much of the material in this web is gleaned from the classic text of [Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, \(New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968\)](#). The example of textual criticism can be furthered explored in [Jack Finegan, *Encountering New Testament Manuscripts: A Working Introduction to Textual Criticism*, \(Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974\)](#). Additional information is quoted from [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. by Erroll F. Rhodes \(Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987\)](#).

The color images of the opening pages of the Gospel of John in [P66](#) (304k) and [P75](#) (315k) were provided by the Martin Bodmer Library. Thank you, Dr. Braun. All other manuscript images are used with the permission of the custodians of those documents.

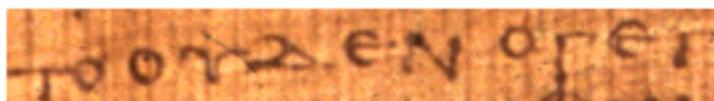


This [papyrus](#) codex consists of 75 leaves and 39 unidentified fragments and was probably made up of originally 39 sheets of papyrus, folded and arranged in quires to form 78 leaves and 156 pages. The written pages are numbered consecutively from 1 to 34, 35 - 38 are missing, and then from 39 to page 108.

The leaves are nearly rectangular measuring 6.4 inches high and 5.6 inches wide.

The number of lines of text per page varies from 14 to 25. The number of letters in a line of text runs from 18 to 28. The handwriting is a good literary uncial. There is a rudimentary punctuation with a high point at the end of sentences and a double point at the end of sections. The words for God, Jesus, Lord, and Christ are always [abbreviated](#) and sometimes also man, father, spirit, and son. There is evidence of corrections, perhaps made by the scribe himself.

Some letters are missing on the right margin because of the deterioration of the edge of the papyrus sheets. Some pages have a vertical strip which was placed on the edge to reinforce the sheet.



ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ· ΚΑΙ ΧΩΡΙΣ Α----
ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΟΥΔΕΝ Ο ΓΕΓΟΝΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΖΩ

All things came into being through him; and apart from him nothing came into being that has come into being.

First of all, P66 contains the word *ouden* where other manuscripts will read *oude en*. The question will be which reading is more likely to have been the original and gave rise to the other reading through scribal error?

Secondly, the question arose whether the phrase should be punctuated after *ouden/oude en* or after *o gegonen*. P66 is listed in the critical apparatus as not containing any punctuation. There does seem, however, to be an inordinate amount of space following the *N*. There is also a small point between the *E* and the *N*. One wonders what significance that may have?

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Papyrus 75

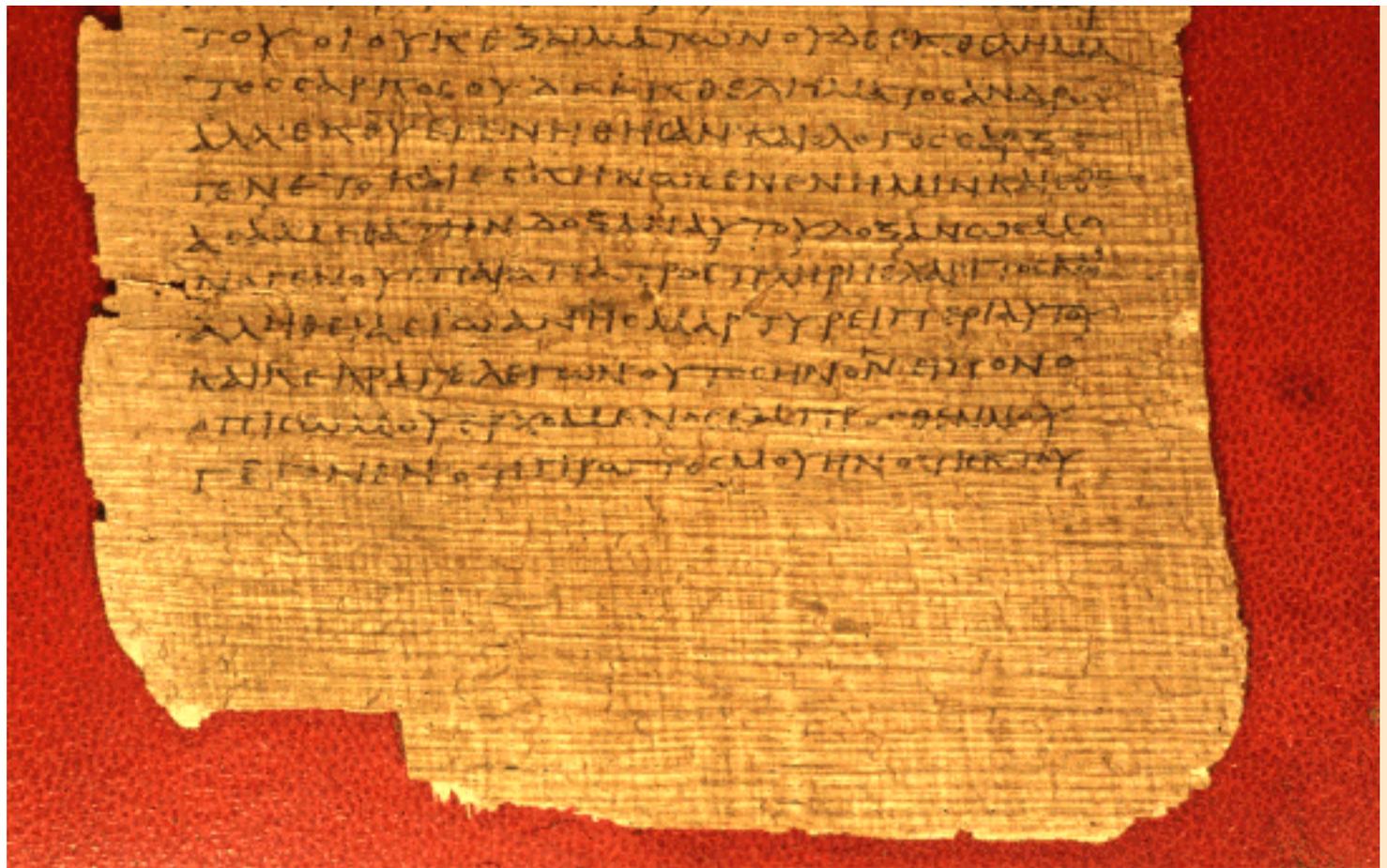
Papyrus Bodmer XV (p75)175-225 C.E.

ΚΑΙ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΕΝ ΤΩ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΝ
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 ΤΕΡΩ ΕΥΛΟΓΟΥΝ ΤΟ ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟΝ·

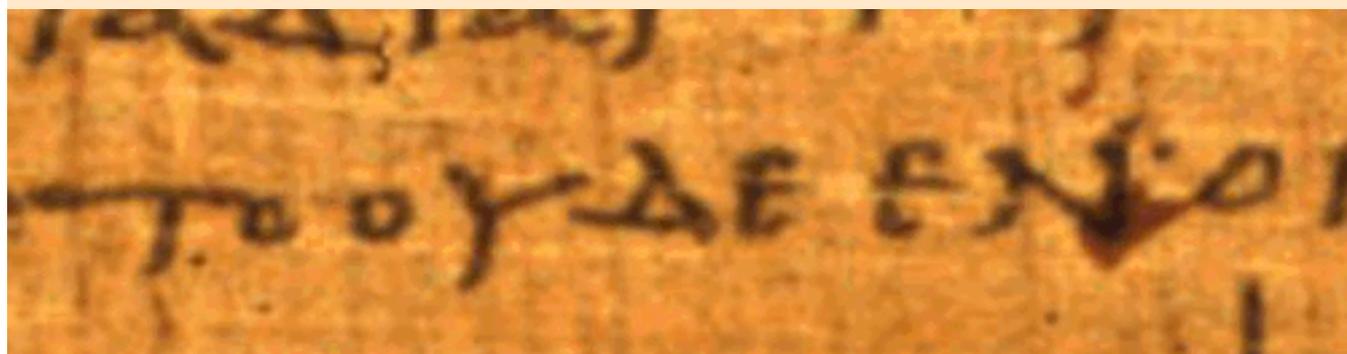
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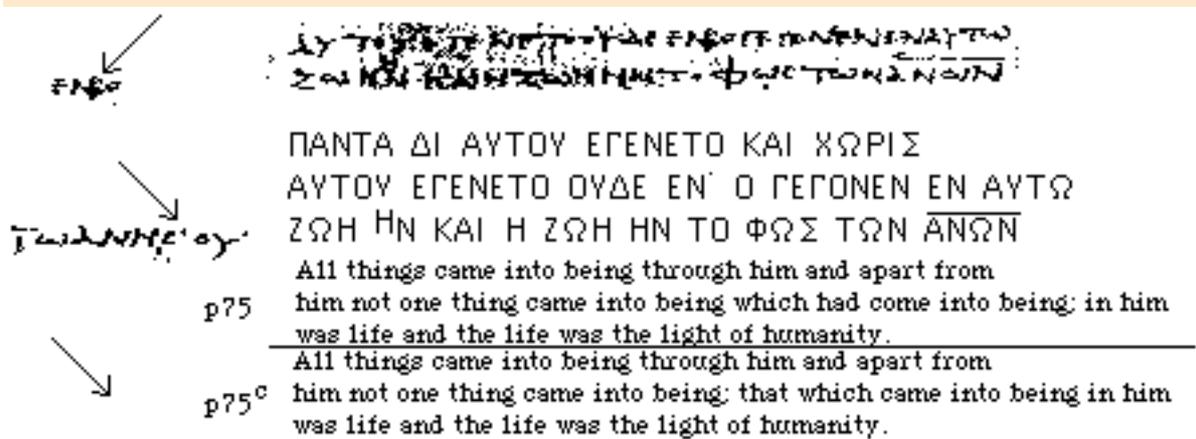
ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ
 ΤΩ ΔΩΔΗΝΗ

ΕΝ ΔΡΧΗΝ ΗΝ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΑΙ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΗΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗΝ
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 ΦΩΤΟΣ ΗΝ ΤΟ ΦΩΣ ΤΟ ΑΛΗΘΙΝΟΝ Ο ΦΩΤΟΣ
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 ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΚΟΙΤΗΣ ΔΙΑΥΤΟΝ ΟΥΚ
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This [papyrus](#) codex with 51 surviving leaves now contains parts of Luke and John. The pages were originally about 10.2 by 5.1 inches and well preserved. Each page is written in a single column of from 38 to 45 lines and each line has 25 to 36 letters. The pages are not numbered. The handwriting is a clear uncial which when compared to other papyri dates the manuscript to sometime between 175 and 225 C.E.





In the first line of the image, notice the high point just after the letter nu (N) and before the omicron (O). When compared to another high point in line 9 which has plenty of space around it, one can conclude that the point was not originally written but was inserted by a corrector. The text then must be considered as two witnesses.

Notice also that instead of the letters "OUDEN," this manuscript has the two words "OUDE EN." Either one of the epsilons has been dropped (if P75 is the original reading) or it has been reduplicated (if P66 represents the original reading). The meaning is actually altered little, only making the expression more emphatic.

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Papyrus (5th Cent. B.C.E.-8th Cent. C.E.)

Image of a papyrus plant



Location of papyrus growth

Egypt is important for papyrus in two respects.

First, papyrus plants grew almost exclusively in the region of the Nile

delta. Secondly, the dry climate of Egypt made it possible for papyri to endure, in many cases, for over 2 millenia.



An Ancient Description of the Process

Pliny, *Natural History*, 13.74-82

Paper is made from the papyrus plant by separating it with a needle point into very thin strips as broad as possible. The choice quality comes from the center, and thence in the order of slicing. The (choice) quality in former times called 'hieratic' because it was devoted only to religious books has, out of flattery, taken on the name of Augustus, and the next quality that of Livia, after his wife, so that the 'hieratic' has dropped to third rank.

The next had been named 'amphitheatric' from its place of manufacture. At Rome Fannius' clever workshop took it up and refined it by careful processing, thus making a first-class paper out of a common one and renaming it after him; the paper not so reworked remained in its original grade as 'amphitheatric'.

Next is the 'Saitic', so called after the town where it is most abundant, made from inferior scraps, and from still nearer the rind the 'Taeneotic', named after a nearby place (this is sold, in fact, by weight not by quality). The 'emporitic', being useless for writing, provides envelopes for papers and wrappings for merchants. After this there is (only) the papyrus stalk, and its outermost husk is similar to a rush and useless even for rope except in moisture.

Paper of whatever grade is fabricated on a board moistened with water from the Nile: the muddy liquid serves as the bonding force. First there is spread flat on the board a layer consisting of strips of papyrus running vertically, as long as

possible, with their ends squared off. After that a cross layer completes the construction. Then it is pressed in presses, and the sheets thus formed are dried in the sun and joined one to another, (working) in declining order of excellence down to the poorest. There are never more than twenty sheets in a roll.

There is great variation in their breadth, the best thirteen digits, the 'hieratic' two less, the 'Fannian' measures ten, the 'amphitheatic' one less, the 'Saitic' a few less--indeed not wide enough for the use of a mallet--and the narrow 'emporitic' does not exceed six digits. Beyond that, the qualities esteemed in paper are fineness, firmness, whiteness, and smoothness.

The Emperor Claudius changed the order of preference. The excess fineness of the 'Augustan' paper was insufficient to withstand the pressure of the pen; in addition, as it let the ink through there was always the fear of a blot from the back, and in other respects it was unattractive in appearance because excessively translucent. Consequently the vertical (under) layer was made of second-grade material and the horizontal layer of first-grade. He also increased its width to measure a foot.

There was also the 'macrocolumn', a cubit wide, but experience revealed the defect that when one strip tears off it damages several columns of writing. For these reasons the 'Claudian' paper is preferred to all others; the 'Augustan' retains its importance for correspondence, and the 'Livian', which never had any first-grade elements but was all second-grade, retains its same place.

Rough spots are rubbed smooth with ivory or shell, but then the writing is apt to become scaly: the polished paper is shinier and less absorptive. Writing is also impeded if (in manufacture) the liquid was negligently applied in the first place; this fault is detected with the mallet, or even by odour if the application was too careless. Spots, too, are easily detected by the eye, but a strip inserted between two others, though bibulous from the sponginess of (such) papyrus, can scarcely be detected except when the writing runs--there is so much trickery in the business! The result is the additional labour of reprocessing.

Common paste made from finest flour is dissolved in boiling water with the merest sprinkle of vinegar, for carpenter's glue and gum are too brittle. A more painstaking process percolates boiling water through the crumb of leavened bread; by this method the substance of the intervening paste is so minimal that even the suppleness of linen is surpassed. Whatever paste is used ought to be no more or less than a day old. Afterwards it is flattened with the mallet and lightly washed with paste, and the resulting wrinkles are again removed and smoothed out with the mallet.

For more information on Pliny, see [Pliny the Elder, Natural Historian and Scientist](#)

Preparation for Writing

After the papyrus had been processed and made into sheets (and usually sheets into rolls), it could then be used as a writing material. Sometimes a scribe wrote on just one sheet and then rolled it up or folded it. Longer documents were written, at first, on a roll of papyrus in narrow columns. Since this could be cumbersome with a long document, papyrus came to be used in the form of the [codex](#) (ancestor to our modern book).

Animation of Papyrus Preparation



History of Papyrus and Its Discovery

The use of papyrus as a writing material goes back to extreme antiquity. The

oldest written papyrus known to be in existence is, according to Kenyon (*The Paleography of Greek Papyri*, Oxford, 1899), an account-sheet belonging to the reign of the Egyptian king Assa, which is conjecturally dated circa 2600 B.C.

The size of the single sheet of papyrus was not constant in ancient times, and there ought never to have been any doubt of this fact. Kenyon has collected some measurements. For most non-literary documents (letters, accounts, receipts, etc.) a single sheet was sufficient; for longer texts, especially literary ones, the necessary sheets were stuck together and made into a roll. Rolls have been found measuring as much as 20 and even 45 yards.

The regular format for ancient works of literature was the papyrus roll. It was usual to write on that side of the sheet on which the fibres ran horizontally (recto); the other side (verso) was used only exceptionally. When a sheet of papyrus bears writing on both sides, in different hands, it may generally be assumed that the writing on the recto is the earlier of the two. Only in exceptional cases was there writing on both sides of the sheets of a papyrus roll.

In the later centuries of antiquity we find also the papyrus book or codex, which finally triumphs over the roll. It is not true that the transition from roll to book was the result of the introduction of parchment. To give only a few instances, the British Museum possesses a fragment of a papyrus codex of the Iliad, probably of the 3rd century A.D. Among the Oxyrhynchus Papyri there is a leaf from a codex of the gospels, containing Matthew 1:1-9,12,14-20, of the 3rd century, besides other fragments of Biblical codices. The University Library at Heidelberg possesses twenty-seven leaves from an old codex of the Septuagint. And the sayings of Jesus found at Oxyrhynchus are also on a leaf from a codex.

The first recorded purchase of papyri by European visitors to Egypt was in 1778. In that year a nameless dealer in antiquities bought from some peasants a papyrus roll of documents from the year 191 - 192 A.D., and looked on while they set fire to fifty or so others simply to enjoy the aromatic smoke that was produced. Since that date an enormous quantity of inscribed papyri in all possible languages, of ages varying from a thousand to nearly five thousand years, have been recovered from the magic soil of the ancient seats of civilisation in the Nile Valley. From about 1820 to 1840 the museums of Europe acquired quite a respectable number of papyri from Memphis and Letopolis in Middle Egypt, and from This, Panopolis, Thebes, Hermonthis, Elephantine, and Syene in Upper Egypt. Not many scholars took any notice of them at first, and only a very few read and profited by them.

The next decisive event, apart from isolated finds, was the discovery of papyri in the province of El-Fayûm (Middle Egypt) in 1877. To the north of the capital,

Medinet el-Fayûm, lay a number of mounds of rubbish and debris, marking the site of the ancient "City of Crocodiles," afterwards called "The City of the Arsinoïtes," and these now yielded up hundreds and thousands of precious sheets and scraps. Since then there has been a rapid succession of big finds, which have not ceased even yet: we are still in a period of important discoveries. In the external history of the discoveries the most noteworthy feature is that so many of the papyri have been dug up with the spade from Egyptian rubbish-heaps. Antiquaries had set the example by excavating in search of the foundations of ancient temples or fragments of prehistoric pottery, and now the excavators seek papyri. The fact that so many of the papyri are found among the dust-heaps of ancient cities is a valuable indication of their general significance. The multitude of papyri from the Fayûm, from Oxyrhynchus-Behnesa, etc., do not, as was at first supposed, represent the remains of certain great archives. They have survived as part of the contents of ancient refuse-heaps and rubbish-shoots. There the men of old cast out their bundles of discarded documents, from offices of public and private, their worn-out books and parts of books; and there these things reposed, tranquilly abiding their undreamt-of fate.

(Adapted from Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East: The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World*, Trans. by Lionel R. M. Strachan, 1927 [First Edition 1908], pp. 26-32.)

For more on the study of papyrus, follow this link to the [Papyrology](#) home page.

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Glossary of Technical Terms

Bios (pl. bioi)

Sometimes a prologue to a Gospel text will contain traditional information about the life of the evangelist. The lives are attributed to an otherwise unknown Dorotheus of Tyre or to Sophronius, the Patriarch of Jerusalem in the first half of the seventh century.

Catena (pl. catenae)

Catenae are comments extracted from ecclesiastical writers. The comments are written into the margin with the author's name abbreviated and a system of symbols matching the marginal comment to the relevant place in the text.

Chapter

After the fourth century biblical manuscripts begin to exhibit various systems of capitulation. The numbers appear in the margin next to the place in the column where the new section begins. Sometimes the new section will also be designated by the first letter of the first word being placed into the margin slightly and for the first letter to be enlarged. A table of chapters may appear before the book.

Colon (pl. cola)

Cola are single clauses after which a breath is taken. In order to facilitate reading, some manuscripts are written colometrically with one colon per line. A colon was considered to contain between nine and sixteen syllables. Several bilingual Greek and Latin manuscripts of the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles have the text arranged colometrically.

Colophon

A colophon is an inscription written by a scribe which usually appears at the end of a manuscript. Colophons include such information as the name of the scribe who copied the work, remarks about the making of the manuscript, prayers, and warnings against changing the text. (See examples in the discussion on [scribes](#).)

