Preface

The text of the Greek New Testament has been transmitted, preserved, and maintained by the faithful labor of scribes from the time of the autographs to the present day. While the bulk of the text found in all manuscripts reflects a high degree of textual uniformity, that uniformity increases significantly when a consensus text is established from manuscripts that span the entire period of manual transmission. This consensus text reflects a unified dominance that permeates the vast majority of manuscripts. The editors have designated this dominant line of transmission the "Byzantine Textform."[1]

Although a general scribal care and concern for accuracy prevailed during the copying process, no single manuscript or intermediate exemplar can be claimed with certainty to reflect the precise autograph. Various human failings naturally occurred during the era of manual copying of documents; these failings appear among the manuscripts in varying degree, taking either the form of scribal error or intentional alteration. The manuscript tradition must be considered in its entirety, giving due regard to the transmissional factors that permitted the rise of such variation.

The dominant text of this scribal tradition is considered by the editors to reflect most closely that which was originally revealed by God through the human authors of the New Testament. The present edition therefore displays that dominant consensus text as it appears throughout the Greek New Testament. This Byzantine Textform volume is offered as an accurate representation of the New Testament canonical text, the written word of God according to the original Greek. This labor of love and devotion has been performed with the utmost care and respect for God's revealed word of truth, and is now presented in a format designed to satisfy the needs of students, clergy, and scholars alike.

[1] Early printed Textus Receptus (or "Received Text") editions closely resemble the Byzantine Textform but often diverge from it in significant readings. Such editions primarily derive from the limited selection of a small number of late manuscripts, as utilized by Erasmus, Ximenes, or their immediate historical successors. The overall text of these early printed editions differs from the Byzantine Textform in over 1800 instances, generally due to the inclusion of weakly supported non-Byzantine readings. Since the Receptus form of text does not provide an accurate reproduction of the common Greek manuscript tradition, the present edition strives to rectify that situation by presenting the readings of the Byzantine Textform in a more precise manner.

Those who have labored in the preparation of this volume trust that it will encourage many to broaden their knowledge of the New Testament through the exegesis and interpretation of its Koine Greek archetype, all to the glory of God. Our prayer and fervent hope is that the Lord Jesus Christ will prosper the work of our hands and use our labors for the benefit of his kingdom.

THE TEXT OF THIS EDITION

The newly edited Byzantine Greek text presented in this edition differs slightly from previous versions. All readings were carefully reexamined, with certain alterations being made to the main text after fresh reevaluation. Various typographical errors have been corrected, and the orthography has been standardized throughout. The underlying theory has been revised in light of new knowledge based upon extensive collation research.[2] Diacritical marks, punctuation, and capitalization now are included to assist the reader. Critical notes alert the reader to closely divided Byzantine readings as well as to differences between the Byzantine Textform and the predominantly Alexandrian text displayed in modern eclectic critical editions.

This edition with its marginal readings offers an accurate reflection of the true state of the Byzantine text of the Greek New Testament. While further minor adjustments yet may occur in view of additional information or the reassessment of existing data, the editors anticipate no future major alteration to the basic text here presented.

TEXTTYPES AND TEXTFORM

The New Testament autographs were composed in Greek during the first century AD. Copies of these sacred canonical documents rapidly circulated among the churches of the Roman Empire according to the ecclesiastical needs of the spreading early Christian communities. Conscientious scribes carefully prepared copies of the New Testament documents, either as separate canonical books or in collected groupings. This scribal labor was performed with a respectable degree of accuracy, and the manuscript copies thus prepared were able to establish and maintain the general form of the

[2] Robinson has collated the *Pericope Adulterae* (John 7:53-8:11) in all available Greek manuscripts and lectionaries that include the narrative of this incident. When these data are compared with full collation records of various uncial and minuscule manuscripts in all portions of the New Testament, a more comprehensive understanding of historical manuscript transmission results. The *Pericope Adulterae* data suggest an increased presumption of relative independence within the various lines of Byzantine manuscript descent. This provides a weighty premise by which to interpret transmissional history. The editors' previous assumption regarding the effect of scribal cross-comparison and correction using multiple exemplars is now seen to be a lesser factor in the overall transmissional process.

canonical New Testament text. Yet deviations from the original form of the text appeared within a fairly short time.

Most deviations resulted from simple copying errors caused by the eye, ear, or hand. These would include cases of itacism, misspelling, dittography, transposition or substitution of words, and omission of letters, words, or phrases by haplography, homoioteleuton or other causes. Some variations resulted from certain types of intentional alteration. These include conjectural attempts to restore damaged exemplars; the adjustment of readings considered problematic due to perceived difficulties in content, syntax, or style; and various theological alterations made by orthodox, heterodox, or heretics.

Some transmissional lines of the New Testament text, therefore, created and perpetuated certain readings and patterns of reading that differed from the autographs: these developed into the various known families and texttypes found among our extant manuscripts. While a family group usually can be traced to a more recent common ancestor, the origin of the larger texttype units remains problematic. Four divergent major texttypes predominate within the New Testament, although the existence and coherence of the Western and Caesarean have been called into question. The Byzantine and Alexandrian remain primary, and basically it is the preference for one of these two texts that characterizes the various printed Greek New Testament editions. The Byzantine-priority theory considers the Byzantine Textform to reflect the text that most closely reflects the canonical autographs, and thus to reflect the archetype from which all remaining texttypes have derived.