Comma (pl. commata)

Commata are single phrases after which a breath is taken. A comma was considered to be less than eight syllables. (See [Colon](#))

Commentary

Scholia which are systematically developed in order to elucidate continuously the entire text, rather than random notes, is considered a commentary. The commentary is written in the margins and sometimes interspersed between sections of Scripture. (See [Scholium](#))

Cursive

The cursive style was used in Greek antiquity for writing non-literary, everyday documents, such as letters, accounts, receipts, petitions, deeds, and the like. Contractions and abbreviations for high-frequency words were common.

Gloss

Glosses are brief explanations of difficult words or phrases written into the margins of manuscripts or between the lines. Glosses sometimes were accidentally copied into a new manuscript.

Hypothesis

Hypotheses were brief introductions to books supplying the reader with information about the author, content of the book, and the circumstances of its composition.

Lectionary Note

A regular system of lessons from the Gospels and Epistles was developed for worship. In order to help the reader know where to begin and end, these places were marked in the margin or between the lines of text. Notes indicating what passages were to be read on which days were sometimes written in the margin with red ink. Then a list may appear at the end of the [codex](#). Lectionary manuscripts were developed which tend to exhibit an early type of text.

Minuscule

During the ninth century a reform in handwriting occurred from which was developed a script of small letters in a running hand call minuscule. This cursive script became popular for the production of books.

Nomina Sacra

A system for contracting "sacred names" developed among Christian scribes during the first centuries of Christianity. Eventually there were fifteen such forms. Explanations for their origin range from a Christian attempt to follow the model of the Jewish Tetragrammaton (four Hebrew characters representing the name of God) to an imitation of contractions representing proper names, titles, names of months, numerals, and formulae which occur in pre-Christian ostraca (pottery sherds) and inscriptions.

Opisthograph

A papyrus roll which bears writing on both sides is called an opisthograph. Usually only the inside of the roll, which had horizontal fibers, was used for writing.

Ornamentation

Ornamentation is the endeavor to beautify a page or column. There are different methods, namely:

- Initials at the beginning of a book, chapter or paragraph are enlarged, written in a different color, painted, or intricately designed, e.g. the letter A as a bird next to a stem.
- Drawing ornamented borders.
- Placement of vignettes before or after sections, books, or chapters.
- Monocondylia, playing with letters or letter combinations.
- Illustrations of the contents of the book.

Pagination

Pagination in papyri is infrequent and when it does occur it is often the work of an editor, perhaps a librarian. Consistent pagination began to occur in codices in the early third century. Many great codices of the fourth century have no pagination. When pagination is occurs, the numbers appear in the center of the upper margin or the top outside edge. Some scribes only numbered the even-numbered pages. Occasionally leaves, not pages, are numbered.

Numeration is also used for the numbering of quires.

Palimpsest

A palimpsest is a parchment manuscript which contained writing but has been scraped, washed off, smoothed and rewritten upon. Of the 250 [uncial](#) manuscripts of the New Testament known today, 52 are palimpsests. It is only through the use of modern technology, such as chemical reagents and ultraviolet light, that the obliterated writing is able to be read.

Paragraphus

This is a dash drawn in the left margin under the line of the text which finishes a section. In some classical, dramatic texts it serves the purpose of marking a change in speaker.

Punctuation

The earliest manuscripts have little punctuation and it only occurs sporadically before the

eighth century.

Scholium (pl. scholia)

Scholia are interpretative remarks of a teacher placed beside the text in order to instruct the reader.

Scriptio Continua

ANCIENTGREEKWASWRITT

ENINUPPERCASECHARACTERS

WITHVIRTUALLYNOWORDORSEN

TENCEDIVISIONANDWITHOUTPUNC

TUATION

Title

Most of the late manuscripts which have a system of [capitulation](#) also place a summary-heading in the margin which describes the contents of the chapter. Frequently a red ink is used.

Uncial

Uncial is a formal style of handwriting, a "bookhand" which was characterized by deliberate and carefully executed letters, each one separated from the others. After the sixth century the style began to deteriorate and the letters appeared thick and clumsy. E. G. Turner classifies the literary hands of the first four centuries of the Common Era into three groups: Informal round hands; Formal round hands (Biblical Majuscule or Uncial; Coptic Uncial); Formal mixed hands.

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-

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Codex Vaticanus

Codex Vaticanus (B or 03) mid fourth (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Vat. gr. 1209)
Used with permission.



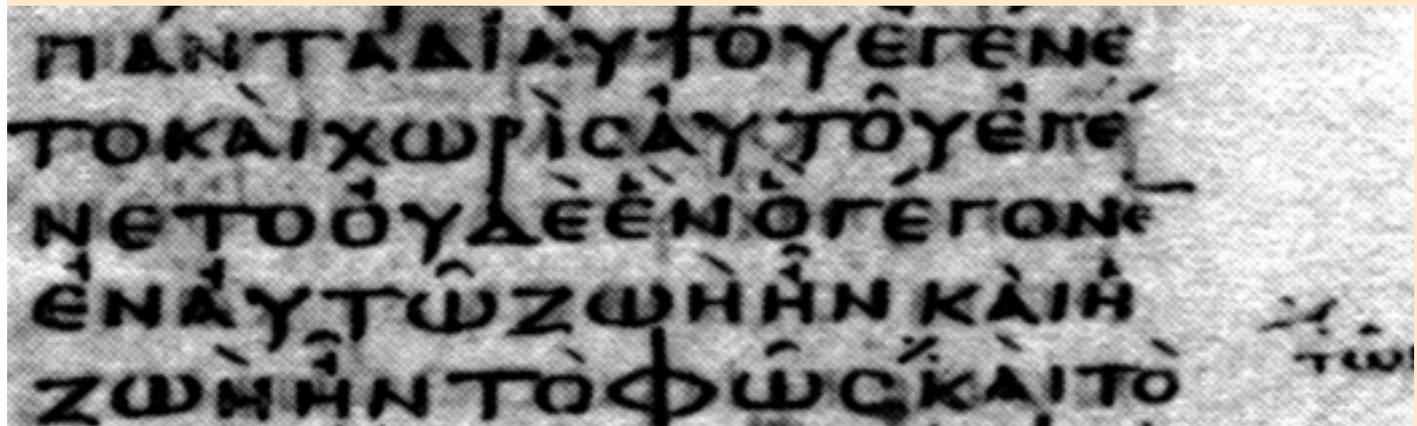
Originally, this codex was a complete Christian Bible with OT and NT. The OT is almost complete and consists of 617 leaves. The NT is made up of 142 leaves. The leaves measure about 10.8 inches on each side. The text appears in three columns with 40 to 44 lines of text per column and about 16 to 18 letters per line.

The letters are written in a brown ink and sometimes are resting on the guidance line and at other times have the ruled line running halfway between the lines of writing. The letters are

evenly spaced [uncial](#) letters although sometimes smaller letters are crowded together at the end of lines in an attempt to finish a word or to start the next line with a consonant. There is no word separation (*scriptio continua*) and virtually no punctuation.

One scribe worked on the OT and another the NT. A corrector went through the manuscript, probably soon after its writing. Then a second corrector worked on the manuscript much later (10th or 11th century) and traced over the faded letters with fresh ink omitting letters and words he considered to be wrong. He also added accent and breathing marks.

Notice at the end of the first line below that there is a line written out to the side. This represented the letter Nu (N). In the full picture of Codex Vaticanus, look in the margin to the far right, you will see something written out to the side. The scribe forgot a phrase which was later written out in the margin with a symbol designating where it should be inserted. In the left margin of the third column, about half way down, you can see a mark written. This is the letter Beta (B) representing the number two. This is a [chapter](#) marker.



ΝΕ ΤΟΥ ΟΥΔΕ ΕΝ Ο ΓΕΓΟΝΕ
ΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΖΩΗ ΗΝ ΚΑΙ Η

ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕ
ΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΧΩΡΙΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕ
ΝΕ ΤΟ ΟΥΔΕ ΕΝ Ο ΓΕΓΟΝΕ
ΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΖΩΗ ΗΝ ΚΑΙ Η

All things came into being through him and apart from him not one thing came into being which had come into being: in him was life and the life was the light of humanity.

We find in this codex the same reading as in P75 (before the punctuation was added). However, we still can not be sure where a break in the sentence would fall and, consequently, how to punctuate the passage.

Codex

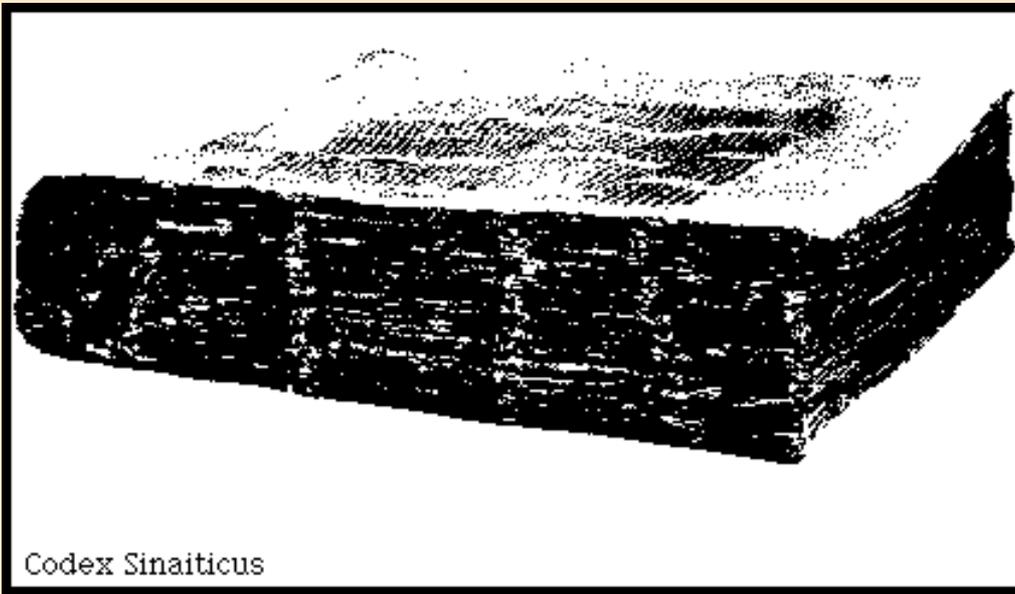
The codex format was probably developed as a way to make the contents of a document more readily accessible in contrast to the [roll](#). Callimachus, a cataloguer of books at the great library of Alexandria, is noted to have said, "A big roll is a big nuisance."

As to the relative frequency of use of the roll and of the codex, in an enumeration of 476 second-century non-Christian literary papyrus manuscripts from Egypt, 465 or more than 97 percent are in the form of the roll; but eight Christian biblical papyri known from the same century are all in the form of the codex. Likewise in the entire period extending to shortly after the end of the fourth century, out of 111 biblical manuscripts or fragments from Egypt, 99 are codices. That the codex increased in use in comparison with the use of the roll is natural in view of the many obvious advantages of the leaf book, not the least of which is that it is more feasible to write on both sides of a leaf, and hence such a book is cheaper. But the statistics just given indicate a particular and very early preference for the codex form on the part of Christians. This also is natural in view of the advantages of the codex with respect to matters of particular interest to the Christians. For example, the single Gospel according to Luke would probably have filled an average papyrus roll of approximately thirty feet in length, and Paul's ten collected church letters (including Philemon) would probably have occupied two ordinary rolls, but all Four Gospels or all of the Letters of Paul could readily be brought together in a single codex book. Likewise it is much more difficult to turn quickly to a specific passage in a roll, and much easier to do so in a codex.

Finegan, *Encountering New Testament Manuscripts*, p. 29.

[Papyrus](#) codices are the first to appear and are then joined by codices made of [parchment](#). Almost all of the manuscripts of the New Testament are in the form of the codex. In fact, some believe the codex had its origins in early Christianity and was adopted by others later on.

The most common form of the codex was made up of a number of "gatherings" sewn together and placed within a sturdy covering. Each "gathering" starts out as four sheets which are folded in half to make eight leaves (folios) (16 pages). This "gathering" was called a "quire."

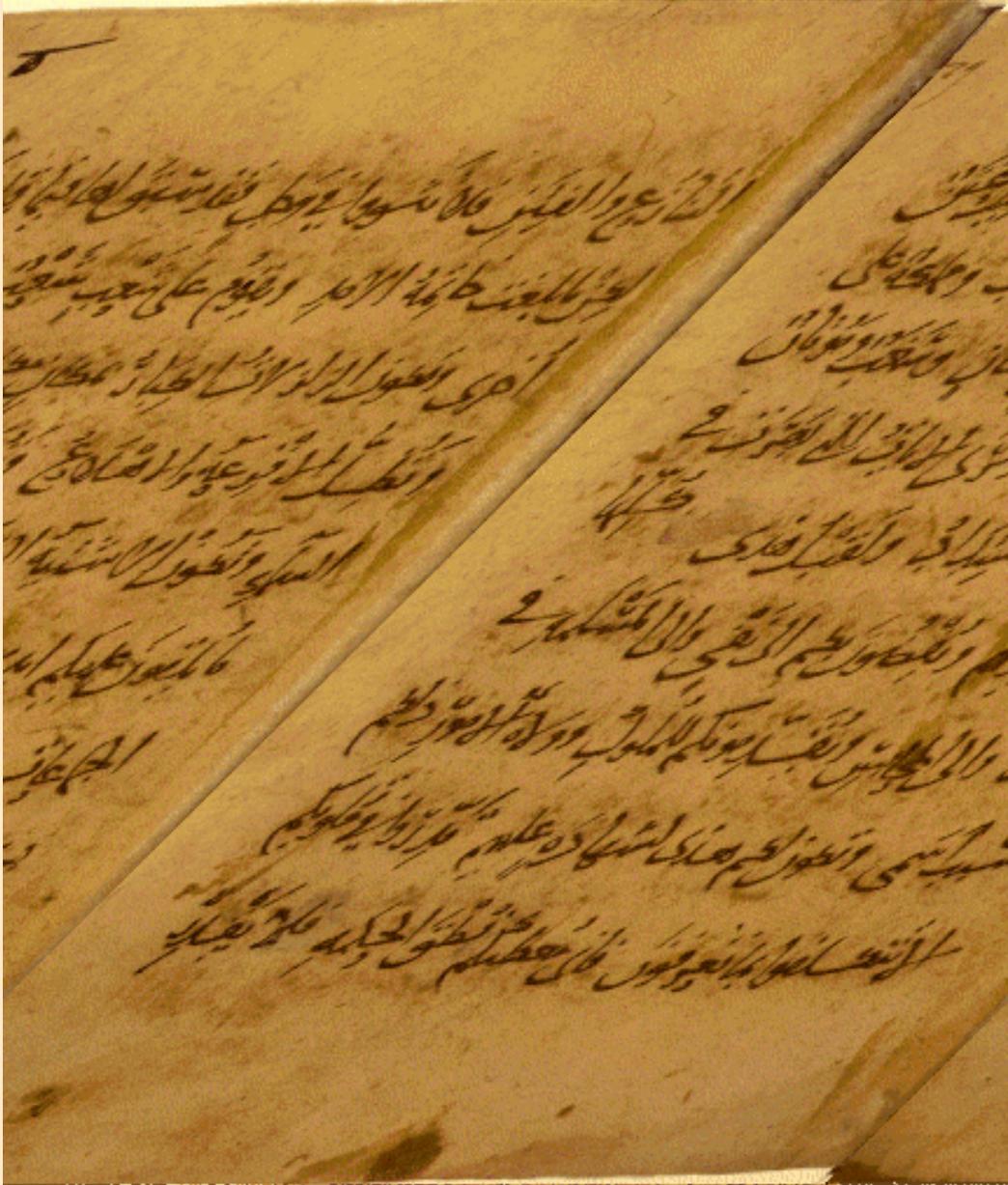


Codex Sinaiticus

One of the languages into which the New Testament was first translated is [Coptic](#). Here are two images (in color) available from the [Copt-Net](#).

St. Mark





St. Luke

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[\[Scribes\]](#)
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Parchment (2 Cent. C.E.-10th Cent. C.E.)

Description

Parchment was made from the skins of animals such as sheep and cows. Vellum is a special kind of parchment made from calf skins. After being soaked in lime water and scraped, the skin is stretched and left to dry. This stretching process distinguishes parchment from leather.

The parchment is treated and sometimes dyed (purple, for example). It can then be formed into a [codex](#). To enable the [scribe](#) to write straight lines, the parchment is ruled by a combination of pin pricks and impressed lines. The scribe does not always write on the line, but often hangs the characters from the ruled line.

The [Vatican Library Exhibit](#) has images of manuscripts on parchment.

Picture of Manuscript Page



Ancient Description of Process

Conradus de Mure, *De animalium naturam* (13th century)

Likewise concerning skin:

how parchment may be made from it:

The flayed skin from the calf is placed into water. Lime is mixed in which bites into all the raw skin. This should fully clean it and remove the hairs. The circular frame on which the skin is stretched is made ready. Let it be placed in the sun so that the fluid is removed. Approach

with the knife which tears away the flesh and hairs. It quickly renders the sheet thin.

To prepare parchment for books:

First cut into rectangular sheets. Assemble the sheets over each other and join together. Next comes pumice which removes what is on the surface. Chalk comes next, so that the work will not run. Then puncture (each sheet) with dots (using an awl or needle) following with a line made by the lead.

Jerome's Comments about Parchment

Parchments are dyed purple, gold is melted into lettering, manuscripts are decked with jewels, while Christ lies at the door naked and dying. -- Jerome, *Epistle* xxii.32

Let her treasures be not gems or silks, but manuscripts of the holy Scriptures; and in these let her think less of gilding and Babylonian parchment and arabesque patterns, than of correctness and accurate punctuation. -- Jerome, *Epistle* cvii.12

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Scribes

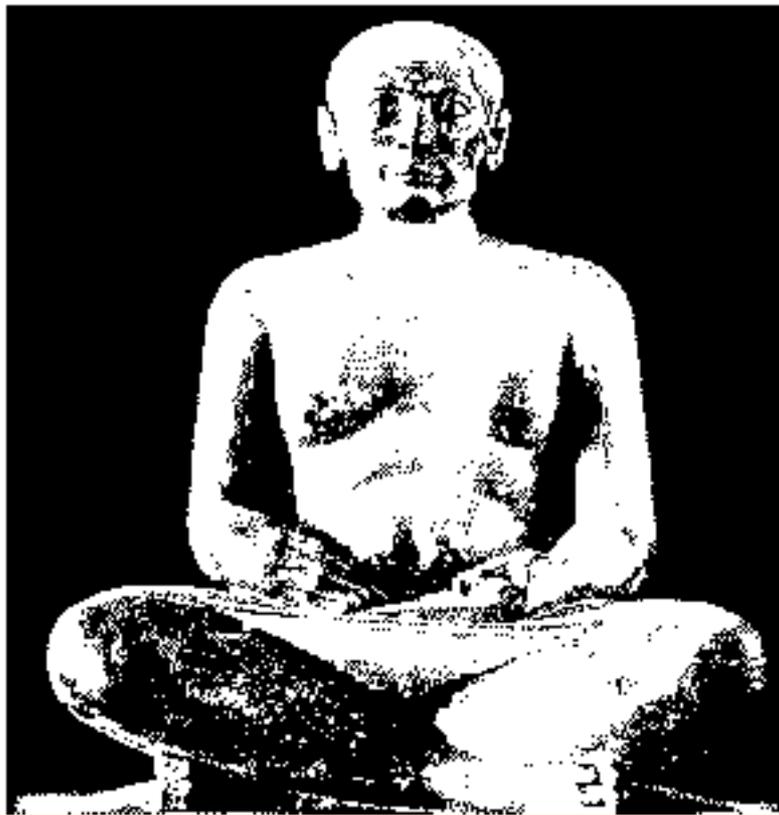
Images

Scribe's Tools



This first-century A.D. Roman pen and ink pot were excavated from the Tiber River. (*The British Museum*)

Seated Egyptian Scribe



Vase Painting Depicting Writing on Papyrus Roll



Personal Colophons

We can gain an insight into the life of a scribe by the comments ([colophons](#)) they sometimes wrote in the margins or at the end of a manuscript.

"He who does not know how to write supposes it to be no labor; but though only three fingers write, the whole body labors."

"Writing bows one's back, thrusts the ribs into one's stomach, and fosters a general debility of the body."

"As travellers rejoice to see their home country, so also is the end of a book to those who toil [in writing]."