The Western Text

The earliest deviations from the autographs appear in the so-called Western, or "uncontrolled popular text," of the second century. That text is characterized by free expansion, paraphrase, and alteration of previously existing words. Western witnesses are few and generally diverse, with a textual individuality that hampers the reconstruction of a common archetype. Even so, the bulk of its readings shares a commonalty with the text of the presumed autograph.

The Alexandrian Text

The Alexandrian texttype appears to originate in an early localized recensional attempt to purge and purify the alterations and accretions found among the Western manuscripts. The principles underlying this recensional activity seem to have been reductionist and

stylistic.[3] The manuscript(s) selected as the recensional exemplars likely were "mixed" in textual quality as well as scribally defective; this would parallel what is found in most early Egyptian or Palestinian papyri of the second and third centuries. The Alexandrian recension seems often to have overreacted and overextended itself, removing not only early Western expansions but many longer original readings in the process. Yet the same recension failed to correct many Western substitutions and transpositions, even while retaining many shorter "sensible" readings caused by accidental scribal omission in the intermediate archetype.[4]

The Alexandrian texttype is primarily represented throughout most of the New Testament by the agreement of Codex Vaticanus (B/03) and Codex Sinaiticus (א/01), with the support of other related manuscripts, such as 𝔓75 and L/019. Critical editions such as the NA27 and UBS4 reflect a predominantly Alexandrian textbase,[5] with readings established on a variant-by-variant basis by means of subjectively applied internal criteria coupled with selectively determined external principles (the "reasoned" method of modern eclecticism). This modern eclectic process of subjective textual determination on a per-variant basis results in a textual patchwork that within numerous verses finds no support among any extant document, even over relatively short segments of scripture.[6] This problematic situation does not occur among the manuscript consensus that forms the basis of the Byzantine Textform.

The Caesarean Text

The Caesarean text appears to be an amalgam of readings from the Alexandrian and Byzantine traditions. Although the Caesarean manuscripts do appear to possess a distinctive pattern of readings, this texttype does not appear to have existed prior to either the Byzantine

[3] J. C. O'Neill, "The Rules followed by the Editors of the Text found in the Codex Vaticanus," *NTS* 35 (1989) 218-228. O'Neill suggests that specific editorial activity, accidental error, and attempted reconstruction characterized the recension that produced the original Alexandrian archetype reflected in its later 𝔓75/B descendants.

[4] This suggestion is developed further in Maurice A. Robinson, "In Search of the Alexandrian Archetype: Observations from a Byzantine-Priority Perspective," in Christian-B. Amphoux and J. Keith Elliott, eds., *The New Testament Text in Early Christianity: Proceedings of the Lille Colloquium, July 2000,* Histoire du Texte Biblique 6 (Lausanne: Éditions du Zèbre, 2003), 45-67.

[5] Barbara Aland et al., eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece,* 27th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993); idem, *The Greek New Testament,* 4th rev. ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994). The base text of both editions remains identical.

[6] Examples are provided in the Appendix to this volume, notes 16-18; see also Maurice A. Robinson, "Investigating Text-Critical Dichotomy: A Critique of Modern Eclectic Praxis from a Byzantine-Priority Perspective," *Faith and Mission* 16 (1999), 16-31, particularly 17-19; idem, "Rule 9, Isolated Variants, and the 'Test-Tube' Nature of the NA27 Text," in Stanley E. Porter and Mark Boda, eds., *Translating the New Testament: Text, Translation, Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, forthcoming).

or Alexandrian texts. It is generally dismissed from any serious consideration regarding autograph originality.

The Byzantine Textform

The Byzantine Textform preserves with a general consistency the type of New Testament text that dominated the Greek-speaking world. This dominance existed from at least the fourth century until the invention of printing in the sixteenth century. Under the present theory, this text also is presumed in centuries prior to the fourth to have dominated the primary Greek-speaking region of the Roman Empire (southern Italy, Greece, and Asia Minor) – a large and diverse region within which manuscript, versional, and patristic evidence is lacking during the pre-fourth century era, yet the primary region of Byzantine Textform dominance in subsequent centuries.

From a transmissional standpoint, a single Textform would be expected to predominate among the vast majority of manuscripts in the absence of radical and well-documented upheavals in the manuscript tradition. This "normal" state of transmission presumes that the aggregate consentient testimony of the extant manuscript base is more likely to reflect its archetypal source (in this case the canonical autographs) than any single manuscript, small group of manuscripts, or isolated versional or patristic readings that failed to achieve widespread diversity or transmissional continuity. In support of this presumption is the fact that a consensus text – even when established from manuscripts representing non-dominant transmissional lines – tends to move *toward* rather than away from the more dominant tradition.