"The end of the book; thanks be to God!"

"O reader, in spiritual love forgive me, and pardon the daring of him who wrote, and turn his errors into some mystic good."

"There is no scribe who will not pass away, but what his hands have written will remain forever."

"Whoever says, 'God bless the soul of the scribe', God will bless his soul."

"Mercy be to him who wrote, O Lord, wisdom to those who read, grace to those who hear, salvation to those who own. Amen."

"Write nothing with thy hand but that which thou wilt be pleased to see at the resurrection."

"It is cold today." "That is natural; it is winter." "The lamp gives a bad light." "It is time for us to begin to do some work." "Well, this vellum is certainly heavy!" "Well, I call this vellum thin!" "I feel quite dull today; I don't know what's wrong with me."

"Fool and knave, can't you leave the old reading alone and not alter it!"

"I adjure you who shall copy out this book, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by his glorious advent when he comes to judge the living and the dead, that you compare what you transcribe, and correct it carefully against this manuscript from which you copy; and also that you transcribe this adjuration and insert it in the copy."

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Paleography

Paleography is the study of ancient writing. It technically involves the analysis of the handwriting (script) of the ancient manuscripts. The paleographer studies such things as the angles of strokes, density of ink and its composition, and the general style as compared with



other handwriting. Such study enables the scholar to detect different handwriting which in some cases may mean a different person has taken over the task of copying or in other cases it represents the work of a corrector of the text. By comparing handwriting styles and other features of a manuscript, the paleographer may be able to date a manuscript.

Other aspects of paleography include the material which was used for writing, the format of those texts, and also the work of those who copied texts preserving the knowledge of antiquity for the sake of posterity.

In the ancient Mediterranean world, people wrote on such items as clay tablets, stone, bone, wood (wood with a layer of wax), leather, various metals, potsherds (ostraca), papyrus, and parchment. The most widely used of this epigraphic potpourri were [papyrus](#) and [parchment](#).

Writing not only involves the material upon which one writes, but also the way in which that material is formed. The writing format is controlled by such factors as how much room it takes up and its ease of use and manipulation. There were two main formats in the Greco-Roman world, the [roll](#) and the [codex](#). Those who committed themselves to the task of copying -- whether paid professionals or monks in monasteries -- are referred to as [scribes](#).

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Ancient Writing Materials

In the ancient Mediterranean world, people wrote on such items as clay tablets, stone, bone, wood (wood with a layer of wax), leather, various metals, potsherds (ostraca), papyrus, and parchment. The most widely used of this epigraphic potpourri were [papyrus](#) and [parchment](#).

An important group of manuscripts that pre-date the New Testament are the [Dead Sea Scrolls](#). The following is a sample of these manuscripts.

- [Psalms](#) *Tehillim*
 - [Phylactery](#) *Tefillin*
 - [The Community Rule](#) *Serkeh ha-Yahad*
 - [Calendrical Document](#) *Mishmarot*
 - [Some Torah Precepts](#) *Miqsat Ma`ase ha-Torah*
 - [Enoch](#) *Hanokh*
 - [Hosea Commentary](#) *Pesher Hoshe`a*
 - [Prayer for King Jonathan](#) *Tefillah li-Shlomo shel Yonatan ha-Melekh*
 - [Leviticus](#) *Va-Yikrah*
 - [Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice](#) *Shirot `Olat ha-Shabbat*
 - [Damascus Document](#) *Brit Damesek*
 - [The War Rule](#) *Serekh ha-Milhamah*
-

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Ancient Writing Formats

Writing not only involves the material upon which one writes, but also the way in which that material is formed. The writing format is controlled by such factors as how much room it takes up and its ease of use and manipulation. There were two main formats in the Greco-Roman world, the [roll](#) and the [codex](#).

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Roll

Description

When more than one sheet of [papyrus](#) was needed for a document, multiple sheets were pasted side-by-side and rolled up. A person wrote on the side which has horizontal fibers. This came to be known as the recto side while the opposite side is referred to as verso. A roll written on both sides is called an [opisthograph](#).

Image of Papyrus Roll



A man holds a papyrus roll and his wife holds a waxed writing tablet and a stylus in this first-century A.D. painting from a house in Pompeii. (*Scala/Art Resource, N.Y.*)

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Manuscript Transmission

Manuscript Replication

The task of writing, while a part of Hellenistic education, was primarily the occupation of professional writers generally known as "[scribes](#)." In order to preserve an aging and deteriorating document or to make an additional copy, a scribe was employed to copy the contents of the original onto a new surface. The scribe was paid according to the quality of the work and by the number of lines. A single scribe most likely read aloud to himself as he copied from the exemplar (the original) to the new document. In a scriptorium, the ancient "copy center," there could be a group of scribes who make multiple copies as a lector (reader) reads the exemplar for them to duplicate.

The ancient manuscript was a dynamic text in that it could be corrected and added to. Only under extreme scrutiny can the textual layers be distinguished as attributable to the original scribe or a later corrector.

Transmission Errors

While the study of transmission errors can be fascinating in itself, it is more than an object of curiosity. The identification of transmission errors may help determine the relationship of one manuscript to another or, even more importantly, determine the textual variant which most likely represents the reading of the original manuscript.

It may be said that a discussion of the transmission errors is not a criticism against the trustworthiness of the documents.

... in spite of the very real possibilities for corruption of the text in the course of its transmission, and the actual existence of many differences among the various manuscripts of the NT, the work of the copyists of the NT was, on the whole, done with great care and fidelity. It has, in fact, been seriously estimated that there are substantial variations in hardly more than a thousandth part of the entire text (an estimate by Fenton J. A. Hort, quoted with approval by Caspar Rene Gregory, *Canon and Text of the New Testament* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907], p. 528).

Finegan, *Encountering the New Testament Manuscripts*, p. 55.

Unintentional Variants

Scribal errors create variants in the textual tradition. One type is referred to as unintentional variants and have several causes.

- Errors Caused by Sight

Some errors seem to have been caused by a visual difficulty during the copy process.

- [Permutation](#)
- Parablepsis

Parablepsis ("looking by the side") refers to errors that occur when looking at the left or right margins of text.

- [Haplography](#)
 - [Dittography](#)
- [Errors Caused by Faulty Hearing](#)
- Errors Caused by Memory Lapse

During the process of reading from the exemplar and beginning to write it on the copy, a scribe could make mistakes as he repeats the line.

- [Substitution of Synonyms](#)
 - [Variations in Sequence](#)
 - [Transposition of Letters](#)
 - [Assimilation of Wording](#)
- [Errors Caused by Poor Judgment](#)

Intentional Variants

"They write down not what they find but what they think is the meaning; and while they attempt to rectify the errors of others, they merely expose their own." (Jerome, Epist. lxxi.5, *Ad Lucinum* concerning scribes copying his own works.).

These are some of the main causes of variants that can be described as intentional.

- [Spelling and Grammar Changes](#)
- [Harmonistic Alterations](#)

- [Corrections](#)
 - [Conflations](#)
 - [Doctrinal Alterations](#)
-

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Permutation

Explanation

Letters which resemble one another are difficult to distinguish. This is especially true if the letters were not written carefully in the manuscript which is being copied and if the copyist is hurrying, is working in poor light, or suffers from astigmatism. The copyist reads the text as representing a different word or combination of words and writes that down. When an unusual change is found in a manuscript involving letters which look alike, then it is possible that the error arose from permutation.

Examples

Acts 20:35

Three minuscule manuscripts (614, 1611, and 2138) have the same reading which goes back to an [uncial](#) ancestor written in [scriptio continua](#).

ΚΟΠΙΩΝΤΑ	ΕΔΕΙ	(kopionta edei)
—		
ΚΟΠΙΩΝΤΑΣ	ΔΕΙ	(kopiontas dei)
—		

I Timothy 3:16

The earlier manuscripts have a relative pronoun while many later manuscripts read the usual contraction for God.

ὅς	ος	(os)	"he who"
ἰσ	θεος	(theos)	"God"

II Peter 2:13

Some letters were easily confused if the cross-bars or the legs of the letter had not been written carefully.

Α <u>Π</u> Α <u>Τ</u> Α <u>Ι</u> Σ	απαταις	"dissipations" or "deceptions"
Α <u>Γ</u> Α <u>Π</u> Α <u>Ι</u> Σ	αγαταις	"love feasts"

They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their dissipation, carousing with you.

Rom. 6:5

If two lambdas (l) were written too close together, they could be mistaken for the letter mu (m) as in the case of Codex Augiensis (F 101) and Codex Boernerianus (G 012), both of the ninth century.

ΛΛΛΛ	αλλα	(alla)	"but; yet, certainly"
ΛΜΛ	αμα	(ama)	"together"

For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly (or "together") we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection (NASB)

II Peter 2:18

A lambda (l) followed closely by an iota (i) may look like the letter nu (n). Notice that the tau (t) and the gamma (g) have also been confused in this reading found in Codex Sinaiticus (4th cent.), Codex Ephraemi (5th cent.), and Codex Porphyrianus (9th cent.).

Ο <u>Ν</u> Ι <u>Γ</u> Ω <u>Σ</u>	ολιγως	(oligos)	"scarcely"
Ο <u>Ν</u> Τ <u>Ω</u> Σ	οντως	(ontos)	"really"

For, uttering loud boasts of folly, they entice with licentious passions of the flesh men who have barely escaped from those who live in error.

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Haplography

Explanation

The error of parablepsis (a looking by the side) is caused by homoeoteleuton (a similar ending of lines). The omission referred to as haplography occurs when text is missing owing to lines which have a similar ending in a manuscript.

Examples

John 17:15

There is a curious omission in Codex Vaticanus. The exemplar from which the scribe of this manuscript was copying probably had the following arrangement of lines.

ΟΥΚΕΡΩΤΩΙΝΑΛΛΗΡΗΣΑΥΤΟΥΣΕΚΤΟΥ
ΚΟΣΜΟΥΑΛΛΙΝΑΤΗΡΗΣΑΥΤΟΥΣΕΚΤΟΥ
ΠΟΝΗΡΟΥ

I do not pray that thou shouldst take them from the [world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the] evil one.

I Cor. 9:2

In Codex Alexandrinus, an entire verse is missing because two lines end with the similar phrase.

ΟΥΚΕΙΜΙΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΣΟΥΚΕΙΜΙΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΣΟΥΣΙΗΝΣΟΥΝΤΟΝ
ΚΥΡΙΟΝΗΜΩΝΕΦΡΑΚΑΟΤΟΕΡΓΟΝΜΟΥΥΜΕΙΣΕΣΤΕΕΝΚΥΡΙΩ
ΕΙΔΛΛΟΙΣΟΥΚΕΙΜΙΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΣΑΛΛΑΓΕΥΜΙΝΕΙΜΙΗΓΑΡ
ΣΦΡΑΓΙΣΜΟΥΤΗΣΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΗΣΥΜΕΙΣΕΣΤΕΕΝΚΥΡΙΩ

Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord? [If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.] This is my defense to those who would examine me.

Dittography

Explanation

The error of parablepsis (a looking by the side) is caused by homoeoteleuton (a similar ending of lines). Dittography is when a word or group of words is picked up a second time by the scribe and as a result the same line is copied twice when it only appears once.

Example

Acts 19:34

The phrase "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians" appears twice in codex Vaticanus while it only appears once in other manuscripts.

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Errors Caused by Faulty Hearing

Explanation

It is easy for someone with perfect hearing to hear incorrectly when words are confused because of similarly sounding letters. The scriptorium -- the ancient "copy center" -- worked by having one person dictate to a group of scribes who produced the copied manuscripts. Even when a scribe copied a manuscript alone, he would have read a portion out loud and then written it down. During the time from reading a text to writing it down, errors are bound to happen. Writing down something that sounds the same as that which was read is a common error that is detectable.

Examples

Variants Chart

Variants Caused by Similarly Sounding Letters

Letter	Homophones	Text	Homophones	Text
ω ο	εχωμεν εχομεν	Rom 5:1	ωθε οθε	Luke 16:25
αι ε	ερχεσθαι ερχεσθε	Luke 14:17	ζηλουσθε ζηλουσθαι	Gal. 4:18
ου υ	λουσαντι λυσαντι	Rev. 1:5		

Itacisms

Itacisms η ι υ ει οι υι η

There are a group of vowels and diphthongs (vowel combination) that came to be pronounced alike. This kind of error is referred to as an *itacism* when one of the seven is confused with another. In the following examples, notice the underlined letters in the Greek, which are the itacisms, and then see how it affects the English translation.

1 Cor. 15:54

ΚΑΤΕΠΟΘΗΘΑΝΑΤΟΣΕΙΝΙΚΟΣ

"Death is swallowed up in victory."

ΚΑΤΕΠΟΘΗΘΑΝΑΤΟΣΕΙΝΕΙΚΟΣ

"Death is swallowed up in conflict."

Rev. 4:3

A strange reading is found in codex Sinaiticus and Codex Alexandrinus which was caused by

ΚΑΙΙΡΙΣΚΥΚΛΟΘΕΝΤΟΥΘΡΟΝΟΥΟΜΟΙΟΣΟΡΑΣΕΙΣΜΑΡΑΓΔΙΝΩ

"and a rainbow encircled the throne that looked like an emerald."

ΚΑΙΙΕΡΕΙΣΚΥΚΛΟΘΕΝΤΟΥΘΡΟΝΟΥΟΜΟΙΟΣΟΡΑΣΕΙΣΜΑΡΑΓΔΙΝΩ

"and priests encircled the throne that looked like an emerald."

an itacism.

Matt. 2:6

Certain consonants also were interchanged because they sounded alike. In this case, the closing letter of one form and the opening letter of the next (k & s) when combined form the sound of the single letter (as in x). It can be represented as "ek sou" or "ex ou".

ΕΚΟΥΓΑΡΕΞΕΛΕΥΣΕΤΑΙΗΓΟΥΜΕΝΟΣ

"For from you a leader shall come"

ΕΞΟΥΓΑΡΕΞΕΛΕΥΣΕΤΑΙΗΓΟΥΜΕΝΟΣ

"For from whom a leader shall come"

I Thess. 2:7

This is another instance in which ending sounds can become combined with the beginning sounds of the next form. Here a closing consonant could also be the opening consonant of the next form. A scribe would not be able to hear the difference.

ΕΓΕΝΗΘΗΜΕΝΗΠΙΟΙ (egenēthēmen ēpioi)

"we were gentle"

ΕΓΕΝΗΘΗΜΕΝΗΠΙΟΙ (egenēthēmen nēpioi)

"we were babes"

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Errors Caused by Mental Lapse

Substitution of Synonyms

Explanation

From the moment a [scribe](#) read or heard the phrase he was to copy down until he finished writing it out, there was a danger that what he held in memory could become distorted in some way. One way seems to have been writing down a synonym for a word that he was supposed to copy. In this case, perhaps the scribe was more conscious of the sense of what he was writing than the exact words themselves.

Example (Chart of Substitutions)

SUBSTITUTION OF SYNONYMS	
ΕΙΠΕΝ	ΕΦΗ
ΕΚ	ΑΠΟ
ΑΠΟ	ΕΚ
ΕΥΘΥΣ	ΕΥΘΕΩΣ
ΕΥΘΕΩΣ	ΕΥΘΥΣ
ΟΤΙ	ΔΙΟΤΙ
ΠΕΡΙ	ΥΠΕΡ
ΥΠΕΡ	ΠΕΡΙ
ΟΜΜΑΤΩΝ	ΟΦΘΑΛΜΩΝ

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Errors Caused by Mental Lapse

Variations in Sequence

Explanation

It appears that sometimes a scribe confused the sequence of words. In Greek, the word order is not crucial. There could appear a variation of the sequence without altering the sense of a phrase.

Example

Mark 1:5

In this example, the sequence of three words appear in manuscripts three different ways.

ΠΑΝΤΕΣΚΑΙ ΕΠΒΑΠΤΙΖΟΝΤΟ

And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

ΚΑΙ ΕΒΑΠΤΙΖΟΝΤΟ ΠΑΝΤΕΣ

And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized all by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

ΚΑΙ ΠΑΝΤΕΣ ΕΒΑΠΤΙΖΟΝΤΟ

And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and the people of Jerusalem; and they all were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

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Errors Caused by Mental Lapse

Transposition of Letters

Explanation

A totally different word can be formed by simply transposing a letter. The results can be devastating to the meaning of a passage.

Examples

John 5:39

Sometimes a transposition of letters can result in a completely different word being written which totally destroys the sense of the passage. In this example the scribe of Codex Bezae has

ΚΑΙ ΕΚΕΙΝΑΙ ΕΙΣ ΙΝΑ ΙΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥΣ ΑΙ ΠΕΡΙ ΕΜΟΥ

And they (the Scriptures) are the ones testifying concerning me.

ΚΑΙ ΕΚΕΙΝΑΙ ΕΙΣ ΙΝΑ ΙΑΜΑΡΤΑΝΟΥΣ ΑΙ ΠΕΡΙ ΕΜΟΥ

And they (the Scriptures) are the ones sinning concerning me.

made a real blunder.

[\[Home\]](#) [\[Assimilation of Wording\]](#) [\[Index\]](#)

Errors Caused by Mental Lapse

Assimilation of Wording

Explanation

[Scribes](#) who worked for many years in copying the same manuscripts (e.g. Biblical) became very familiar with the wording of the texts. This could account for some of the times when a phrase in a manuscript has included in it the wording from a parallel passage.

Examples

Matt. 19:17

The earlier manuscripts of Matthew contain this quotation of Jesus as being distinct from the other Synoptic Gospels (Mark 10:17; Luke 18:18). Yet later manuscripts have a variant reading which assimilates the wording from the parallel passages.

Why do you ask me about what is good? One there is who is good. --Matt. 19:17

Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. (assimilated to Mk. 10:17; Lk. 18:18)

N.B. It is impossible to determine whether this is unintentional assimilation or intentional harmonizing.

Col. 1:14

Some of the letters ascribed to Paul contain passages that closely parallel other of the Pauline letters. Assimilation often occurs.

In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:14)

In whom we have redemption through His blood the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7)

In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins through His blood (Col. 1:14 assimilating Eph. 1:7)

N.B. It is impossible to determine whether this is unintentional assimilation or intentional harmonizing.

[\[Home\]](#) [\[Errors Caused by Poor Judgment\]](#) [\[Index\]](#)

Errors Caused by Poor Judgment

Explanation

There are times when [scribes](#) inadvertently copy a marginal [gloss](#) right into the text itself. This shows that some scribes were not paying attention to what they were doing and perhaps did not even think about what they were writing.

Examples

II Cor. 8:4

In many [minuscule](#) manuscripts there is a variant apparently influenced by an assimilation of wording from 2 Cor. 6:1 (adding at the end of the verse the words *dexasthai umas*).

2Cor 8:4 μετα πολλης παρακλησεως δεομενοι ημων την χαριν και την κοινωνιαν της διακονιας της εις τους αγιους [δεξασθαι ημας]
 begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints --

2Cor 6:1 Συνεργουντες δε και παρακαλουμεν μη εις κενον την χαριν του θεου δεξασθαι υμας-
 Working together with him, then, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain.

[It seems that a scribe added a note in the margin which read "in many of the copies thus it is found." A scribe of a subsequent manuscript, according to J. A. Bengel (1687-1752), incorporated this comment directly into his text as though it were part of Paul's words.]

Luke 3:23-38

The fourteenth-century codex 109 of the Four Gospels was transcribed from a copy which must have had Luke's genealogy of Jesus in two columns. Instead of following the columns, the scribe copied across the columns with disastrous results. Of course, everyone is made the son of the wrong father. Worse than that, instead of ending with "...Adam, the son of God," this manuscript has God being the son of Aram and the source of the whole race is not God but Phares!

Intentional Variants

Spelling and Grammar Changes

Explanation

During the early centuries of the Common Era the spelling of many Greek words had not become standardized. The literati who revived a study of Classical Greek considered it necessary to improve the Hellenistic (or Koine, "common") Greek of the New Testament.

It is said that he (Tatian) was bold enough to alter some of the Apostle's expressions as though trying to rectify their phraseology.

Eusebius, *The History of the Church*, 4.29.6.

Example

Rev. 1:4

The book of Revelation is notorious for its grammatically defective Greek. In this verse, the author follows a preposition which takes the genitive case with the article in the nominative case. There are a few different ways in which scribes attempted to alleviate the syntax.

ἀπὸ [θεοῦ or κυρίου] ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος

from [God or the Lord] the one who is and who was and is to come.

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Intentional Variants

Harmonistic Alterations

Explanation

Since many scribes knew much of their Scriptures by heart, they recognized the places in which there are parallels or quotations which do not completely follow their antecedents. In order to harmonize these passages, they would sometimes alter the text to make it agree with the antecedent parallel or quotation.

Example

Luke 11:2-4

The shorter form of the Lord's Prayer in Luke was assimilated in many copies of Luke to agree with the longer form in Matt. 6:9-13. Note that the passage from Matthew given here does not contain the well-known final verse which has a weak manuscript authority ("For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, Amen").

Pray then like this: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our debts, As we also have forgiven our debtors; And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. (Matt. 6:9-13)

And he said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive every one who is indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation." (Luke 11:2-4)

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Intentional Variants

Corrections

Explanation

Scribes often felt it their duty to correct the text they were copying if they felt that there were historical or geographical conflicts in what was written.

Examples

Mark 1:2

The composite quotation from Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3 is introduced by the formula "As it is written in Isaiah the prophet." Later scribes (Codex Alexandrinus, Codex Washingtonensis, Family 13, Majority Text, Harclean Syriac, Bohairic Coptic) attempted to alleviate the discrepancy by changing the formula to read "...in the prophets."

Mark 8:31

Some copyists seemed to have been troubled by Mark's quotation of Jesus that he would rise again "after three days." They emended the text to read "on the third day." (Metzger, p. 199.)

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Intentional Variants

Conflations

Explanation

Rather than choosing between two variant readings for a text, many scribes decided to use both by conflating the variants. In this way, both readings would be preserved.

Example

Luke 24:53

Luke ends with the statement that the disciples "were continually in the temple blessing God." This is supported by P75, Codex Vaticanus, Codex Sinaiticus, and others. Codex Bezae has "praising" instead of "blessing." There are a number of manuscripts that have the conflation "praising and blessing" (e.g. codices Alexandrinus and Washingtonensis).

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Intentional Variants

Doctrinal Alterations

Explanation

The Church Fathers repeatedly accuse the heretics of corrupting the Scriptures in order to support their special views. For example, Marcion, in the mid-second century, expunged his copies of the Gospel of Luke of all references to the Jewish background of Jesus. Either a scribe eliminated or altered what was potentially damaging to his own views or introduced alterations which would support his view.

Examples

John 7:8

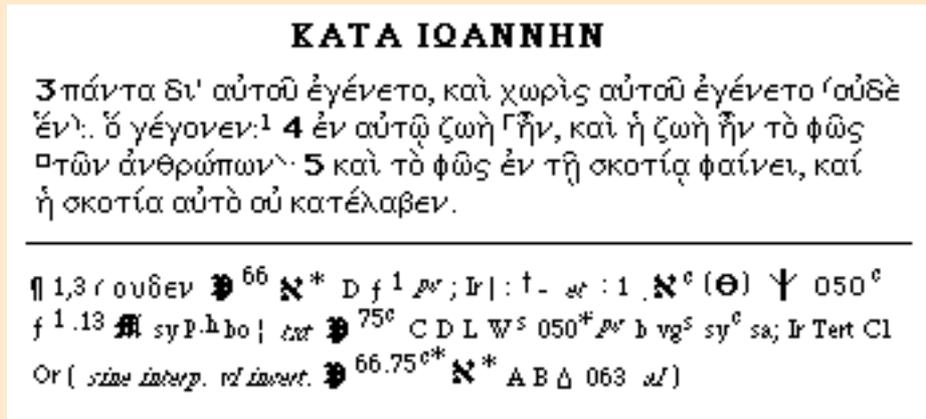
Although in this verse Jesus states that he is not going to the feast, he seems to have changed his mind after his brothers leave (v. 10). It seems to suggest that Jesus either lied to them about going to the feast or went back on his prior decision. In any case, scribes were struck by the possible inconsistency and in order to alleviate it, changed the "not" to "not yet" which also appears in a later clause.

Luke 23:32

To avoid the implication in this text that Jesus was also a criminal, most Greek witnesses have changed the sequence of words to solve the difficulty. Of the modern translations, the Revised Standard Version, the New American Standard Bible and the New International Version all follow the largest number of manuscripts instead of the stronger support based on antiquity and on internal evidence.

Modern Critical Text

The modern critical text contains a system of notations within the printed text which point to a special kind of footnote called a *critical apparatus*. The following image gives an example of this. This is the section under analysis in the [Example of Textual Criticism](#).



In order to decipher the notes in the critical apparatus, you may either place the cursor over the symbols in the critical apparatus or click on the individual characters. If you click on the characters, you will be brought to the description of that object in the table below. To return to viewing the apparatus, click on the up arrow icon to the left.

	¶ 1,3	Chapter 1, verse 3
	r	The words enclosed between these two signs are replaced by other words in a part of the tradition.
	ουθεν	This is the variant which some texts have.
	P ⁶⁶	Papyrus 66, Second Century
	S [*]	Codex Sinaiticus, Fourth Century
	D	Codex Bezae, Sixth Century
	f ¹	A family of manuscripts which is valued as one witness.

	⸰ ^e	<i>pauci</i> (a few): A few other witnesses.
	Ir	Church Father: Irenaeus, Second Century
	:	A punctuation variant is marked by : :1, etc.
	†	The dagger indicates in the Nestle-Aland 26th edition where readings which stood in the earlier Nestle's text are now in the apparatus.
	et	<i>eti</i> (also)
	: 1	A punctuation variant is marked by : :1, etc.
	Ⲛ ^c	Codex Sinaiticus, corrector
	(⊖)	The parenthetical citation of witnesses in the critical apparatus indicates that these witnesses attest unequivocally the readings in question, but that they also exhibit certain negligible variations which the restrictions of space preclude describing in detail. Codex Koridethi, Ninth Century
	Ψ	Codex Athous Laurae, Ninth Century
	050 ^c	050, corrector, Ninth Century
	f 1.13	A family of manuscripts which is valued as one witness.
	Ⲛ	Majority Text
	sy P.h	sy refers to the Syriac versions: p is the Peshitta (5th cent.) and h is the Harclean (6th cent.).
	bo	The Bohairic is a Coptic version of the New Testament.
		The different readings in a single instance of variation are separated by a broken vertical line.

 txt	The witnesses for the reading printed in the text are preceded by the sign txt (= textus).
 75 ^c	Papyrus 75, late second century. The superscript c refers to a correction in the text.
 C	Codex Ephraemi, fourth century.
 D	Codex Bezae, sixth century.
 L	Codex Regius, eighth century.
 W ^s	Codex Washingtonensis, supplement, fifth century
 050 [*]	050, Ninth Century
 : <i>pc</i>	<i>pauci</i> (a few): A few other witnesses.
 b	Old Latin witness
 vg ^s	The Sixtine edition of the Curetonian Syriac version, fifth century.
 sa;	The Coptic version called Sahidic.
 Ir	Church Father: Irenaeus, Second Century
 Tert	Church Father: Tertullian, Third Century
 Cl	Church Father: Clement of Alexandria, Second Century
 Or	Church Father: Origen, Third Century
 <i>sine interp. of insert.</i>	Without punctuation or uncertain.
 66	Papyrus 66, Second Century

 .75 ^{c*}	Papyrus 75, late second century. The superscript c refers to a correction in the text.
 Ⲛ*	Codex Sinaiticus, Fourth Century
 Ⲁ	Codex Alexandrinus, Fifth Century
 B	Codex Vaticanus, Fourth Century
 ⲁ	Codex Sangallensis, Ninth Century
 063	063, Ninth Century
 ⲛ	<i>alii</i> , others

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Textual Criticism

Brief History of Textual Criticism

The method of textual criticism which has been generally practised by editors of classical Greek and Latin texts involves two main processes, recension and emendation. Recension is the selection, after examination of all available material, of the most trustworthy evidence on which to base a text. Emendation is the attempt to eliminate the errors which are found even in the best manuscripts.

The application of critical methods in the editing of classical texts was developed principally by three German scholars, Friedrich Wolf (1759-1824), one of the founders of classical philology, Immanuel Bekker (1785-1871), and Karl Lachmann (1793-1851). Bekker devoted his long life to the preparation of critical editions of Greek texts. Bekker collated some 400 manuscripts, grouped existing manuscripts of an author into families where one was derived from another, and published sixty volumes of improved editions of Greek authors. Lachmann went further than Bekker, showing how, by comparison of manuscripts, it is possible to draw inferences as to their lost ancestors or archetypes, their condition, and even their pagination.

The basic principle which underlies the process of constructing a stemma, or family tree, of manuscripts is that, *apart from accident, identity of reading implies identity of origin*. Often, however, difficulties hinder the construction of a stemma of manuscripts. A disturbing element enters when mixture has occurred, that is, when a copyist has had two or more manuscripts before him and has followed sometimes one, sometimes the other; or, as sometimes happened, when a scribe copied a manuscript from one exemplar and corrected it against another. To the extent that manuscripts have a "mixed" ancestry, the genealogical relations among them become progressively more complex and obscure to the investigator.

Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, pp. 156-159.

Principles of Textual Criticism

Canons of Tischendorf

Lobegott Friedrich Constantin von Tischendorf (1815-1874)

The text is to be sought from the most ancient evidence, meaning especially the oldest Greek manuscripts; (2) a reading peculiar to a single document is to be considered suspect; (3) an obvious scribal error is to be rejected even though well supported in the manuscripts; (4) in parallel passages the tendency of copyists would be to make the readings agree, and therefore, in such passages, testimonies are to be preferred which are not in precise accordance; (5) that reading is to be preferred which could have given occasion to the others, or which appears to comprise the elements of the others; and (6) that reading is to be preferred which accords with NT Greek or with the style of the individual writer.

(Summarized by Finegan, *Encountering NT Manuscripts*, p. 63)

Metzger Criteria

- I. EXTERNAL EVIDENCE, involving considerations bearing upon:
 1. The date of the witness or, rather, of the type of text.
 2. The geographical distribution of the witnesses that agree in supporting a variant.
 3. The genealogical relationship of texts and families of witnesses: Witnesses are weighed rather than counted.
- II. INTERNAL EVIDENCE, involving two kinds of probabilities:
 - i. Transcriptional Probabilities depend upon considerations of palaeographical details and the habits of scribes. Thus:
 1. In general the more difficult reading is to be preferred.
 2. In general the shorter reading is to be preferred.
 3. That reading is to be preferred which stands in verbal dissidence with the other.
 - ii. Intrinsic Probabilities depend upon considerations of what the author was more likely to have written, taking into account:
 1. the style and vocabulary of the author throughout the book,
 2. the immediate context,
 3. harmony with the usage of the author elsewhere, and, in the Gospels,
 4. the Aramaic background of the teaching of Jesus,
 5. the priority of the Gospel according to Mark, and
 6. the influence of the Christian community upon the formulation and transmission of the passage in question.

Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, pp. 209-210.

Twelve Basic Rules of Aland/Aland

1. Only one reading can be original, however many variant readings there may be.
2. Only the readings which best satisfies the requirements of both external and internal criteria can be original.
3. Criticism of the text must always begin from the evidence of the manuscript tradition and only afterward turn to a consideration of internal criteria.
4. Internal criteria (the context of the passage, its style and vocabulary, the theological environment of the author, etc.) can never be the sole basis for a critical decision, especially when they stand in opposition to the external evidence.
5. The primary authority for a critical textual decision lies with the Greek manuscript tradition, with the version and Fathers serving no more than a supplementary and corroborative function, particularly in passages where their underlying Greek text cannot be reconstructed with absolute certainty.
6. Furthermore, manuscripts should be weighed, not counted, and the peculiar traits of each manuscript should be duly considered. However important the early papyri, or a particular uncial, or a minuscule may be, there is no single manuscript or group of manuscripts that can be followed mechanically, even though certain combinations of witnesses may deserve a greater degree of confidence than others. Rather, decisions in textual criticism must be worked out afresh, passage by passage (the local principle).
7. The principle that the original reading may be found in any single manuscript or version when it stands alone or nearly alone is only a theoretical possibility. Any form of eclecticism which accepts this principle will hardly succeed in establishing the original text of the New Testament; it will only confirm the view of the text which it presupposes.
8. The reconstruction of a stemma of readings for each variant (the genealogical principle) is an extremely important device, because the reading which can most easily explain the derivation of the other forms is itself most likely the original.
9. Variants must never be treated in isolation, but always considered in the context of the tradition. Otherwise there is too great a danger of reconstructing a "test tube text" which never existed at any time or place.
10. There is truth in the maxim: *lectio difficilior lectio potior* ("the more difficult reading is the more probable reading"). But this principle must not be taken too mechanically, with the most difficult reading (*lectio difficilima*) adopted as original simply because of its degree of difficulty.
11. The venerable maxim *lectio brevior lectio potior* ("the shorter reading is the more probable reading") is certainly right in many instances. But here again the principle cannot be applied mechanically.
12. A constantly maintained familiarity with New Testament manuscripts themselves is the best training for textual criticism. In textual criticism the pure theoretician has often done more harm than good.

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, pp. 275-276.

Hypothetical Text Types

Introduction

New Testament manuscripts can be classified according to certain major types or families. A family is the name given to a group of texts with a common ancestor. These texts are discovered through the deviations common to a group of manuscripts. For example, the errors made in copying the text in Alexandria were perpetuated in later reproductions. Classification according to families is the basic point of departure in the actual work of textual reconstruction. One reading of a text that represents a good family may provide more support for the original text than a dozen readings from a poor family. Caution is required at this point lest a generalization become misleading. Families are not represented by entire manuscripts but often only segments of them. The modern practice of copying an entire manuscript of the New Testament at once was seldom followed in antiquity. Thus, several families of texts may be represented in a single manuscript. Four types of families of texts have been sufficiently defined to merit discussion.

The Alexandrian Text

This text arose in Egypt and is generally conceded to be the most important one. Westcott and Hort, who named this the Neutral Text, thought that Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus had preserved a pure form of the Alexandrian type of text. It is now evident that these manuscripts had been corrected by later scribes, but they are the most ancient uncials and preserve the Alexandrian text at an early stage. Some of the important papyrus manuscripts also represent this family.

The Byzantine Text

This family has been designated by many names. It is called Byzantine because it was adopted in Constantinople and used as the common text in the Byzantine world. It was produced in Antioch, Syria, under the direction of Lucian near the beginning of the fourth century and has been called the Syrian or Antiochene text. It was used almost universally after the eighth century. Both Erasmus, who created the first printed Greek text, and the translators of the King James Version of the Bible used this type of text. It was produced by combining earlier texts and has less value than the Alexandrian text. A (Codex Alexandrinus, fifth century) and C (Codex Ephraemi, fifth century) are the oldest representatives of the Byzantine family. A great majority of late uncials and minuscules belong to this group.

The Western Text

This family of texts was closely related to the church in the west, particularly in North Africa. Although it can probably be traced to the second century, its value has been disputed. It was used by the early church fathers. Its age would seem to suggest great importance, but there are clear indications that it was not carefully preserved. It is best represented by the Old Latin

translations, by the Syriac versions, and the church fathers. Its most famous representative is manuscript D (Codex Bezae) for the book of Acts.

The Caesarean Text

This family of texts was widely used in Caesarea from which it derived its name. It seems to have arisen out of the Alexandrian text but was also mixed with the Western text. Consequently, its value is limited. Metzger suggests that it is necessary to distinguish between two stages in its development, the pre-Caesarean and the Caesarean (Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 215). Some of its more prominent representatives are W (Washington Codex, fifth century), P45, and two groups of minuscules and lectionaries.

This material is based on R. C. Briggs, *Interpreting the New Testament Today: An Introduction to Methods and Issues in the Study of the New Testament*, (Nashville: Abingdon, 1982), pp. 45-47).

Example of Textual Criticism - John 1:3

The following example analyzes one textual problem that involves a single word. J. Finegan explores this in detail in his book *Encountering NT Manuscripts*. In addition to the individual graphics which illuminate the textual problem, there are also thirteen images of the manuscripts in question. For those who have difficulty deciphering the Greek, look at the page containing a table of the [Greek alphabet](#).

-
- Alexandrian Text Type
 - [Papyrus 66](#)
 - [Papyrus 75](#)
 - [Codex Vaticanus](#)
 - Western Text Type
 - [Codex Sinaiticus](#)
 - [Codex Bezae](#)
 - [Codex Washingtonensis](#)
 - Byzantine Text Type
 - [Codex Alexandrinus](#)
 - [Codex 666](#)
 - [Text Critical Conclusions](#)
-

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Codex Sinaiticus

Codex Sinaiticus (01) Mid-Fourth Cent.



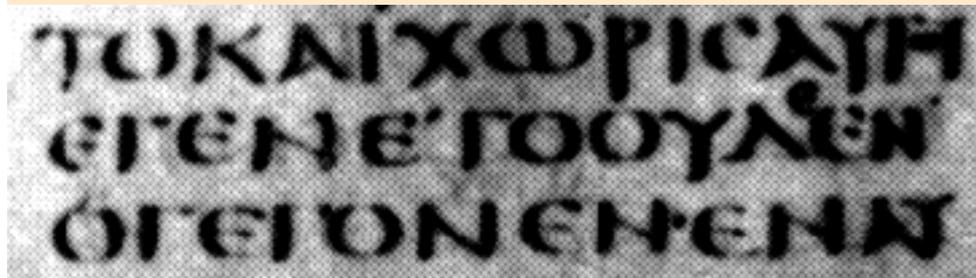
Although this manuscript is usually considered among the [Alexandrian](#) family of witnesses, in the Gospel of John (1:1-8:38), it is regarded as transmitting a [Western Text](#).

Codex Sinaiticus was originally a complete Bible. The NT portion (148 leaves) is well preserved and includes the Letter of Barnabas and the Shepherd of Hermas.

The leaves measure 15"x14". The letters were written in brown ink, four columns per page, with 48 lines to a column, and usually 12-16 letters perline. The text is written on the ruled lines in *scriptio continua* with some punctuation (high and middle points and colon). Some letters are crowded in a smaller size at the end of a line. Often, sections of text end in mid-line; a new section begins at the beginning of the next line and is moved into the margin slightly.

Scholars have identified three scribes as having produced the manuscript. The one who was involved with the NT is labeled Scribe A. It can be shown that the scribe of the OT copied the manuscript from dictation in part of that portion. Likewise, it is held that the NT portion was copied down from a written exemplar. Taken altogether, perhaps as many as nine correctors worked on the manuscript from the fourth to the twelfth century.

The Gospel of John begins at the top of the left column. Notice the way in which a new section is treated in the manuscript.