The Byzantine-priority hypothesis thus appears to offer the most plausible scenario for canonical autograph transmission. This hypothesis is far more probable than the speculative originality claimed for modern eclectic patchworks, constructed from scattered fragments, with continually shifting levels of support from existing manuscripts.[7] An historical theory that assumes a generally normal mode of transmission more readily accounts for the expansion and dominance of a single Textform that can be presumed closely to reflect

[7] Jenny Read-Heimerdinger, *The Bezan Text of Acts: A Contribution of Discourse Analysis to Textual Criticism,* JSNTSS 236 (Sheffield: Academic Press, 2002), states, "The current editions of the Greek New Testament . . . [present] a hypothetical text that has been reconstructed by selecting variant readings from different MSS . . . . There is no evidence whatsoever that the current text ever existed in the form in which it is edited" (51); thus, researchers and search programs "rely for their text on a printed edition whose text does not exist in any extant manuscript and which is reconstituted by textual critics" (64n7).

the original autographs. The Byzantine-priority theory presents far fewer difficulties than are found in the alternative solutions proffered by modern eclectic proponents.

While any explanation of early transmissional history remains a matter of theory, it is a fact that almost all readings found within the Byzantine Textform exist as component portions of either the Western or Alexandrian texts. Yet the Western and Alexandrian texttypes differ far more among themselves than does either when compared to the Byzantine Textform. This strongly suggests the separate derivation of each of these regional texts from a common source that would closely resemble the more dominant tradition. In addition, the individual Byzantine Textform readings are clearly defensible on reasonable internal, transcriptional, and transmissional grounds, and demonstrate far fewer weaknesses than exist with readings typical of non-Byzantine texttypes.

The simplicity of the Byzantine-priority hypothesis stands in stark contrast to the transmissional history demanded by the modern eclectic models (reasoned or thoroughgoing). Those models see the original text scattered to the four winds at a very early period, with a later development of disparate texttypes, none of which can claim to represent the "lost" autographs. Under those systems, the Byzantine text is considered to have arisen from an officially promulgated formal recension, or from an unguided "process" that involved a relatively unsystematic selection and conflation of readings taken from the (supposedly earlier) disparate Western and Alexandrian texttypes. In either case, this uncritical selection of readings then was coupled with various stylistic and harmonizing improvements that supposedly typified the later scribal mindset. The problem lies in explaining how such a haphazard procedure ever could result in the extensively disseminated but relatively unified Byzantine Textform. These suppositions (which lack historical confirmation) are seen to be unwarranted once the full theoretical and practical conspectus of the Byzantine-priority position has been examined in light of the existing evidence.

THE BYZANTINE-PRIORITY THEORY

The establishment of the most accurate form of the canonical Greek text of the New Testament is prerequisite to exegesis and to a proper hermeneutic. Many theories and extreme solutions have been proposed regarding the most appropriate method for determining the optimal form of the New Testament autograph text. Some researchers even have jettisoned the concept of autograph recoverability, while

others have abandoned entirely the concept of an original autograph.[8] The current trend seems merely to favor a critical inquiry into the various forms (or "states") of the text presented in the existing manuscripts, and to investigate their individual theological significance according to their position within church history, with little or no regard given to the concept of autograph originality.[9] In contrast, the present editors support a theory favoring the priority and canonical autograph authenticity of the Byzantine Textform.

Byzantine-priority functions within the framework of a predominantly transmissional approach, and stands as a legitimate alternative to the methods and results currently espoused by modern eclecticism. Rather than creating a preferred text on a variant-by-variant basis, Byzantine-priority seeks first the establishment of a viable history of textual transmission. Transcriptional and transmissional probabilities are then applied to the external data, which then is supplemented by various internal criteria. The resultant text reflects a defined level of agreement supported by a general transmissional continuity throughout all portions of the Greek New Testament.

Byzantine-priority differs from other theories and methods within New Testament textual criticism: the object is not the reconstruction of an "original" text that lacks demonstrable continuity or widespread existence among the extant manuscript base; nor is the object the restoration or recovery of an "original" text long presumed to have been "lost." Neither should the concept of an archetypal autograph be abandoned as hopeless. Rather, Byzantine-priority presents as canonical the Greek New Testament text as it has been attested, preserved, and maintained by scribes throughout the centuries. This transmissional basis characterizes the Byzantine-priority theory.

Byzantine-priority functions within accepted text-critical guidelines, utilizing all pertinent transmissional, transcriptional, external, and internal considerations when evaluating variant readings. Internal and external criteria function in a balanced manner, consistent

[8] See, for example, Eldon Jay Epp, "The Multivalence of the Term 'Original Text' in New Testament Textual Criticism," *HTR* 92 (1999) 245-281.

[9] Such is the emphasis of David C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: University Press, 1997). Parker further amplifies his position in his "Through a Screen Darkly: Digital Texts and the New Testament." *JSNT* 25 (2003) 395-411: "Textual critics, under the guise of reconstructing original texts, are really creating new ones . . . . The biblical text, rather than being corrupted and needing to be restored . . . , is constantly under development . . . . In this light, the quest for the original text may be seen as a complete misunderstanding of what editors were really doing" (401); "I do not mean that the texts we are creating are necessarily superior to earlier creations. It is more significant that they are the texts that we *need* to create" (402, emphasis added).

with sound methodology. Texttype relationships and proclivities are recognized, and a reasoned method of textual evaluation is practiced. Extraneous theological factors are not invoked or imposed when establishing the most plausible original form of the New Testament text.