	<p>ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΟΥΔΕΝ Ο ΓΕΓΟΝΕΝ ΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ</p>	
	<p>ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ Θ̄Ν Π̄Α ΤΑ ΔΙ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝε ΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΧΩΡΙΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΟΥΔΕΝ^ε Ο ΓΕΓΟΝΕΝ ΕΝ ΑΥ ΤΩ ΖΩΗ ΕΣΤΙΝ</p>	<p>Ⲭ All things came into being through him; and apart from him nothing came into being that has come into being.</p> <p>Ⲭ^c All things came into being through him; and apart from him no single thing came into being. What has come into being is life in him. And the life was the light of men.</p>

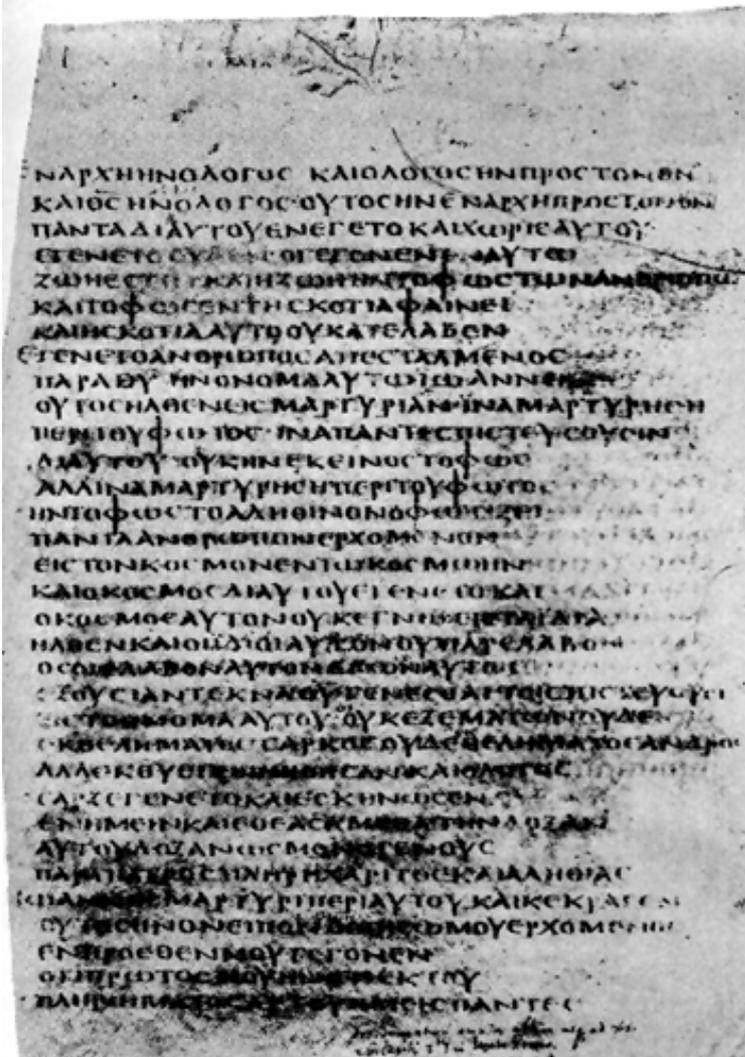
In line nine of column one, notice that a letter epsilon (e) has been placed between the delta (D) and epsilon (E). Note arrow 1 to see the precise position. At the end of the line, one can see a faint high point that probably was also inserted later (arrow 2). Certainly the mid point in the next line (line 2 below) was squeezed in by the later corrector (arrow 3).

What we can conclude is that originally the text had the same reading as Papyrus 66. The corrector, however, has adapted the text resulting in the same reading as the corrected text of Papyrus 75 and the text of Codex Vaticanus.

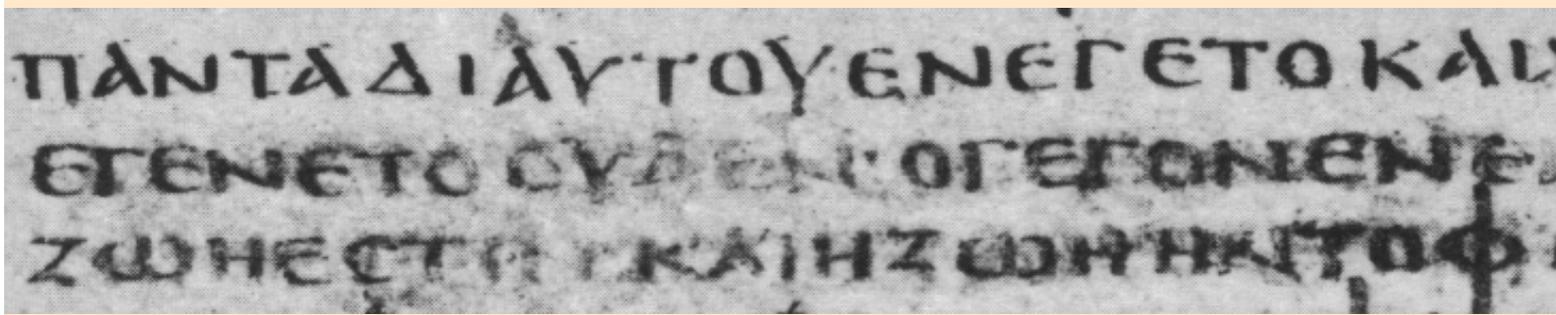
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Codex Bezae

Codex Bezae or Cantabrigiensis (D, 05) Sixth Century



This manuscript of the four gospels (Matthew, John, Luke, Mark) and some of Acts contains 406 leaves each measuring 10 x 8 with a single column of text. The left-hand page is the Greek and the right-hand side is Latin (bilingual manuscript). There are 33 colometric lines on each page -- each line ends with a natural pause. The first three lines of each book is written with red ink and the remainder with brown ink. The high and middle points are used as punctuation along with the colon. A later hand has added liturgical marginal notations for the beginning (archi) and the ending (telos) of readings. There is evidence of as many as nine correctors who have worked on the manuscript between the sixth and twelfth century.



ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΝΕΓΕΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΧΩΡΙΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ
 ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΟΥΔΕΝ· Ο ΓΕΓΟΝΕΝ ΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ
 ΖΩΗ ΕΣΤΙΝ· ΚΑΙ Η ΖΩΗ ΗΝ ΤΟ ΦΩΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΩΝ

1
 ΔΙΑ

2
 ΟΥ

ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙΑ^Α ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΝΕΓΕΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΧΩΡΙΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ
 ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΟΥΔΕΝ· Ο ΓΕΓΟΝΕΝ ΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ
 ΖΩΗ ΕΣΤΙΝ· ΚΑΙ Η ΖΩΗ ΗΝ ΤΟ ΦΩΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΩΝ

All things came into being through him; and apart from him
 nothing came into being. What has come into being in him
 is life. And the life was the light of humanity.

In line three a corrector has written an unnecessary alpha (A) (arrow 1) in order to complete a preposition whose final alpha is normally elided when it precedes a word beginning with a vowel. He does not do this in subsequent lines.

The scribe has transposed the letters of "egeneto" to form "enegeto." No corrector seems to have noticed.

The phrase under scrutiny in this example is punctuated with a mid point (arrow 2). In wording, Codex Bezae agrees with Papyrus 66 and Codex Sinaiticus. In punctuation, it conforms to the corrector of Papyrus 75 and the corrector of Codex Sinaiticus.

[\[Home\]](#) [\[Codex Washingtonensis\]](#) [\[Index\]](#)

Codex Washingtonensis

Codex Washingtonensis (W, 032) 5th/7th Cent.



Note: The box around the text is not part of the original manuscript.

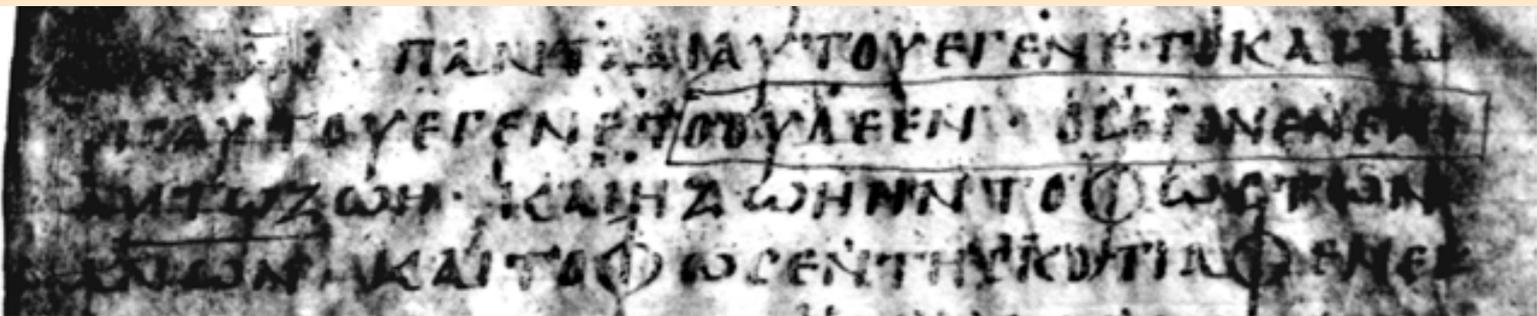
Codex Washingtonensis, sometimes called Codex Freerianus or most simply, the Washington Ms. of the Gospels, consists of 187 leaves made up from 26 quires. Each page is about 8.3 by 5.5 inches. The

sloping uncial characters are written in a single column of 30 lines per page with 27 - 30 letters to a full line. Paragraphs are indicated by enlarged letters projecting into the margin and sometimes accompanied by a paragraph marker. There are also marks in the left margin to signal a quotation from the OT. Sometimes a middle point (almost a high point) is used as punctuation along with the colon. Instead of punctuation, the scribe frequently left a small blank space between phrases. The apostrophe is placed after proper nouns, words ending in a consonant other than a Nu (N) or Sigma (S), and also words whose final vowel is omitted.

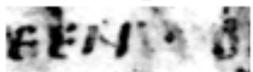
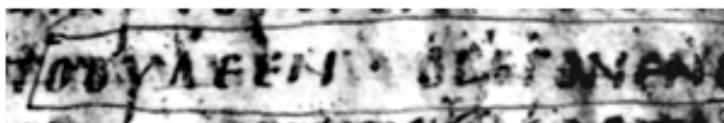
Paleographers have deduced that the original scribe corrected some of his own errors. He was followed by another who made revisions. Finally, two later hands made a few additional changes.

With regard to the hypothetical text types, this codex is variegated in its representation. It is conjectured that the exemplar or a distant ancestor that the scribe was copying from was one that had been pieced together out of fragments of several manuscripts. Therefore, readings representative of all of the major text types can be found in this manuscript.

The first quire of John is even more baffling. The handwriting is different in this one quire than in the rest of the manuscript. There are also two different correctors in this quire than have worked elsewhere in the text. There are also features of this quire which differ slightly from the rest. We can assume that this quire was added to the codex at a later date to replace one that was lost or perhaps mutilated. Although the greater part of the codex is dated to about the Fifth Century, this supplemental part (Wsupp) is placed in the Seventh Century.



W^{supp}



ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΧΩ
ΡΙΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΟΥΔΕ ΕΝ · Ο ΓΕΓΟΝΕΝ ΕΝ
ΑΥΤΩ ΖΩΗ · ΚΑΙ Η ΖΩΗ ΗΝ ΤΟ ΦΩΣ ΤΩΝ
ΑΝΩΝ ·

All things came into being through him; and a-part from him no single thing came into being. What has come into being in him (is or was) life. And the life was the light of humanity.

There is a clear punctuation mark with additional space on either side separating the two phrases as in the corrector of Papyrus 75 and the corrector of Codex Sinaiticus.

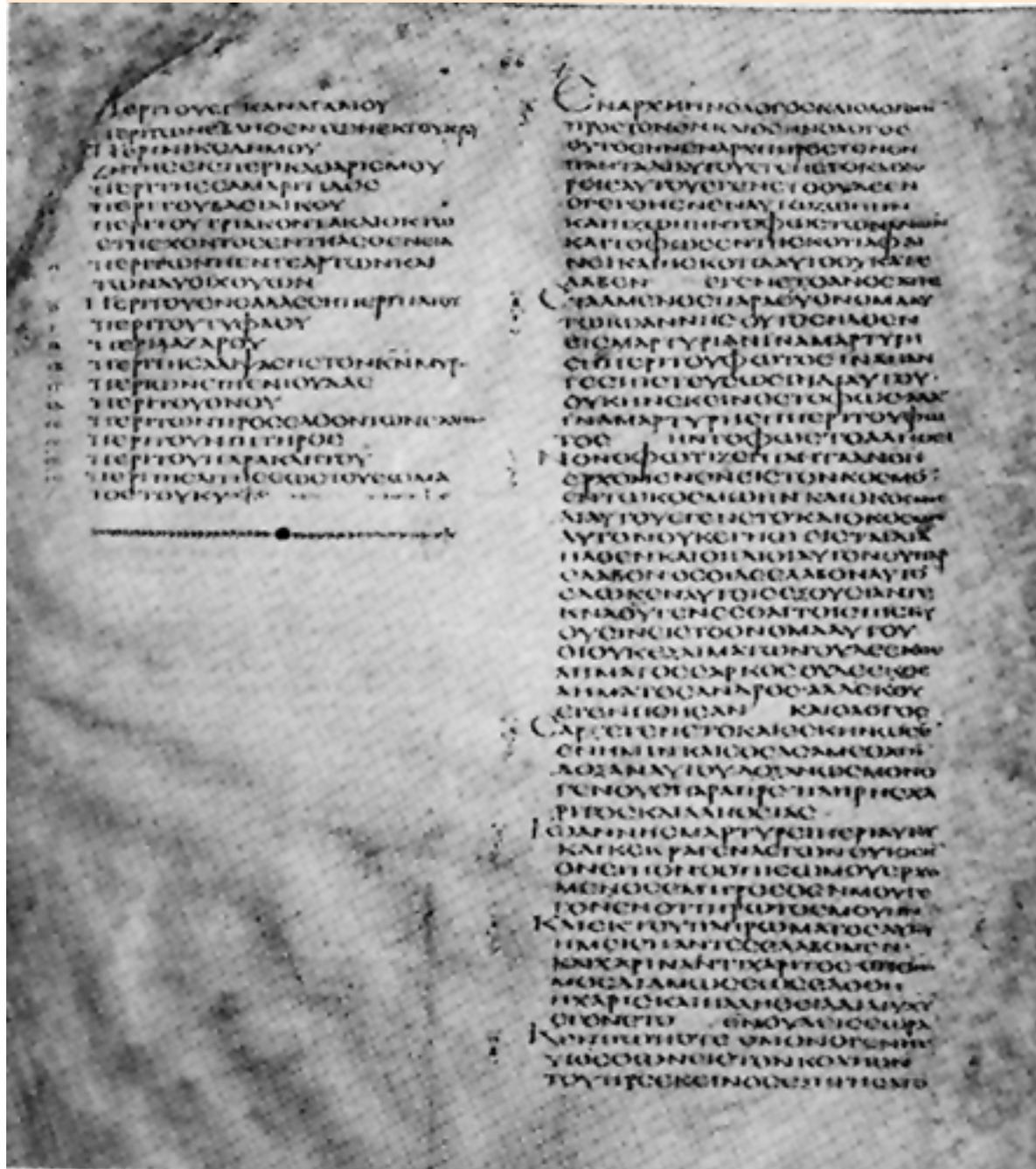
In the first scanned image of this page, you can see the ruled lines horizontally and vertically. The scribe

makes every attempt to stop at the right margin even if it breaks a word. Notice also how the letter Upsilon (looks like a Y) descends to the line below.

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Codex Alexandrinus

Codex Alexandrinus (A, 02) Fifth Century



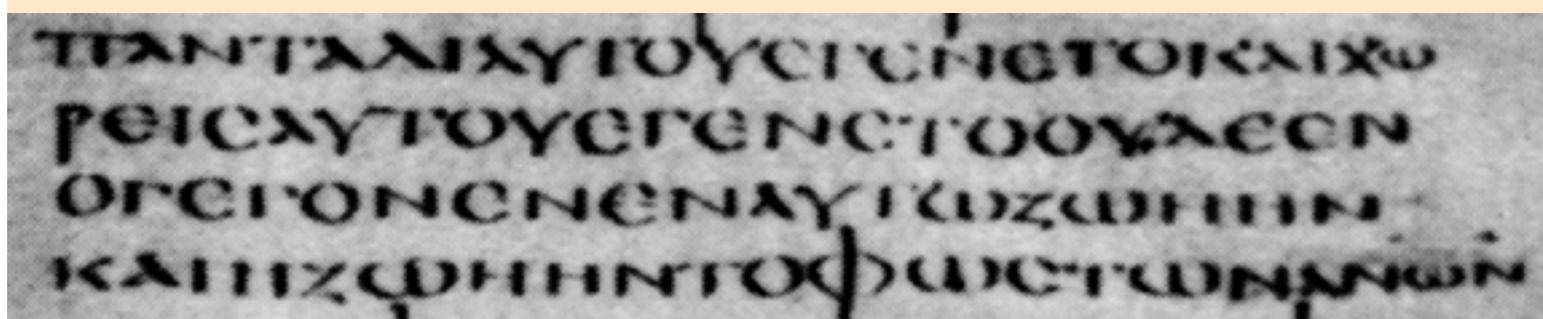
This codex consists of 773 parchment leaves measuring 12.6 by 10.4 inches. Virtually all of the OT (630 leaves) and NT (143) are preserved in the codex. Normally the quires are made up 8 leaves. The text is written in two columns per page with 46 - 52 lines each and 20 - 25 letters per line. The letters are written in a plain uncial script with the beginning lines of books in red

ink. Letters at the ends of lines are often smaller and crowded.

Sections start with larger letters set into the margin. A paragraph may actually start within a line but have the first letter of the next line pushed into the margin in a larger size. Words are written in *scriptio continua* and there are high and middle points for punctuation. Some of the NT books have a table of chapters. Titles do not appear until the end of a book in a colophon or panel tailpiece.

Although Codex Alexandrinus is largely an Alexandrian witness, it belongs to the Byzantine family (oldest example) in the text of the Gospels.

In the left column of the image above you can see the table of chapters for the Gospel of John, e.g. "Concerning the Wedding in Cana."



ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΧΩ
ΡΕΙΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΟΥΔΕ ΕΝ
Ο ΓΕΓΟΝΕΝ ΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΖΩΗ ΗΝ
ΚΑΙ Η ΖΩΗ ΗΝ ΤΟ ΦΩΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΝΩΝ

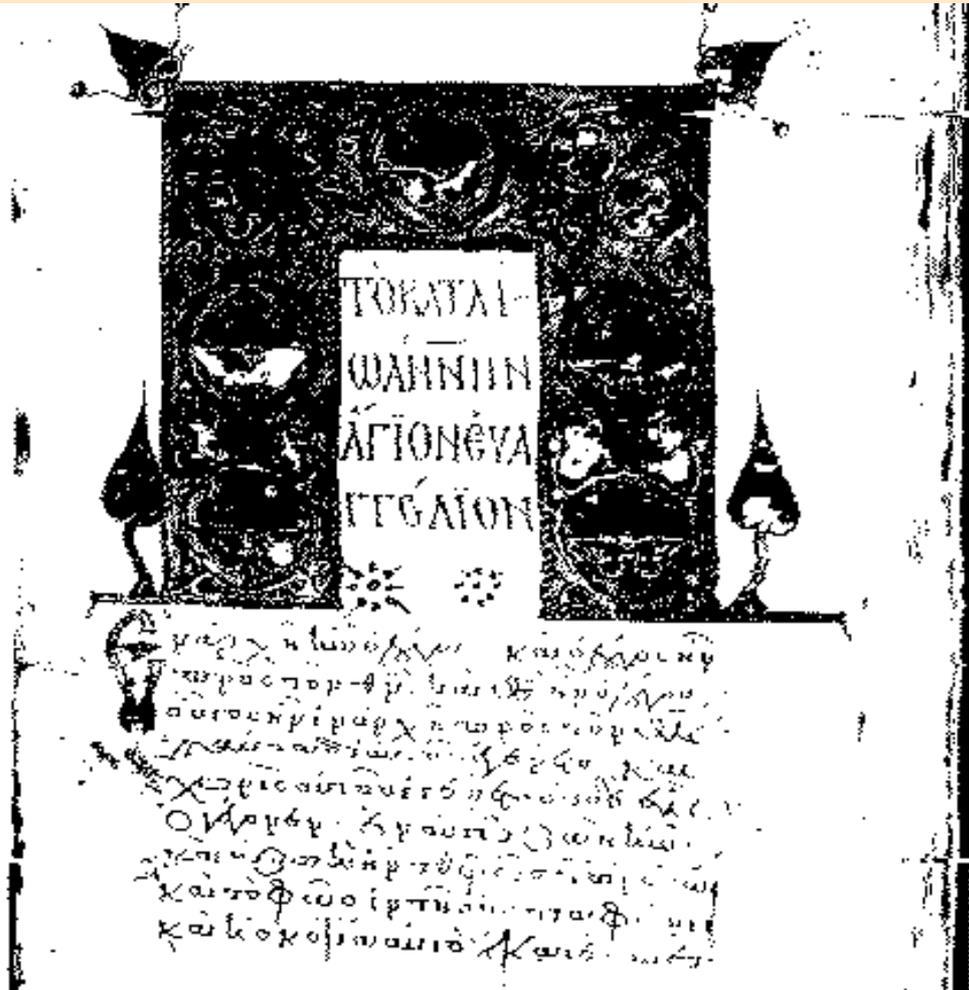
All things came into being through him; and apart from him no single thing came into being that has come into being. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

You may notice that there is a spelling variation in this passage ("choreis" instead of "choris"). There are no punctuation marks signifying a break in the phrases. On the basis of this text alone, we are unable to decide how the phrases break. Yet, by comparing this text to Codex 666 (Byzantine text), which has almost exactly the same line breaks and is punctuated, we can determine that a break probably should be placed where it is in the English translation below. Codex Alexandrinus supports the reading of Papyrus 75 and Codex Vaticanus.

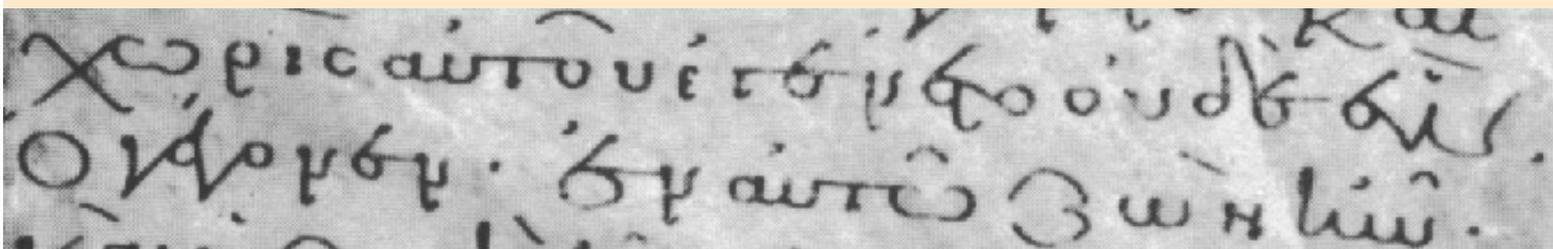
[\[Home\]](#) [\[Codex 666\]](#) [\[Index\]](#)

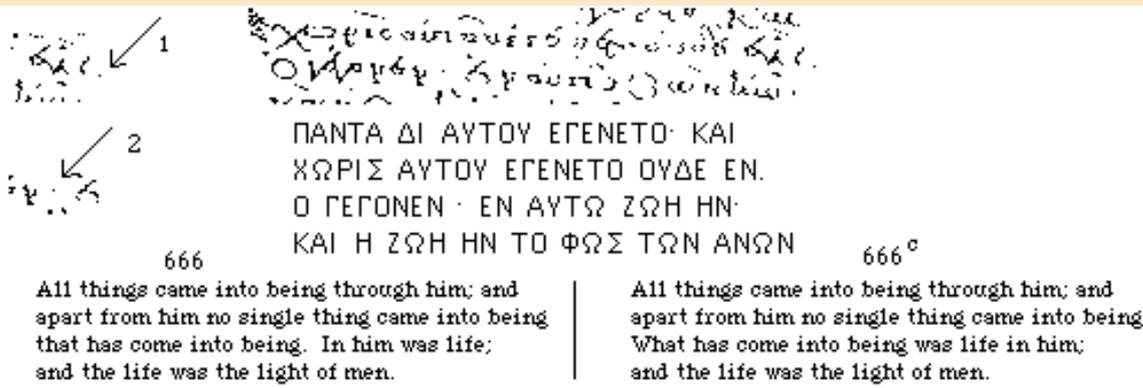
Codex 666

Codex 666 (Ms. Gr. 1) 12th or 13th Cent.



The writing in this manuscript is in minuscule script. It exists today in 37 quires with 294 leaves containing the four Gospels. The leaves measure approximately 8.3 by 6.0 inches. One column of text appears on each page with 23 or 24 lines of writing. Words are written in scriptio continua and have accents and breathings. Punctuation consists of high, middle, and low points, comma, and question mark. OT quotations are sometimes marked. The initial letters are written in red; initial letters at the beginnings of books appear in red, blue, and gold. For each gospel there is, at the beginning, a list of chapter titles for that gospel and a seated portrait of the author.





At the end of the Line 5 (arrow 1) there is a low point. But the next line has a mid point after only two words (arrow 2). The latter punctuation has blank space before and after it. Both are not grammatically possible. The prior punctuation appears at the end of the line and is more likely to have been added by a corrector. He did not bother to change the existing punctuation.

Notice that again we have the two words "oude en." The original text supports the reading of some of the other manuscripts regarding the wording, but is unique in its punctuation and wording. The corrected text is in agreement with the corrector of Papyrus 75, the corrector of Sinaiticus, and Codex Washingtonensis.

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Text Critical Conclusions

"oude en" or "ouden"

Which reading has the oldest attestation?

"oude en" "ouden" Explain your answer:

Which reading is more likely to have given rise to the other (intentionally or unintentionally)?

"oude en" "ouden" Explain your answer:

Which reading is shorter or less emphatic and is more likely then to have been original?

"oude en" "ouden" Explain your answer:

Which reading is less likely to have arisen out of a theological concern for added precision with regard to the created order (e.g. the Gnostics held that the material world was created by the Demiurge)?

"oude en" "ouden" Explain your answer:

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Exercise in Textual Criticism

Simulated Manuscripts

These four simulated manuscripts represent the type of editing required when dealing with ancient manuscripts. The "scribal errors" have been exaggerated in order to make them more obvious. Two of these manuscripts are copies of the original. One manuscript is a copy from these two. The fourth manuscript is a copy of one of the original two. It, therefore, will share similarities with the manuscript that is also related to one of the two exemplars. You are provided with something that you don't find in real life, the original text.

Directions: Try to divide the scriptio continua text into words and sentences adding punctuation. Pay attention to the errors that you encounter. Determine which variant may explain the other according to the rules of textual criticism. In real texts you may have been helped by the type of handwriting if it had been datable. You might try to create your own critical apparatus to your reconstructed text. Create a stemma showing the relationship of the texts. When you are finished analyzing the work of these hard of hearing, half-blind, sleepy, nitwit scribes who made [Codex Michigan](#), [Codex Indiana](#), [Codex Illinois](#), and [Codex Rhode Island](#), compare them to the [original text](#). Here's an [example](#) (PDF) of how you might go about understanding the relationship of the texts and recreate the text with a critical apparatus.

Codex Michigan

Codex Indiana

Codex Illinois

Codex Rhode Island

The Original Text

Praise Worthy

Virtuoso violinist Pinchas Zukerman was giving a master class to a group of young artists who had come to the Aspen Music Festival from the four corners of the world. The auditorium was filled with their peers and distinguished teachers and performers; the atmosphere was electric. To each of the talented performers in turn Zukerman offered friendly advice and encouragement, discussing their playing in detail, and invariably picking up his own violin to demonstrate finer points of technique and interpretation.

Finally came the turn of a young musician who performed brilliantly. When the applause subsided, Zukerman complimented the artist, then walked over to his own violin, caressed it, tucked it under his chin, paused a long moment, and then, without playing a note or uttering a word, gently placed it back in its case. Once more the applause broke out, and this time it was deafening, in recognition of the master, who could pay so gracious a compliment.

Victor Rangel-Ribeiro, *Reader's Digest*, August 1989, p. 76.

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A Table of Greek Manuscripts

Abbreviations given below.

ms. nr. cont.	saec.	bibliotheca	
*Papyrus 1 20 2	III	Philadelphia, Univ. of Penns., Univ. Mus., E 2746; P. Oxy.	Mt 1,1-9.12.14-
*Papyrus 2 15	VI	Firenze, Mus. Archeol., Inv. 7134	Jo 12,12-
*Papyrus 3 42 2323	VI/VII	Wien, Österr. Nat. Bibl., Pap. G.	Lc 7,36-45; 10,38-
*Papyrus 4 2,1.6-7; 35; 5,3-8; 5,30-6,16	III	Paris, Bibl. Nat., Suppl. Gr. 1120	Lc 1,58-59; 1,62- 3,8-4,2.29-32.34-
*Papyrus 5 16,14-30; 25	III	London, Brit. Libr., Inv. 782. 2484; P. Oxy. 208. 1781	Jo 1,23-31.33-40; 20,11-17.19-20.22-

*Papyrus 6 11,1-8.45-52	IV	Strasbourg, Bibl. Nat. et Univ., Pap. copt. 379.	Jo 10,1-2.4-7.9-10;
381.		382.384	
Papyrus 7 2	IV-VI(?)	olim: Kiev, Ukrain. Nat. Bibl., Petrov	Lc 4,1-
553			
*Papyrus 8 6,1-6.8-15	IV	Berlin, Staatl. Mus., Inv. 8683	Act 4,31-37; 5,2-9;
*Papyrus 9 17	III	Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard Univ., Semit. Mus., Inv. P. Oxy.	IJo 4,11-12.14-
3736;			
402			
*Papyrus 10 7	IV	Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard Univ., Semit. Mus., Inv. P. Oxy.	Rm I ,1-
2218;			
209			
*Papyrus 11 12.14; 3,1-3.5-6;	VII	Leningrad, Publ. Bibl., Gr. 258A	I Cor 1,17-22; 2,9- 4,3-5,5.7-8; 6,5-
9.11-18; 7,3-6.10-14			

*Papyrus 12 1,1 3b	III	New York, Pierpont Morgan Libr., Pap. Gr. 3; P. Amherst	Heb
*Papyrus 13 12,17 1292	III/IV	London, Brit. Libr., Inv. 1532 v; P. Oxy. 657; Firenze, Bibl. Laurenziana; PSI	Heb 2,14- 5,5; 10,8-22; 10,29- 11,13; 11,28 -
*Papyrus 14 8; 3,8-10.20	V	Sinai, Harris 14	I Cor 1,25-27; 2,6-8
*Papyrus 15 8,4 1008	III	Kairo, Egyptian Mus., JE 47423; P. Oxy.	I Cor 7,18-
*Papyrus 16 8 1009	III/IV	Kairo, Egyptian Mus., JE 47424; P. Oxy.	Ph 3,10-17; 4,2-8
*Papyrus 17 19 1078	IV	Cambridge, Univ. Libr., Add. 5893; P. Oxy.	Heb 9,12-
*Papyrus 18	III/IV	London, Brit. Libr., Tnv.	Apc 1,4-

7

2053v; P. Oxy.

1079

*Papyrus 19 IV/V Oxford, Bodl. Libr., Gr. bibl. Mt 10,32-11,5

d. 6 (P); P. Oxy.

1170

*Papyrus 20 III Princeton, Univ. Libr., AM Jc 2,19-3,9

4117; P. Oxy.

1171

*Papyrus 21 IV/V Allentown, Muhlenberg Coll., Mt 12,24-26.32-33

Theol. Pap. 3; P. Oxy.

1227

*Papyrus 22 III Glasgow, Univ. Libr., MS 2 - X. Jo 15,25-16,2.21-32

I; P. Oxy.

1228

*Papyrus 23 III Urbana, Univ. of Illinois, G. Jc 1,10-12.15-18

P. 1229; P. Oxy.

1229

*Papyrus 24 IV Newton Centre, Andover Theol. Apc 5,5-8; 6,5-8

School, Hill's Libr., OP

1230;

P. Oxy.

1230

*Papyrus 25
3.5-7.9-10

IV

Berlin, Staatl. Mus., Inv.

Mt 18,32-34; 19,1-

16388

*Papyrus 26
16

ca. 600

Dallas, Southern Meth. Univ.,

Rm 1,1-

Bridwell Libr.; P. Oxy.

1354

*Papyrus 27
8,33-9,3.5-9

III

Cambridge, Univ. Libr., Add.

Rm 8,12-22.24-27;

7211; P. Oxy.

1355

*Papyrus 28
22

III

Berkeley, Pacific School of

Jo 6,8-12.17-

Rel., Museum, Pap. 2; P.

Oxy.

1596

*Papyrus 29
8.20

III

Oxford, Bodl. Libr., Gr. bibl.

Act 26,7-

g. 4 (P); P. Oxy.

1597

*Papyrus 30
5,3.8-10.12-18.25-28; 2Th

III

Gent, Rijksuniv., Univ. Bibl.,

ITh 4,12-13.16-17;

Inv. 61; P. Oxy. 1598

1,1-

*Papyrus 37 52	III/IV	Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan,	Mt 26,19-
137		Inv. 1570; P. Mich.	
*Papyrus 38 16	ca. 300	Ann Arbor. Univ. of Michigan,	Act 18,27-19,6.12-
138		Inv. 1571; P. Mich.	
*Papyrus 39 22	III	Rochester, Ambrose Swabey	Jo 8,14-
1780		Libr., Inv. 8864; P. Oxy.	
*Papyrus 40 2,3; 3,21-4,8; 6,4-5.16;	III	Heidelberg, Pap. Samml. der	Rm 1,24-27; 1,31-
17.27		Univ., Inv. 45; P. Bad. 57	9,16-
*Papyrus 41 25.27;	VIII	Wien, Österr. Nat. Bibl., Pap.	Act 17,2818,2.24-
19;		K. 7541-48	19,1-4.6-8.13-16.18-
24.26-28.35-38; 21,1-4;			20,9-13.15-16.22-
17			22,11-14.16-
*Papyrus 42 2,2932	VII/VIII	Wien, Österr. Nat. Bibl., Pap.	Lc 1,54-55;
8706		K.	

*Papyrus 43 16,2	VI/VII	London, Brit. Libr., Inv. 2241	Apc 2,12-13; 15,8-
*Papyrus 44 17.19; 25,8-10; Jo 12,16-18	VI/VII	New York, Metropol. Mus. of Art, Inv. 14. 1. 527	Mt 17,13.6-7; 18,15- 9,3-4; 10,8-14;
*Papyrus 45 19; 25,41-26,39; Mc 5,38-6,3.16-25.36-50; 26; 8,34-9,9.18-31; 19.24-28; Lc 6,31-41; 9,45-10,1.6-22; 46; 11,50-12,12.18-37; 24;13,29-14,10.17-33; Jo 11,10.18-36.42-57; Act 39; 6,7-7,2.10-21.32-41; 8,34-9,6.16-27; 41; 11,2-14; 13,6-16.2536; 15,2-7.19-27;	III	Dublin,P.ChesterBeattyI;Wien,Öst err.Nat.Bibl., Pap. G. 31974 5,15-26; 5,38-6,3.16-25.36-50; 7,3-15; 7,25-8,1.10 11,27-12,1.5-8.13- 6,45-7,7; 9,26-41; 10,26-11,1.6-25.28- 12,42-13,1.6- 10,7-25; 10,30- 4,27-36; 5,10-21.30- 7,52-8,1.14-25; 9,35-10,2.10-23.31- 11,24-12,5.13-22; 13,46-14,3.15-23;	Mt 20,24-32; 21,13- 4,36-40; 5,15-26; 7,3-15; 7,25-8,1.10- 11,27-12,1.5-8.13- 6,45-7,7; 9,26-41; 10,26-11,1.6-25.28- 12,42-13,1.6- 10,7-25; 10,30- 4,27-36; 5,10-21.30- 7,52-8,1.14-25; 9,35-10,2.10-23.31- 11,24-12,5.13-22; 13,46-14,3.15-23;

15,38-16,4.15-21.32-

40; 17,9-17

*Papyrus 46	ca. 200	Dublin, P. Chester Beatty II;	Rm 5,17-6,3.5-14;
8,15-25.27-35; 8,37-9,32;			
		Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan,	10,1-11,22.24-33;
11,35-15,9; 15,11-16,27;			
		Inv. 6238	ICor 1,1-9,2;9,4-
14,14; 14,16-15,15;			15,17-
16,22;2Cor			
			1,1-11,10.12-
21;11,23-13,13;Gal 1,1-8;1,10			
			2,9.12-21;3,2-
29;4,2-18; 4,20-5,17;			
			5,20-6,8.10-18; Eph
1,1-2,7; 2,10-5,6;			
			5,8-6,6.8-18.20-24;
Ph 1,1.5-15.17-28; 1,30			
			2,12.14-27; 2,29-
3,8.10-21; 4,2-12.14-23;			
			Col 1,1-2.5-13.16-
24; 1,27-2,19;			
			2,23-3,11.13-24;
4,3-12.16-18; ITh 1,1;			
			1,9-2,3; 5,5-9.23-
28; Heb 1,1-9,16;			
			9,18-10,20.22-30;
10,32-13,25			

*Papyrus 47	III	Dublin, P. Chester Beatty III	Apc 9,10-11,3; 11,5-
16,15; 16,17-17,2			

*Papyrus 48	III	Firenze, Bibl. Laurenziana; PSI	Act 23,11-17.23-
29			

1165

*Papyrus 49 III New Haven, Yale Univ. Libr., P. Eph 4,16-29, 4,31-5,13

415

*Papyrus 50 IV/V New Haven, Yale Univ. Libr., P. Act 8,26-32-10,2631

1543

*Papyrus 51 ca. 400 Oxford, Ashmolean Mus.; P. Oxy. Gal 1,210.13.16-20

2157

*Papyrus 52 II Manchester, J. Rylands Libr., Jo 18,31-33.37-38

Gr. P.

457

*Papyrus 53 III Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan, Mt 26,29-40; Act 9,33-10,1

Inv.

6652

*Papyrus 54 V/VI Princeton, Univ. Libr., Garrett Jc 2,1618.22-26; 3,2-4

Depots 7742; P. Princ.

15

*Papyrus 55 VI/VII Wien, Österr. Nat. Bibl., Pap. Jo 1,31-33.35-

38

G.

26214

*Papyrus 56 V/VI Wien, Österr. Nat. Bibl., Pap. Act 1,1.4-
5.7.1011

G.

19918

*Papyrus 57 IV/V Wien, Österr. Nat. Bibl., Pap. Act 4,36-
5,2.810

G.