Byzantine-priority theory does not operate on an eclectic variant-by-variant basis. Rather, it continually investigates the position of all variant units within the history of transmission. Probabilities are evaluated in light of the extant manuscript and historical data, as well as the known habits of scribes. The emphasis of Byzantine-priority is upon a "reasoned transmissionalism," particularly in regard to the connected sequence of variant units as they appear in the text and as they relate to the external support provided by the manuscripts themselves.

Modern eclectic theory fails precisely at this point: it produces a sequence of favored readings that at times – even over short segments of text – has no demonstrated existence in any known manuscript, version, or father.[10] Byzantine-priority considers such a method and its results to be illegitimate, since it neglects the pertinent historical factors regarding manuscript transmission. Modern eclectic praxis is not a legitimate alternative to the acceptance of the text preserved among the consensus of the manuscripts. A viable praxis of textual criticism requires a transmissional history that does not contradict the general harmony found among the extant witnesses. The text produced by modern eclecticism lacks a viable theory of transmission; the text presented under Byzantine-priority is based upon a theory of transmission that offers consistent conclusions. This in itself suggests the validity of the Byzantine-priority hypothesis.

Byzantine-priority provides a compelling and logical perspective that stands on its own merits when establishing the optimal form of the New Testament text. It has a methodological consistency not demonstrated among the various eclectic alternatives. Modern eclectic claims to have established a quasi-authoritative form of the New Testament text consistently fall short, since the underlying theory lacks a transmissionally oriented base. The Byzantine-priority theory may appear simple, but it certainly is not simplistic: there are compelling reasons for recognizing a text that demonstrates

[10] Maurice A. Robinson, "The Recensional Nature of the Alexandrian Text-Type: A Response to Selected Criticisms of the Byzantine-Priority Theory," *Faith and Mission* 11 (1993) 46-74, especially 48, 68: "The text found in the current critical editions, taken as a whole, is not one found in any extant manuscript, version, or Father, nor ever will be . . . . Modern eclectics have created an artificial entity with no ancestral lineage from any single historical MS or group of MSS." Examples of the short-segment sequential reading problem can be found in the sources cited in footnote 6 above.

transmissional continuity and dominance for more than a thousand years as the most likely representation of the sacred autographs. The appendix to this volume discusses "The Case for Byzantine-Priority" in more detail.

THE BYZANTINE CONSENSUS TEXT

The Byzantine Textform reflects a dominant consensus pattern of readings that is maintained throughout most of the New Testament. In nearly all instances the consensus readings are readily established and confirmed by data published in various critical apparatuses, specialized studies, and collation records. The primary source for establishing the readings of the Byzantine Textform remains the massive apparatus of Hermann Freiherr von Soden,[11] supplemented in the Apocalypse by the relatively complete collation data of Herman C. Hoskier.[12] Additional confirmatory material appears in various sources, including the UBS^4, NA^{27}, the IGNTP volumes,[13] the Editio Critica Maior,[14] and specific manuscript collations published within the Studies and Documents series and elsewhere.

The *Text und Textwert* volumes[15] are particularly useful in this regard: this series presents complete collation data regarding selected variant units throughout the New Testament. Within each variant unit, *Text und Textwert* cites *all* available Greek manuscripts in relation to their support of specific readings. These data provide primary confirmation regarding the status of Byzantine readings that previously had been established from earlier published sources. In particular, these full collation results tend to confirm the Byzantine group evidence presented in von Soden's early twentieth-century apparatus. In a similar manner, the Claremont Profile Method also tends to confirm von Soden's general reliability in regard to the

[11] Hermann Freiherr von Soden, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt,* 2 vols. in 4 parts (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1911).

[12] Herman C. Hoskier, *Concerning the Text of the Apocalypse,* 2 vols. (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1929).

[13] S. C. E. Legg, ed., *Nouum Testamentum Graece secundum Textum Westcotto-Hortianum: Euangelium secundum Marcum* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1935); idem, *Nouum Testamentum Graece secundum Textum Westcotto-Hortianum: Euangelium secundum Matthaeum* (Oxford, Clarendon, 1940); The American and British Committees of the International Greek New Testament Project, *The New Testament in Greek: The Gospel according to Luke,* 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984, 1987); W. J. Elliott and D. C. Parker, eds., *The New Testament in Greek, IV: The Gospel according to St. John. 1. The Papyri* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

[14] Barbara Aland et al., eds., *Novum Testamentum Graecum: Editio Critica Maior, IV, Die Katholischen Briefe:* 1, Der Jakobusbrief; 2, Die Petrusbriefe; 3, Der Erste Johannesbrief (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997-2003).