26020

[Papyrus 58] vide Papyrus
33

*Papyrus 59 VII New York, Pierpont Morgan Jo 1,26.28.48.51;
2,15-16; 11,40-52;

Libr.; P. Colt 3

12,25.29.31.35;17,24-26; 18,1-2.16-17.22;

21,7.12-13.15.17-

20.23

*Papyrus 60 VII New York, Pierpont Morgan Jo 16,29-30; 16,32-
17,6.8-9.11-15.18-25;

Libr.; P. Colt 4

18,1-2.4-5.7-16.18-

20.23-29.31-37.39-40;

19,2-3.5-8.10-

18.20.23-26

*Papyrus 61 ca. 700 New York, Pierpont Morgan Rm 16,2327; I Cor
1,1-2.4-6; 5,1-3.5-6.9-13;

Libr.; P. Colt 5 Ph 3,5-9.12-16; Col
 1,3-7.9-13; 4,15; ITh
 1,2-3; Tt 3,1-5.8-
 11.14-15 ; Phm 4-7

*Papyrus 62 IV Oslo, Univ. Bibl., Inv. 1661 Mt 11,25-
 30

*Papyrus 63 ca. 500 Berlin, Staatl. Mus., Inv. Jo 3,14-18; 4,9-
 10
 11914

*Papyrus 64 ca. 200 Oxford, Magdalen Coll., Gr. 18; Mt 3,9.15; 5,20-
 22.25-28;
 (+67) Barcelona, Fundación S. Lucas 26,7-8.10.14-15.22-
 23.31-33
 P67) Evang., Inv. I (=

*Papyrus 65 III Firenze, Ist. di Pap. G. ITh 1,3-2,1.6-
 13
 Vitelli; PSI
 1373

*Papyrus 66 ca. 200 Cologne, Bibl. Bodmer.; P. Jo 1,16,11; 6,35-
 14,26.29-30; 15,2-26;
 Bodmer II; Dublin, P. Chester 16,2-4.6-7;16,10-
 20,20.22-23; 20,25-21,9
 Beatty

[Papyrus 67] vide Papyrus

*Papyrus 68 5,3	VII(?)	Leningrad, Publ. Bibl., Gr.	ICor 4,12-17, 4,19-5,3
		258B	

*Papyrus 69 61	III	Oxford, Ashmolean Mus.; P. Oxy.	Lc 22,41.45-48.58-61
		2383	

*Papyrus 70 3,1; 11,26-27; 12,4-5; 15 419.420	III	Oxford, Ashmolean Mus.; P. Oxy.	Mt 2,13-16; 2,22-3,1; 11,26-27; 12,4-5;
		2384; Firenze, Ist. di Pap. G.	24,3-6.12-
		Vitelli, CNR	

*Papyrus 71 18	IV	Oxford, Ashmolean Mus.: P. Oxy.	Mt 19,10-11.17-18
		2385	

*Papyrus 72 1,1-3,18; Jd 1-25 hodie Vaticana)	III/IV	Cologne, Bibl. Bodmer.; P. Bodmer VII. VIII (1. 2 Pt in Bibl.	IPt 1,15,14; 2Pt
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Papyrus 73 3	?	Cologne, Bibl. Bodmer.	Mt 25,43; 26,2-3
-----------------	---	------------------------	------------------

*Papyrus 74	VII	Cologne, Bibl. Bodmer.; P.	Act 1,2-5.7-
11.1315.18-19.22-25; 2,2-4;			
		Bodmer XVII	2,6-3,26;4,2-6.8-
27; 4,29-27,25;			27,27-28,31; Jc 1,1-
6.8-19.21-23.25;			1,27-2,3.5-15.18-
22;			2,25-3,1.5-6.10-
12.14;3,17 4,8.11-14;			5,1-3.7-9.12-14.19-
20; IPt			1,1-2.7-8.13.19-
20.25; 2,6-7.11-12.18.24;			3,4-5; 2Pt 2,21;
3,4.11.16; IJo 1,1.6;			2,1-2.7.13-14.18-
19.25-26; 3,1-2.8.14.19-20;			4,1.6-7.12.16-17;
5,3-4.9-10.17; 2Jo			1.6-7.12-13; 3Jo
6.12; Jd 3.7.12.18.24			

*Papyrus 75	III	Cologne, Bibl. Bodmer.; P.	Lc 3,18-22;
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*Papyrus 76	VI	Wien, Österr. Nat. Bibl., Pap.	Jo
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*Papyrus 77 39	II/III	Oxford, Ashmolean Mus.; P. Oxy. 2683	Mt 23,30-
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*Papyrus 80 3,34 83	III	Barcelona, Fundación S. Lucas Evang., Inv.	Jo
*Papyrus 81 12	IV	Trieste, S. Paris, Inv. 20	Ipt 2,20-3,1.4-
*Papyrus 82 34.3738 2677	IV/V	Strasbourg, Bibl. Nat. et Univ., Gr.	Lc 7,32-
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*Papyrus 85 10,2.59	IV/V	Strasbourg, Bibl. Nat. et Univ., Gr.	Apc 9,19-
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*Papyrus 88 26	IV	Milano, Univ. Cattolica, Inv. 69.24	Mc 2,1-
*Aleph 01 eapr	IV	London, Brit. Libr., Add. 43725	
*A 02 25,6; Jo 6,50-8,52; 2Cor	V	London, Brit. Libr., Royal I D.	eapr (vac. Mt 1,1-
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*B 03 Heb 9,14-fin.)	IV	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Gr. 1209	eap (vac. ITm-Phm;
*C 04 2; 5,15-7,5; 17,2618,28;	V	Paris, Bibl. Nat., Gr. 9	eapr (vac. Mt 1,1-
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[0138] vide
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[0139] vide
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of		137; Arundel Castle, Duke	
459		Norfolk, MD	
436 ap	XI	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Gr. 367	
440 eap	XII	Cambridge, Univ. Libr., Mm. VI.	
		9	
442 Rm)	XIII	Uppsala, Univ. Bibl., Gr. 1, p.	apK (vac. Act
440		183-	
451 ap	XI	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Urbin. Gr. 3	
453 aK	XIV	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Barb. Gr.	
		582	
460 ap	XIII	Venezia, Bibl. S. Marco, 379	

462 ap	XIII	Moskva, Hist. Mus., V. 24, S. 346	
467 apr	XV	Paris, Bibl. Nat., Gr. 59	
472 +	XIII	London, Lambeth Pal., 1177	e
473 e	XIII	London, Lambeth Pal., 1178	
474 +	XI	London, Lambeth Pal., 1179	e
482 e	1285	London, Brit. Libr., Burney 20	
489 +	1316	Cambridge, Trin. Coll., B.X. 16	eap
491 +	XI	London, Brit. Libr., Add. 11836	eap
522 eapr	1515	Oxford. Bodl. Libr., Can. Gr. 34	

543 +	XII	Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan, Ms	e
15			
544 e	XIII	Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan, Ms	
25			
(*)565 48; 13,223)	IX	Leningrad, Publ. Bibl., Gr. 53	e+ (vac. Jo 11,26-
569 eK	1061	Leningrad, Publ. Bibl., Gr. 72	
579 +	XIII	Paris, Bibl. Nat., Gr. 97	e
614 [*] fin.)	XIII	Milano, Bibl. Ambros., E 97 sup.	(*)a p (vac. Jd 3-
621 +	XIV	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Gr. 1270	ap(K)
623 +	1037	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Gr. 1650	ap

629 ap	XIV	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Ottob. Gr.	
		298	
630 [*] p	XIV	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Ottob. Gr.	act (*)cath (*)
		325	
636 ap	XV	Napoli, Bibl. Naz., II. A. 9	
642 +	XV	London, Lambeth Pal., 1185	ap
(*)700 e	XI	London, Brit. Libr., Egerton	
		2610	
713 +	XII	Birmingham, SeIIy Oak Coll.,	e
7		Cod. Alg. Peckover Gr.	
720 +	XIII	Wien, Österr. Nat. Bibl.,	eapK
80		Theol. Gr. 79.	
788 e	XI	Athen, Nat. Bibl., 74	

826 e 3	XII	Grottaferrata, Bibl. della Badia, A' a'	
828 e 5	XII	Grottaferrata, Bibl. della Badia, A' a'	
(*)892 12,18; 14,23-fin. suppl.]	IX	London, Brit. Libr., Add. 33277	e (vac. [Jo 10,6-
915 ap	XIII	Escorial, T III 12	
918 Act)	XVI	Escorial, E I 5	ap (vac.
945 [*] p	XI	Athos, Dionysiu, 124 (37)	e (*)act cath
954 e	XV	Athos, Dionysiu, 347 (312)	
983 e	XII	Athos, Esphigmenu, 29	
998	XII	Athos, Iviron, 654 (30)	e

+

1006 [*] XI Athos, Iviron, 728 (56) e (*)
r

(*)1010 XII Athos, Iviron, 738 (66) e (vac. [Lc 8,4-44;
Jo 12,2513,22 suppl.]

1012 XI Athos, Iviron, 1063 (68)
e

1038 XIV Athos, KarakaIIu, 37 (49)
e

1067 XIV Athos, Kutlumusiu, 57 ap
+

1071 XII Athos, Lavra, A' 104
e

1093 1302 Athos, Panteleimonos, 28
e

1175 [*] XI Patmos, Joannu, 16 (*)act cath (*)p
(vac. I Th I,10-3,2; Tt I

,7- fin.; Phm; Heb
3,6-6,7; 8,6-10,8;

11,20-12,2; 13,21-
fin.)

1194 e	XI	Sinai, Gr. 157	
1195 e	1123	Sinai, Gr. 158	
1216 e	XI	Sinai, Gr. 179	
1229 +	XIII	Sinai, Gr. 192	e
1230 eK	1124	Sinai, Gr. 193	
(*)1241 13,3; Act 17,10-18; [I Cor 13,3-fin.; Gal; Eph Col; Heb 11,3-fin.; Jc-Jd manu]	XII	Sinai, Gr. 260	eap (vac. Mt 8,14- 2,10-fin.; 2Cor 2,15-fin.; Phil; suppl. vel alia
1242 eap	XIII	Sinai, Gr. 261	
1243 eap	XI	Sinai, Gr. 262	

1253 e	XV	Sinai, Gr. 303	
1293 +	XI	Paris, Bibl. Nat., Suppl. Gr. 1225	e
1325 e	1724	Jerusalem, Taphu, 62	
1329 e 303	XII	Jerusalem, Saba, 166; Leningrad, Publ. Bibl., Gr.	
1333 e	XI	Jerusalem, Saba, 243	
1346 e 284	X/XI	Jerusalem, Saba, 606; Leningrad, Publ. Bibl., Gr.	
1355 e	XII	Jerusalem, Stavru, 104	
1424 [*] 1,23-2,16) 152	IX/X	Maywood, Theol. Sem., Gruber Ms.	(*)eK apr (vac. Mt

1448 eap	XI	Athos, Lavra, A' 13	
1505 [*] p	1084	Athos, Lavra, B' 26	e act (*)cath
1506 [*] 1,3-4; 4,16-fin.; Heb)	1320	Athos, Lavra, B' 89	e (*)pK (vac. ICor 2Cor-
1518 ap	XV	olim: London, Lambeth Pal., 1181	
1573 eap	XII/XIII	Athos, Vatopediu, 939	
1582 e	949	Athos, Vatopediu, 949	
1611 [*] 21,27-fin. suppl.)	XII	Athen, Nat. Bibl., 94	ap (*)r (vac. [Apc
1678 eaprK	XIV	Athos, Panteleimonos, 770	
1704 eapr	1541	Athos, Kutlumusiu, 356	

1729 +	XV	Athos, Vatopediu, 968	ap
1735 apt	XI/XII	Athos, Lavra, B' 42	
(*)1739 2,6 suppl.])	X	Athos, Lavra, B' 64	ap (vac. [Act 1,1-
1758 ap	XIII	Lesbos, Limonos, 195	
1827 +	1295	Athen, Nat. Bibl., 131	ap
1831 ap	XIV	Athen, Nat. Bibl., 119	
1832 +	XIV	Athen, Nat. Bibl., 89	ap
1836 2Pt) 1	X	Grottaferrata, Bibl. della Badia, A' B'	ap (vac. Act-
1838 + 6	XI	Grottaferrata, Bibl. della Badia, A' B'	ap

1841 [*] r	IX/X	Lesbos, Limonos, 55	apt (*)
1845 ap	X	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Gr. 1971	
1846 +	XI	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Gr. 2099	ap
1852 +	XIII	Uppsala, Univ. Bibl., Ms. Gr. 11	apr
1854 [*] r	XI	Athos, Iviron, 231 (25)	ap (*)
1875 apt	X	Athen, Nat. Bibl., 149	
1877 ap	XIV	Sinai, Gr. 280	
1881 [*] 4,13-5,8 suppl.)	XIV	Sinai, Gr. 300	a (*)p (vac. [Heb
1884 cath)	XVI	Gotha, Landesbibl., Chart. B. 1767	a (vac.

1891 X Jerusalem, Saba, 107;
ap
Leningrad, Publ. Bibl., Gr.
317

1906 1056 Paris, Bibl. Nat., Coislin Gr.
pK
28

1908 XI Oxford, Bodl. Libr., Roe 16
pK

1912 X Napoli, Bibl. Naz., Cod.
Vien.
8
pt

1962 XI Wien, Österr. Nat. Bibl., pK
+
Theol. Gr.
157

2014 XV Roma, Bibl. Vallicell., D. 20
rK

2015 XV Oxford, Bodl. Libr., Barocci r
+
48, fol.51-
74

2016 r	XV	London, Brit. Libr., Harley 5678	
2020 r	XV	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Gr. 579	
2027 +	XIII	Paris, Bibl. Nat., Gr. 491	r
2028 rK	1422	Paris, Bibl. Nat., Gr. 239	
(*)2030 16,20)	XII	Moskva, Univ., 2	r (vac. Apc 1,1-16,20)
2036 rK	XIV	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Gr. 656	
2042 rK	XIV	Napoli, Bibl. Naz., II. A. 10	
(*)2050 19,21)	1107	Escorial, X. III. 6	r (vac. Apc 6,1-19,21)
(*)2053 rK	XIII	Messina, Bibl. Univ., 99	

(*)2062 14,20)	XIII	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Gr. 1426	rK (vac. Apc 2,1-
2067 rK	XV	Roma, Bibl. Vatic., Pal. Ms. Gr.	
346			
2069 rK	XV	Venezia, Bibl. S. Marco, 981 (II	
54)			
2073 +	XIV	Athos, Iviron, 273(34)	rK
2080 +	XIV	Patmos, Ioannu, 12	apr
2127 +	XII	Palermo, Bibl. Naz., Dep. Mus. 4	eap
2138 aprt	1072	Moskva, Gorki-Univ. Bibl., I	
2143 ap	XII	Leningrad, Publ. Bibl., Gr. 211	
2145 e	1145	Leningrad, Publ. Bibl., Gr. 222	

2147 eap	XI	Leningrad, Publ. Bibl., Gr. 224	
2148 eK	1337	Leningrad, Publ. Bibl., Gr. 235	
2298 ap	XI	Paris, Bibl. Nat., Gr. 102	
2318 Act)	XVIII	Bukarest, Ruman. Akad., 234	aK (vac.
(*)2329 r (0)	X	Meteora, Metamorphosis 573, fol. 210 245r	
2344 +	XI	Paris, Bibl. Nat., Coislin Gr. 18	apr
(*)2351 14,3; 14,6-fin.) 290	X	Meteora, Metamorphosis 573, fol. 245v(0)-	rK (vac. Apc 13,18-
2377 +	XIV	Athen, Byzant. Mus., 117	r

2464 X Patmos, Joannu, 742 a (*)p (vac. Rm
 11,29-16,10; 1.2Tm; Tt; Phm;
 Heb [*] 7,2-14;
 9,20-10,4; 10,19-fin.)

2492 XIII Sinai, Gr. 1342
 eap

2495 [*] XIV/XV Sinai, Gr. 1992 e (*)a (*)p
 r

2768 978 München, Bayer. Staatsbibl., eK:
 Jo Gr. 208, fol. 107-
 134

l 32 XI Gotha, Landesbibl., Membr. I 78 l
 esk

l 44 XII Kopenhagen, Kgl. Bibl., GkS l
 +ask 1324, 4
 (0)

l 185 XI Cambridge, Christ's Coll., DD. l e
 + I.
 6

l 1575 IX Wien, Österr. Nat. Bibl., Pap. U-l a
 +

K.

16.17

l 1602 VIII New York, Pierpont Morgan U-1
+

Univ. Libr., 615; Freiburg,

615 Bibl.,

Abbreviations

a = Acts & Catholic Epistles (*actus apostolorum et epistulae catholicae*)

cath = Catholic Epistles (*epistulae catholicae*)

e = Gospels (*evangelia*)

p = Epistles of Paul (*epistulae paulinae*)

r = Revelation (*revelatio*)

* = Constant witness cited explicitly in critical apparatus

+ = codex mutilatus (mutilated book)

K = textus cum commentario (text with commentary)

l = lectionarium (lectionary)

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Articles

The following are unpublished, original articles discussing features of papyrology, paleography, codicology, and textual criticism. Any submissions should follow the general style of the first article.

- [The Origins of the Catena in Gaza](#) - Timothy W. Seid

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Greek Alphabet Table

Α	α	a	Alpha
Β	β	b	Beta
Γ	γ	g	Gamma
Δ	δ	d	Delta
Ε	ε	e	Epsilon
Ζ	ζ	z	Zeta
Η	η	e	Eta
Θ	θ	th	Theta
Ι	ι	i	Iota
Κ	κ	k	Kappa
Λ	λ	l	Lambda
Μ	μ	m	Mu
Ν	ν	n	Nu
Ξ	ξ	x	Xi
Ο	ο	o	Omicron
Π	π	p	Pi
Ρ	ρ	r	Rho
Σ	σ,ς	s	Sigma
Τ	τ	t	Tau
Υ	υ	u	Upsilon
Φ	φ	ph	Phi
Χ	χ	ch	Chi
Ψ	ψ	ps	Psi
Ω	ω	ō	Omega

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Codex Michigan (C-MI)

[1] virtuous violinist pinchas zukerman was giving a master class stew to a [2] group of young artists who had come to the aspen music festival from the fo[3]ur corners soviet world the auditorium was filled with the rapier and di[4]stinguished teachers and performers the atmosphere was electric t[5]o each of the talented performers in turn zukerman offered friendly adv[6]ice and in courage meant discussing their playing in detail and invariab[7]ly picking his own violin to demonstrate finer points of technique and inte[8]rpretation finally came the turn of a young musician who performed b[9]rilliantly when the applause subsided zukerman complimented the artist [10]he walked over to his own violin caressed it tucked it under his chin pau[11]sed a long moment and then without playing a note or uttering a word gent[12]ly placed it back in its case once more the applause broke out and this time it [13]was deafening in recognition of the master who could play so graciously a[14]ccompaniment

Codex Indiana (C-IN)

[1] virtuoso violinist pinchas zukerman was giving a mass to a class two a [2]group of young artists who had come to the aspen music festival from the fo[3]ur corners soviet world the auditorium was filled with their peers a[4]nd distinguished teachers and performers the atmosphere was electric t[5]o each of the talented performers in turn zukerman offered friendly adv[6]ice and encouragement discussing their playing in detail and invariab[7]ly picking up his own violin to demonstrate the points of technique and i[8]nterpretation finally came the turn of a young musician who performed brilliantly when the applause subsided zukerman complimented [10]the artist then walked over to his own violin caressed it tucked it under hi[11]s chin passed a long moment and then without playing a note or uttering a word gent[12]ly placed it back in its case once more the applause broke out a[13]nd this time it was deafening in recognition of the master who could play so graciously a[14]ccompaniment

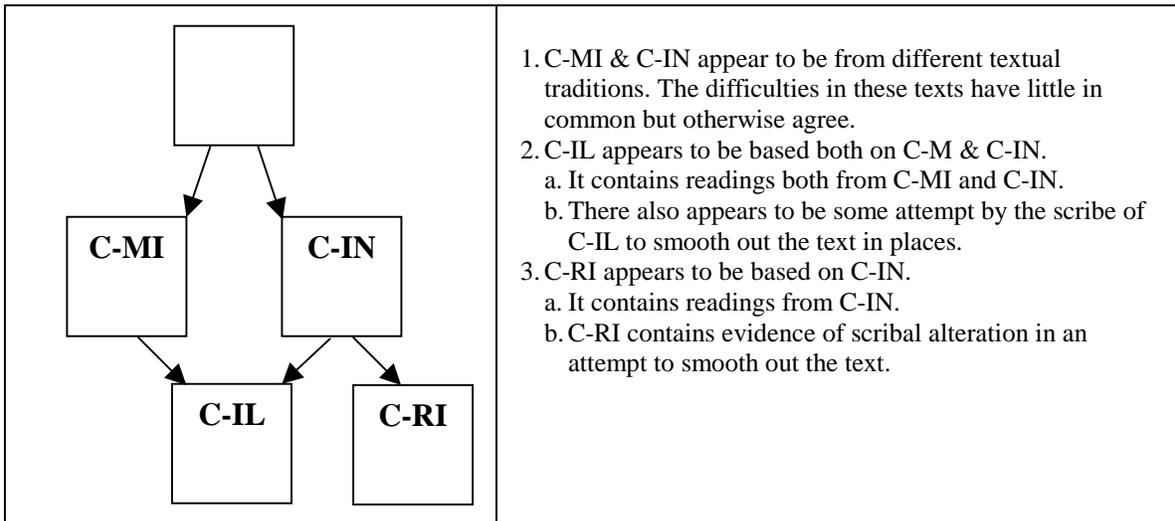
Codex Illinois (C-IL)

[1] virtuous violinist pinchas zukerman was giving a master class stew to a [2] group of young artists who had come to the aspen music festival from the fo[3]ur corners of the soviet world the auditorium was filled with the rapier[4]s and distinguished teachers and performers at most the sphere w[5]as electric to each of the talented performers in turn zukerman offered friendly advice and in courage meant to discuss their playing [7] the tail and invariably picking up his own violin to demonstrate finer po[8]ints of technique and interpretation a fine ally came to turn off a young m[9]usician who performed brilliantly when the applause subsided zukerman [10]n pinchas brother complimented the artist then walked over to his vi[11]olin caressed it tucked it under his chin paused a long moment and then wi[12]thout playing a note or uttering a word gently placed his tobacco cas[13]e once more the applause broke out and this time it was deafening in reco[14]gnition of the master who could play so graciously by shushing grace th[15]e accompanist paying her a compliment

Codex Rhode Island (C-RI)

[1]virtuoso violinist pinchas zukerman was giving a mass to a class of you[2]ng artists who had come to he aspen music fistfull from the four main ner[3]vous people of the world the auditor rerun was filled with their peers an[4]d distinguished teachers and sand performers the atmosphere was elect[5]ric to itch to the talented performers in turn zukerman offered friendly [6] advice and encouragement discussing their playing in detail and invaria[7]bly picking up his own violin to show the points of technique and interpre[8]tation finally came the turn of a young muse he had shunned who performe[9]d brilliantly when the applause subsided zukerman complimented ed the [10] artist then walked over to the hissing of the crowd he caressed on his vi[11]olin i tucked it under his chin passed a long moment and then without play[12]ing a notary uttering a word he gently placed it back in its case once mor[13]e the applause broke out and this time it was deafening in recognition of [14] the master who could pay grace such a compliment.