[15] Kurt Aland et al., eds., *Text und Textwert der griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments*; I, Die Katholischen Briefe; II, Die Paulinischen Briefe; III, Die Apostelgeschichte; IV, Die Synoptischen Evangelien: 1, Das Markusevangelium; 2, Das Matthäusevangelium; 3, Das Lukasevangelium (Berlin: Walter DeGruyter, 1987-1999).

identification of groups.[16] Although von Soden cannot be relied upon when dealing with specific readings of individual manuscripts,[17] his overall general reliability in regard to the larger groupings of texttypes and sub-types remains stable in view of the evidence provided by these outside sources.

ESTABLISHING THE TEXT OF THIS EDITION

The primary readings of the Byzantine Textform are established in a straightforward manner: subject to additional confirmation, when a reading in von Soden's apparatus is identified by a bold **K**, that reading becomes the main text in the present edition (**K** = Κοινη = the Byzantine Textform). Where von Soden makes no statement regarding bold **K,** his main text represents the Byzantine reading, and is reproduced without change. Where his bold **K** is divided, the K^x subgroup is followed (K^x represents the dominant component within bold **K**). Where K^x is divided, the readings of lesser K subgroups are included in the evaluation. When K^x and the various K subgroups are closely divided, alternate readings are displayed in the side margin in proximity to the portion of text affected. At all times, pertinent transmissional, transcriptional, external, and internal factors are considered as component elements of weight. In the relatively few instances where von Soden's main text or apparatus has been confirmed to be in error, other pertinent sources have been used for correction.

In regard to the *Pericope Adulterae* (John 7:53-8:11) and the book of the Revelation a different evaluative procedure is required. In those portions of scripture, the generally unified Byzantine Textform divides into various equally supported transmissional streams. Where these streams unite, the text represents the Byzantine consensus; where they divide, other methodological approaches are required. These are now discussed separately.

[16] See Frederik Wisse, *The Profile Method for Classifying and Evaluating Manuscript Evidence,* SD 44 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982).

[17] Beyond the valid criticism dealing with error in regard to individual manuscript citation (often typographical), Von Soden also has been criticized because his apparatus does not permit the accurate reconstruction of the complete text of any given manuscript. Yet this criticism applies to any edition containing a limited critical apparatus. One cannot reconstruct from the text and apparatus of NA[27] the continuous text of any single manuscript, even from among its "consistently cited witnesses." Von Soden's data are recognized as having a particular and demonstrated value when presenting the evidence of *groups* of manuscripts; it is primarily from these data that the text of the present edition is established.

The Pericope Adulterae

The narrative regarding the woman accused of adultery is clearly a canonical component within the Byzantine Textform. Yet this particular twelve-verse passage reflects a complex transmissional history, perhaps caused by its exclusion from standard lectionary use within the Greek church in relation to the portion of text selected for reading at the feast of Pentecost.[18] Von Soden identified seven distinct lines of transmission within this short section of text. Robinson's complete collation of all available manuscripts containing this pericope suggests that von Soden may have underestimated the complexity of its transmissional lines. Nevertheless, Von Soden's three primary lines of transmission remain valid, and encompass the bulk of the manuscript tradition. Each of these three lines – termed by von Soden μ^5, μ^6, and μ^7 – retains a near-equal level of support.[19]

The μ^7 group exists primarily among manuscripts of the 12th and subsequent centuries. This group is recognized by von Soden and other researchers as possessing a late recensional text that corresponds to the K^r group found in other portions of the New Testament. The μ^5 and μ^6 transmissional lines dominate the remaining portion of the Byzantine manuscript tradition, and reflect earlier forms that were diverse and widespread within that tradition. The autograph form of the *Pericope Adulterae* is more likely to have been one of these two transmissional lines, as opposed to that found in the recensional $\mu^7 = K^r$ tradition.

Previously, the editors displayed the text of the *Pericope Adulterae* as a tentative hybrid, combining elements of μ^5 and μ^6, with some readings bracketed. In this edition, the primary text is μ^5, with its marginal alternates in their proper location. The μ^6 text is displayed separately as an italicized footnote, along with its own alternate marginal readings. For this pericope the μ^5 and μ^6 texts no longer are dependent on von Soden's reconstructions, but each text is published as a group-based consensus derived from the collated manuscripts that date through the eleventh century.

Although final decisions require the detailed analysis of the full collation data (a task yet future), the editors consider the μ^5 group more likely to reflect the autograph form of this pericope. The μ^6 text appears to be secondary, possessing transmissional and internal

[18] See Maurice A. Robinson, "Preliminary Observations Regarding the *Pericope Adulterae* based upon Fresh Collations of nearly all Continuous-Text Manuscripts and all Lectionary Manuscripts containing the Passage." *Filología Neotestamentaria* 13 (2000) 35-59.

[19] The μ as used by von Soden indicates the Greek chapter heading τῆς μοιχαλίδος = "of the adulteress."

characteristics suggestive of later recensional activity. While further analysis of the collation data may lead to minor adjustments regarding the precise form of the μ5 and μ6 texts, no major changes to either group are anticipated.

The Text of the Apocalypse

The establishment of the Byzantine text of the Apocalypse is a task far more complex than that which exists in the greater part of the New Testament. The dominant Apocalypse text appears in two related but distinct transmissional lines within the Byzantine tradition. These forms are generally known as Av and Q, each supported by an approximately equal number of manuscripts. The Av readings predominate in manuscripts that contain or derive from the fourth-century commentary of Andreas of Caesarea (Cappadocia). The Q readings predominate in manuscripts related to the uncial 046.

Where Av and Q agree, that reading reflects the Byzantine Textform. The union of Av and Q prevails throughout most of the Apocalypse. Nevertheless, Av and Q frequently differ, with their respective readings possessing near-equal levels of support among the extant manuscript base. Adjudication between these competing readings requires a precise application of transmissional and internal principles.

In previous editions, the equally divided Av and Q textual differences were partially indicated by the enclosure of some words in square brackets; these signified only cases of inclusion or omission. The remaining instances of equally divided Av and Q division – cases of substitution and transposition – were not indicated, despite their frequency of occurrence. The present edition displays *all* closely divided alternate Byzantine readings in the margin, with more of these divided readings appearing in the Apocalypse than elsewhere in the New Testament.[20]

In the Apocalypse, the main text is considered to be the strongest transmissional representation of the Byzantine archetype; generally this is the text of the Q group. Although the Andreas text has an ancient origin, it appears to reflect recensional adjustment, both prior to the time of Andreas, and possibly also during Andreas' preparation of his commentary.[21] In contrast, the Q text is based upon a consensus of disparate manuscripts that represent many copying

[20] Many bracketed Av readings of earlier editions are now relocated to the margin. The main Apocalypse text of this edition thus moves slightly more toward Q than previously.

[21] Josef Schmid, *Studien zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypse-textes. 1. Teil. Der Apokalypse-Kommentar des Andreas von Kaisareia: Einleitung.* München: Karl Zink, 1955, 125-129.

locations and eras.[22] Despite the transmissional diversity found among the Q manuscripts, the consensus Q text generally remains stable. The unplanned coincidental agreement among the diverse Q manuscripts argues strongly for their transmissional independence and autograph originality; this stands in contrast to the Andreas manuscripts with their apparent recensional origin. Nevertheless, for the greater portion of the Apocalypse, the Av and Q texts share a common base.

The Q manuscripts are not slavishly followed, however. At times, a significant number of Q manuscripts abandon their group consensus and align with the Av reading. This situation does not appear to be coincidental, nor is it due to intrusion from the Andreas stream, given the general independence of the manuscripts within the Q tradition. Manuscripts of the Av tradition rarely support Q readings; this suggests that, when Q manuscripts offer their support in some quantity to the Av readings, a particular weight should be attached to the phenomenon. Where the Av reading is supported by a significant number of Q manuscripts, it is presumed that the Q^{pt} + Av reading preserves the autograph text (readings common to undivided Q + Av already are considered of autograph originality).

The approach remains transmissional: readings jointly supported by Av and Q represent the Byzantine archetype. When Av and Q are divided, the Q reading generally is preferred due to its transmissional diversity and relative independence. Only when a significant number of Q manuscripts supports the Av reading will that reading appear as the main text. Equally divided readings appear in the margin, as is the case elsewhere in the New Testament. Exceptions to these transmissional parameters occur when compelling transcriptional, contextual, or internal considerations strongly favor an alternative reading.

This method has been applied judiciously by the editors. The autograph authenticity of the Apocalypse text is supported with a high degree of accuracy, based upon the combination of transmissional, transcriptional, and internal factors. The main text should be regarded as superior to the marginal alternatives as well as to the text presented in non-Byzantine printed editions.

[22] Schmid, *Einleitung,* 126, states, "Der *K*-Text [Q] ist außerordentlich geschlossen überliefert. Das Gros seiner Hss weist keine fremden Einflüsse auf, und der Text des Archetyps *K* selbst ist höchstens an ein paar Stellen fraglich. Für die Av-Überlieferung dagegen ist die größte Zersplitterung bezeichnend. Die Rekonstruktion des Archetyps ist infolgedessen schwierig und nicht in allen Fällen mit Sicherheit möglich."

General Considerations

For most of the New Testament the Byzantine Textform is supported by nearly the whole of the manuscript tradition; in almost every case the Byzantine reading reflects the concurrence of at least 70% and usually more than 80% of the extant manuscripts. Yet the primary basis of textual determination remains non-quantitative: the transmissional and transcriptional factors that have characterized the manuscripts over the centuries are of greater significance than the mere quantity of evidence. As these non-numerical factors are applied to the evaluation of individual variant units, the sequential resultant text becomes more securely established and reflects a basic transmissional consensus.

Although the far greater *numerical* quantity of Byzantine manuscripts (approaching 80%) exists among the documents of the twelfth and later centuries, the readings of the Byzantine Textform almost always are fully established from the earlier Byzantine lines of transmission that extend through the eleventh century. The documents of the twelfth and later centuries generally are irrelevant to the establishment of primary Byzantine readings, and at best serve only a confirmatory purpose.