Stemma



Text

Virtuoso¹ violinist Pinchas Zukerman was giving a master² class to³ a group⁴ of young artists who⁵ had come to the Aspen Music Festival from the four corners of the world. The auditorium was filled with their peers and distinguished teachers and performers; the atmosphere was electric. To each of the talented performers in turn Zukerman offered friendly advice and encouragement, discussing their playing in detail, and invariably picking up his own violin to demonstrate finer points of technique and interpretation. Finally came the turn of a young musician who performed brilliantly. When the applause subsided, Zukerman complimented the artist, then walked over to his own violin, caressed it, tucked it under his chin, paused a long moment, and then, without playing a note or uttering a word, gently placed it back in its case. Once more the applause broke out, and this time it was deafening, in recognition of the master, who could pay so gracious a compliment.

¹ C-IN, C-RI | *virtuous* C-MI, C-IL

Virtuoso is preferred due to the idiomatic expression “virtuoso violinist.” Virtuous is an understandable mistake and Zukerman is characterized as virtuous in this text.

² C-MI, C-IL | *mass to a* C-IN, C-RI

A violinist normally gives a “master class” and does not perform a catholic “mass” unless the individual is an ordained priest -- Zukerman happens to be Jewish.

³ C-MI, C-IN, C-IL, C-RI | *class stew to a group* C-MI, C-IL; *{to a} class t{w}o a group* C-IN; *to a class {...}* C-RI

Each of the witnesses support the reading with each diverging in some way. In the case of C-MI *f*, the ending “s” from “class has elided with “to” forming the unlikely reading “stew.” The preposition normally associated with “to give” is “to” forming the verbal “to give to” someone. Zukerman here is a violinist, not a cook making a stew. The C-IN *f* has moved the position of the prepositional phrase to fit the expression “to give mass to.” C-IN also has the prepositional phrase in position but the second time it changes the spelling to a homophonic “two” rather than “to.” C-RI attempts to clear up the difficulty in C-IN by leaving out the second occurrence.

⁴ C-MI, C-IN, C-IL | *{to a}^b class^a {...}^c of young artists* C-RI

C-RI attempts to smooth out the reading by omitting the redundant “group” to further categorize “class.”

⁵ C-RI | *wo had come* C-MI, C-IL; *who ad come* C-IN

The unlikely readings found in the majority of manuscripts has been corrected in C-RI. The scribe of C-RI must have understood that “ad come” sounded like “had come. Perhaps the scribe of C-IN was listening to a lector with a British accent, which diminishes the “h” sound. The reading of C-MI *f* appears to be an error, leaving out a letter.

Origins of Catena in Gaza

Written by Timothy W. Seid

An important aspect of paleography and codicology is the analysis of development. The most crucial development that concerns paleographers is script. In general terms, this was the change in writing from various kinds of uncial script to the smaller and cursive writing of minuscule which took place around the ninth century. An earlier development was the adoption of the book as opposed to the more cumbersome roll. About the same time, scribes began using the more durable parchment rather than papyrus in the formation of codices. Another development had to do with the way in which the scribe tried to help the reader. In earlier documents, such as a papyrus roll, the text contained lines of continuous writing with little or no concern for distinguishing one unit from another, whether that be what we call words or sentences. A gradual concern for this sort of "mark-up" -- a modern expression in text processing -- can be detected in the history of textual transmission and writing. These are all ways in which development from a loose and sporadic form to one which is more consistent and advantageous has occurred. The issue of development is, of course, relative since difference does not always mean something is better. Development is not always the same throughout any particular region nor does it proceed at the same rate. Genetic relationships is especially difficult. Scholars still debate over the origins of the codex. Some argue that it was a product of Christian convention while others trace it back to the binding of wax tablets. These issues are also applicable to the catena and its relationship to scholia.

It is impossible to say with any certainty when and from where the catena came into existence or to what degree, if any, the scholia depends upon it. What is significant is that the interest in providing commentary with an ancient text precedes the surge of scholarly activity of the ninth century and the form of script which provided more space for marginalia.

The foremost proponent of the view that the catena comes from the School of Gaza is N. G. Wilson. His arguments are an attempt to show the possibility of a change in the form of annotated manuscripts before the ninth century. It is the claim of Zuntz that there were no scholars between the second century and ninth who could have brought about such a change (Zuntz, 274). However, the School of Gaza seems to have been involved in the collating of the opinions of commentators of preceding centuries.

Procopius describes his method in the following excerpt from an hypothesis:

Having been supplied the ability before God, we collected the explanations which were put down from the Fathers and the others into the Octateuch, combining these things from commentaries and different sayings. But then we selected with the very words of the sayings themselves of the selected passages; either they occurred in harmony with one another or they did not. And from what seemed to us an incomprehensible mass,

hence, I extended the document. Now I see together from a manageable size and I comprehend the Scripture (PG 87.21-24).

From this we learn that Procopius took selections from authorities and added them to the text. This enlarged the text but it made more manageable the corpus of opinions of the Church Fathers.

Photius also refers to the catenae of Procopius in *Bibliotheca* 206-207. Since he does not question the authenticity of these catenae, it is hard to imagine that these are only a later attribution and actually are a work of any contemporary.

The distinction made between a catena and a scholium is that the former consistently makes an attempt to cite the name of the authority and usually before the quotation. The author is more of a compiler and editor with very little to add to the work. The term is reserved for annotated biblical texts rather than classical texts.

There are different types of catenae. In some cases the catena is the major text while in other cases it occupies the margin. They also differ in the way in which the quotations are "chained" together.

An important link in the history of the catena is Codex Zacynthius (040). It is the only extant manuscript of the New Testament in which the text and commentary are written in uncial script. The dating of the manuscript is uncertain. W. H. P. Hatch postulates the sixth century (Hatch, 1931 plate xxv). Wilson assigns it to the eighth or ninth century: "after examining the book I share the conviction of Zuntz and others that such a dating (6th) is inconsistent with what little we know of the development of uncial script (Wilson, 1967 253)." However, the arguments concerning the dating of Codex Zacynthius are more involved than the type of script.

Codex Zacynthius is a palimpsest of eighty-six parchment leaves and three half-leaves. Whereas they now are 28 cm. x 18 cm., they were originally about 35.5 cm. x 28. At some point the manuscript was taken apart, the well-preserved leaves cut and then bound. The upper writing is a gospel lectionary of the thirteenth century. The lower writing now contains Luke 1:1-11:33. Whether it was actually erased is hard to tell since it is still quite clear and even has faded onto the opposite page of the present binding (Greenlee 994).

The gospel text is written in a single column at the inner side of the page. The placement of the catena depends on its size. Where there is more catena there is less text and the catena fills the three margins. Sometimes the catena occupies the top and side or only the side margin. In some cases when the catena runs for several pages, the gospel text is repeated. There can be no doubt that the catena was written concurrently with the text of Luke.

The ink appears a rusty brown with some headings and section numbers written in bright red.

Greenlee distinguishes five styles of letters (Greenlee 995,96).

Hatch disagrees with the view of Tregelles, the first modern scholar to work with the codex, concerning the date of the manuscript. Hatch quotes Tregelles early comments:

The Text is in round full well-formed Uncial letters, such as I should have had no difficulty in ascribing to the sixth century, were it not that the Catena of the same age has the round letters (epsilon, theta, omicron, sigma) so cramped as to appear to belong to the eighth century (Tregelles ii; Hatch, 1937 334).

On the one hand, the confined letters of the Catena suggest the eighth century; while those of the Text are such as we have been accustomed to ascribe to the sixth, and the general absence of accents and breathings, even from the Catena, seems hardly compatible with the later date (Tregelles xvii).

Hatch demonstrates from other manuscripts that these compressed and elongated forms occur elsewhere from as early as the third century B.C.E. (Hatch, 1937 335,36). It is not then necessary to date the manuscript later for the reason of writing style.

The authorities quoted in the catena include Apollinaris, Basil, Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Eusebius, Isidore, Origen, Severus of Antioch, Titus of Bostra, Victor of Antioch, and other anonymous writers. The latest are Severus of Antioch and Victor, who is called "presbyter."

It was Tregelles theory that the manuscript may have been written before 536 when Severus came under fire for his monophysite views. A synod in that year condemned Severus, and Justinian confirmed their decision with an imperial edict. Tregelles thought that since Severus was quoted it meant acceptance of his heretical views. He further hypothesized that after the edict of 536, the name of Severus was erased in the manuscript for purposes of avoiding reprisals.

Greenlee forcefully objects to Tregelles opinion concerning the erasure of Severus.

In the first place, the present writer could detect no evidence that the name of Severus had been erased apart from the erasure of the entire ms. after it had been used for several centuries. In the second place, Tregelles found only five of the twenty-seven occurrences of the name of Severus, in most of which there is absolutely no reason to assume that the name was tampered with (Greenlee 999).

Greenlee also takes issue with Tregelles arguments based on Severus' status as a heretic. Hatch follows Tregelles in this regard in relation to the date of Codex Zacynthius. Greenlee points out that the catena clearly states in the introduction that "rejected exegetes and heretics are quoted as well as orthodox Fathers (Greenlee 998)." The compiler of the catena then quotes a

statement from Cyril of Alexandria: It is not necessary to avoid and exempt everything which the heretics say. For they confess many things which we also confess (folio 1 recto).

It would seem from this that the arguments about Severus as a heretic bear no weight. The compiler is merely using that which he deems worthy. However, there is more to the argument. Hatch points out that not only does the editor call Severus *hagios* but also calls him "Archbishop of Antioch." This goes beyond Greenlee's argument about including heretics. Here is strong internal evidence that the codex was written before 536.

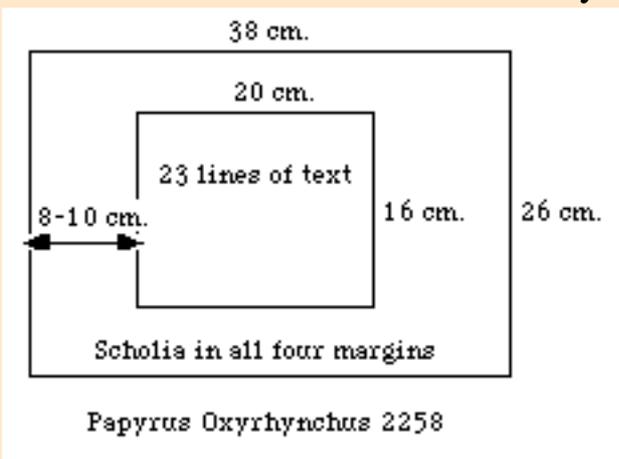
If this is true, then it is all the more possible that Procopius could also have been compiling catenae and annotating the biblical texts with them. It demonstrates that uncial script could be used in a creative fashion in order to construct a marginal commentary.

Although Wilson dates Codex Zacynthius later, his arguments concerning the catena are instructive. Zuntz proposes a later date for the emergence of scholia:

According to him [Zuntz] the evidence from the history of scholarship and from surviving books of the period in question shows that the scholia cannot have been put into their present composite form and transcribed into the margins of books earlier than the ninth century (Wilson, 1967 244).

This view suggests that commentaries or excerpts from commentaries were available in the ninth century when literary men such as Photius compiled and transferred them to the margins of minuscule books. But Wilson doubts that the commentaries would have lasted the five centuries especially if they had not been copied onto parchment from papyrus (Wilson, 1967 245). It is also possible that these commentaries were copied into the margins of codices and then were excerpted in the ninth century to form scholia (Wilson, 1967 246). Wilson takes a mediating position between these two views .

Wilson is also able to marshal evidence from papyri which contain marginal scholia. One example is the Callimachus fragment (P. Oxy. 2258). It is written in a Coptic uncial and probably dates to the sixth or seventh century. All four margins of the fragment contain



scholia.

While it is true that the minuscule script was much more economical in terms of space, it is also true that uncial script was used for marginal commentary for both biblical and for classical texts.

Wilson uses the evidence from Latin scholia to support his case. In Philargyrius' commentary on the *Eclogues* of Vergil, scholia are subdivided by *aliter*, the Latin equivalent for *allws*. Wilson argues that Philargyrius, who lived in the fifth century, probably is to be credited with this feature.

Despite our ignorance of the life and activities of Philargyrius we may suppose that it was he who used *aliter* to subdivide scholia. If this is true, we may also suppose that he did not himself invent this form of commentary, which shows clearly where the compiler ceases to transcribe from one source and begins to use another. More probably he took over a convenient feature of a Greek book that found its way into his hands (Wilson, 1967 250).

Wilson is able to show that *allws* was used very early as a way to designate an alternative case (Wilson, 1967 251).

Wilson again confronts the problem of derivation. He has made the point that both catenae and scholia occur prior to the ninth century. But who borrowed from whom? If the use of a marker is an important feature in catenae then perhaps the derivation of the scholia and catenae predates Procopius and is to be found in the fifth century with Philargyrius. But it is also possible that this work was being done in Gaza in the fifth century.

There may have been someone in the fifth century interested in scholia if the information can be pieced together. The Suda entry for Zosimus (Z 169) reads:

Zosimus, of Gaza or Ascalon, a sophist, during the time of Anastasius the emperor. He wrote a rhetorical lexicon according to the alphabet and a commentary on Demosthenes and Lysias.

In Cedrenus, a Zosimus of Gaza, a rhetor, is put to death during the reign of Zeno in A. D. 490. On the one hand, we may have a Zosimus contemporary with Procopius who is involved in scholia on classical authors or, on the other hand, there may have been two of that name: It is possible that the rhetor/scholiast Zosimus of Gaza flourished in the mid-fifth century. In that case, he may have been responsible for introducing the practice of entering scholia such as is attributed to a Zosimus (Wilson, 1967 254).

An example of the catena which is attributed to Procopius is that found in Cod. Marc. Gr. 22. It contains a catena on Ecclesiastes. The introduction states:

An epitome by Procopius, a Christian sophist, of exegetical chosen selections from the

discourse of Gregory of Nyssa and Dionysius of Alexandria, Origen, Evagrius, Didymus and Olympiodorus of Nile.

The text occupies the inner side of the page with commentary taking up the three remaining margins. The minuscule hand of the margin is smaller than that of the text. The marginal citations are marked both in the main text and in the margin in order to find the place quickly.



These are some of the marks used:

While the type of script and perhaps the markers are products of the post-ninth century era, the placing of commentary in the margin and the citing of the authorities is not.

There is clear evidence that both scholia and catenae existed prior to the ninth century. The uncial script was adapted for marginal commentary. The issue of derivation is virtually unanswerable given the lack of manuscript evidence and, in turn, the uncertainty of paleographical arguments. It is even questionable whether a distinction should be made between scholia -- marginal commentary on classical texts -- and catenae --marginal commentary on biblical texts. There is little to suggest that the School of Gaza would have recognized such a distinction since the classical tradition had become so intertwined with the Christian. To demand that the change in form could only have occurred in the ninth century is merely to associate this change with another, namely the introduction of the minuscule script. The evidence suggests that marginal commentary on biblical texts had a beginning in the fifth to sixth century and was probably of Palestinian origins if not the School of Gaza itself.

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In The Margins of The Past

Manuscripts as Historical Documents

Any great library offers many different kinds of historical experience. The Vatican is especially rich in Greek and Latin manuscripts--the hand-written copies that preserved the classics of the ancient world. In the margins of many of these texts one can meet medieval and Renaissance readers, trying to correct, understand, and sometimes argue with their texts--a conversation between ancient writers and modern readers that has gone on for millennia, and shows every sign of continuing. Other manuscripts let the visitor watch brilliant writers, original thinkers, and great political figures at work, making discoveries, revising their work, or simply writing a love letter. In each case, the original documents let the modern viewer taste the varied flavors of the past with a directness and vividness that no modern history can match.

- **Historia [Augusta](#)**

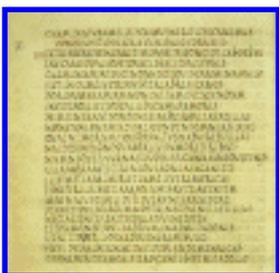


In Latin, Ninth century

The "Historia Augusta" is an amusing collection of lives of the Roman emperors written in the fourth century A.D. The texts purport to be the work of six distinct historians, but were composed, according to most modern scholars, by a single forger. They describe many curious details of court life and provide apparent quotations from original documents, which interested many medieval and Renaissance scholars. One of the many remarkable qualities of the Vatican's manuscripts is the richness of the marginal notes in which generations of scholars discussed and evaluated their content. In the section displayed here, Petrarch calls attention in a marginal note to one of the quoted documents.

Pal. lat. 899 fols. 209 verso-210 recto vlib20 INT.09

- **Virgil, Georgics and Bucolics ([The Palatine Virgil](#))**



In Latin, Fifth or sixth century

This spectacular manuscript, written in Italy in a large rustic hand, may have been completed

before the fall of the Roman empire, and thus is physically as well as intellectually part of the classical heritage preserved in the Vatican (to which it came as booty after Catholic armies sacked the Protestant stronghold at Heidelberg in 1623). It may have been preserved for some time at the Carolingian court, a vital center for classical studies in the early Middle Ages, and certainly it was studied and copied actively by Carolingian scholars. It came to rest at Lorsch by sometime in the ninth century.

Pal. lat. 1631 fol. 15 verso vlib21 INT.10

- **Giovanni Tortelli, [De orthographia](#)**

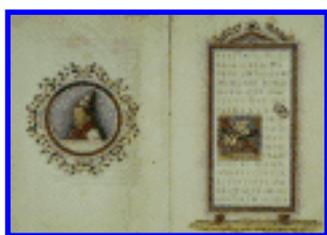


In Latin, ca. 1450

Pope Nicholas V, the real founder of the Vatican Library, also supported many scholarly enterprises. This fine presentation copy of Tortelli's critical Latin lexicon praises the pope lavishly, not only for his learning but also for his patronage of scholars, his support of translations from the Greek, and his project to create a great library, which Tortelli describes as "the most splendid that has ever existed."

Vat. lat. 5229 fol. 1 recto vlib22 INT.14

- **Bartolomeo Platina, [Lives of Jesus and the Popes](#)**



In Latin, ca. 1474

Bartolomeo Platina, librarian under Sixtus IV, compiled this set of sometimes quite critical biographies of the popes. This presentation copy of Platina's work contains corrections in his hand and a splendid miniature, shown here, of his and the library's patron, Sixtus IV. The scribe was Bartolomeo San Vito.

Vat. lat. 2044 fols. 2 verso-3 recto vlib23 INT.15

- **Giovanni Michele Nagonio**, [Prognostichon Hierosolymitanum](#)



In Latin, 1507

Giovanni Nagonio, a papal functionary who wrote celebratory verses like these for many European monarchs, here celebrates the triumphal entry of Julius II into Rome after his victory over the Bolognese. Combining Roman and papal imagery, the miniature shows Julius next to his nephew, Francesco Maria della Rovere, who wears golden armor. The Bolognese appear, presumably, as the gloomy barbarians in chains who accompany his float. On the facing page one sees a self-satisfied pontiff, ringed by short celebratory texts. Nagonio's poems, which fill the rest of the book, reach a self-parodic level of flattery.

Vat. lat. 1682 fols. 8 verso-9 recto vlib24 INT.16

- **Pirro Ligorio**, [Antequae urbis imago](#)



Lossi reprint, 1773

This immense print shows the ancient city not, as Pietro del Massaio had, as a bare stage decorated by the great ruins and buildings that survived into modern times (see Vat. lat. 5699 (arch21)), but as a living community, its public spaces, columns, and colonnades separated by block on block of private residences, which Ligorio recreated from his knowledge of ancient reliefs.

Stamp. geogr. I 169 vlib25 TG.50

NOTE: The picture shown above is only one part of a 12-part map. You can examine the entire map by going to the [Map Room](#).

You can now go to this room:

- [Some extra objects](#)

Or walk back to [the Main Hall](#). You can also go back to the ["Vatican Library"](#).

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c e s s i t a t e m o r t i m e t a l i t a t. h a b e o s o l a u m m o r t i s. s o l u s p e r i r e n o n p o t e r o. N a u
c u s s a l u d i e n o s. h a n c p i u s o r a t i o n e u e r e f u n t d i e. & f u r u e u a n p a r a l i t a r u n t

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