The quantity of witnesses does play a role when evaluating transmissional and transcriptional probabilities, but number by itself cannot become the sole or even the primary factor in the evaluation process. Quantity alone cannot be determinative when evaluating variant units: *all* pertinent considerations regarding external, internal, transcriptional, and transmissional evidence must be examined and evaluated before final decisions upon readings can be made. The "number" factor particularly plays a passive role when the manuscripts comprising the Byzantine Textform are seriously divided. Where the marginal apparatus of this edition displays divided Byzantine readings, the main text necessarily has been established on non-numerical grounds.

This method of "reasoned transmissionalism" is based primarily upon external and documentary evidence; yet *all* pertinent transmissional and transcriptional factors constantly are evaluated in relation to the various aspects of external and internal criteria before any final decisions are made regarding the text to be established.

Final judgment on readings requires the application of internal principles following the initial evaluation of the external data. No reading can be established in isolation from its neighboring variant units; nor can the transmissional and transcriptional habits of scribes

be ignored when examining the development and dissemination of competing readings.[23] In general, scribes tended to preserve the text that lay before them in their exemplars; this despite the various accidental corruptions or intentional alterations that occurred during the transmissional process. Extensive alteration was not frequent or widespread: the vast bulk of the text found in all manuscripts – regardless of texttype – remains a common possession. Existing family and texttype groupings are directly related to the transmissional development of the text in various eras and locales.

Manuscripts and readings must be evaluated in regard to their antiquity, diversity, and continuity within transmissional history. Individual scribes must be characterized in regard to their degree of care when copying from their exemplars. A proper implementation of each of these factors results in a well-established representation of the traditionally disseminated Byzantine Textform. This Textform dominated textual transmission in the primary Greek-speaking regions for more than a thousand years, and it is this Textform that holds the strongest transmissional claim to represent the canonical autographs.

The Byzantine Textform is well-established within the canonical books of the Greek New Testament. The maximum degree of significant Byzantine textual variation is displayed in the relatively few readings of the marginal apparatus. Readings that lack a Byzantine consensus or are not part of the closely divided Byzantine tradition do not appear in either the main text or marginal readings. Research concerning the divided Byzantine readings must continue, particularly in regard to the *Pericope Adulterae* and the book of the Revelation. Significant progress has been made in these areas, and exploration continues regarding closely divided Byzantine readings and the various minority lines of transmission that occur within the Byzantine Textform. The main text and marginal apparatus represent the primary locus within which Byzantine-priority theory functions. From this base future Byzantine Textform research must proceed.

[23] See Ernest C. Colwell, "Method in Evaluating Scribal Habits: A Study of $\mathfrak{P}^{45}$, $\mathfrak{P}^{66}$, $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$," in his *Studies in Methodology in Textual Criticism of the New Testament,* NTTS 9 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), 106-124; Maurice A. Robinson, "Scribal Habits among Manuscripts of the Apocalypse" (PhD Diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1982); James R. Royse, "Scribal Habits in the Transmission of New Testament Texts," in Wendy D. O'Flaherty, ed., *The Critical Study of Sacred Texts* (Berkeley: Graduate Theological Union, 1979), 139-161; idem, "Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri," ThD Diss., Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, 1981; idem, "Scribal Tendencies in the Transmission of the Text of the New Testament," in Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes, eds., *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis,* SD 46 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 239-252.

THE FORMAT OF THE PRESENT EDITION

The Title of this Volume

With good reason, the present title deliberately parallels that of Westcott and Hort (*The New Testament in the Original Greek*). The Byzantine Textform stands as the opposing point on a continuum that extends from the well-established and influential Alexandrian text presented by Westcott and Hort in 1881. As Westcott and Hort had claimed to reproduce with near-certainty the original form of the New Testament documents "in the original Greek," the present edition likewise sets forth a text that – within the framework of its underlying theory – is considered to reflect the canonical autographs in a highly accurate manner. All other Greek New Testament editions fall within the continuum bounded by the Byzantine and Alexandrian traditions.

The editors' names appear on the title page in order to indicate task-based responsibility. The Greek New Testament text remains the written word of God, produced by holy men of old who wrote under God's immediate inspiration and superintendence. The presentation of that word of God according to its clearest transmissional integrity requires only a minor level of editorial involvement and labor. The editors merely recognize and present the text that has been maintained by the scribes of past generations, constructing a textual consensus from the material available in previously published collation and apparatus resources. Our duty was to be faithful to this task, and it is to that end that we have labored.

Individual Book Titles

The New Testament book titles are not part of the inspired canonical text. Their wording varies dramatically among the different manuscripts and editions of the Greek New Testament. The book titles that appear in this edition represent a minimal consensus as found within the canonical tradition.

The Order of the Canonical Books

Individual manuscripts present the New Testament books in various arrangements; nevertheless, a particular Greek "canonical order" seems to have been popular during early transmissional history. This order is partially evidenced within various early papyri and manuscripts,[24] and occurs in the fourth-century Festal Letter of Athanasius (AD 367) and the list of canonical books attributed to the

[24] See David Trobisch, *The First Edition of the New Testament* (Oxford: University Press, 2000), 21-38. On page 28, Trobisch presents evidence from several early manuscripts that demonstrate the sequence of the "canonical edition."

Laodicean Council (AD 360/363).[25] The present edition reproduces that early "canonical order" for the Greek New Testament books.

According to the "canonical order," the New Testament books are grouped as follows: Gospels, Acts and General Epistles, Pauline Epistles, and Revelation. The individual books within each category follow the familiar order, except that in the Pauline Epistles, Hebrews stands between Second Thessalonians and First Timothy, intentionally separating Paul's local church epistles from those written to individuals.[26]

Accents, Breathings, Capitalization, and Punctuation

Early manuscripts were written in capital letter format (termed "uncial" or "majuscule"). They lacked word division, and possessed few (if any) diacritical marks, paragraph breaks, or marks of punctuation. These distinctions appear systematically only after the commencement of the minuscule era during the ninth century. While specialists are familiar with the plainer form of the Greek text, the modern reader expects readability features as a matter of course.

For a reader's edition, clarity is the basic aim. Since this edition is designed for the non-specialist, word separation, paragraph division, punctuation, and diacritical markings have been added throughout.[27] These editorial insertions are not considered definitive for the interpretation of the text. Although alternative accentuation, aspiration, or punctuation could alter the interpretation of many passages and affect exegetical comprehension, the editors have followed the general usage found in standard printed editions. No

[25] Daniel J. Theron, *Evidence of Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1958), 118-119 (Athanasius), 124-125 (Laodicea). See also 116-117 (the general grouping of NT books by Cyril of Jerusalem). Compare Brooke Foss Westcott, *A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament,* 6th ed. (Cambridge and London: Macmillan and Co., 1889), Appendix D, 539-579; in particular, 540-541 (Laodicea), 545-546 (John of Damascus), 549-550 (Cyril of Jerusalem), 552-553 (the index of Codex Alexandrinus), 554-555 (Athanasius), 559-560 (Leontius); but see 431-439 in regard to the possible inauthenticity of the Laodicean list.

[26] William H. P. Hatch, "The Position of Hebrews in the Canon of the New Testament," *HTR* 29 (1936) 133-151. The canonical order Second Thessalonians-Hebrews-First Timothy is discussed on 136-143. Hatch shows that this order is found among early and geographically diverse Greek manuscripts, fathers, and versions, and was retained among some manuscripts over many centuries. Hatch termed this order "Alexandrian," due to his views regarding textual development. The secondary "Western" (or early Latin) order (which is more familiar to the modern reader) was termed "Byzantine" by Hatch (143, 149-150), due to its presence in later Byzantine manuscripts that had adopted the Western usage. The editors suggest, on the contrary, that Hatch's data support the early Greek canonical order as original and authentically "Byzantine." Clearly, the earliest Greek canonical order differed from the early Western tradition; only much later did Byzantine Greek manuscripts adopt the Western order.

[27] The added marks of accentuation, aspiration, punctuation, and capitalization have been extensively proofread for this edition, but perfection is not claimed. The reader is encouraged to offer pertinent correction where necessary.

diacritical insertions should affect the traditional understanding of the Byzantine Greek New Testament text. Readability, therefore, is improved without the imposition of unwarranted interpretation. The text always must be received according to its original inspired intent, without unwarranted editorial alteration.

The text appears in paragraph format, with breaks inserted at appropriate points. Capitalization appears at the beginning of sentences, and at the commencement of direct quotation within a sentence (modern quotation marks are not used). Proper names are capitalized throughout, but not descriptive titles.[28] The various *nomina sacra* abbreviations that commonly appear in manuscripts for members of the Godhead, significant persons, or particular locations are not abbreviated in this edition, but are written in full form, even though the abbreviated forms normally dominate the manuscript tradition.[29]

The Marginal Apparatus

The main text displays the Byzantine Textform, according to its strongest transmissional, transcriptional, external, and internal testimony. Where the Byzantine manuscripts are strongly united, the main text stands without marginal comment. Where the manuscripts comprising the Byzantine Textform are significantly divided, superior angle brackets ⌜ ⌝ mark the affected word or words in the main text. The alternate Byzantine readings are displayed in the side margin, in proximity to the marked portion of the main text.[30] Minority subvariants within the Byzantine tradition are not cited in this edition.

Numerals are written as complete words throughout the main text. Some marginal variants – particularly in the Apocalypse – indicate Greek numerical forms (alphabet letters marked by the numerical superscript bar, e. g., $\overline{\text{ΙΒ}}$, $\overline{\text{ΡΜΔ}}$, $\overline{\text{ΑΧ}}$). In these rare instances, the *majority* of Greek manuscripts display the marginal numeric form; however, just as with the otherwise uncited *nomina sacra* abbreviations (which also tend to appear in the majority of all manuscripts), these

[28] Descriptive titles particularly applied to members of the Godhead include the various inflected forms of θεός, πατήρ, υἱός, χριστός, κύριος, ἅγιος, and πνεῦμα.

[29] Trobisch, *First Edition*, 66-68, 104-105, correctly suggests that a "canonical edition" should at least utilize the *nomina sacra* abbreviations representing the descriptive titles κύριος, θεός, and χριστός, as well as the abbreviation representing the proper name Ἰησοῦς. Since the modern reader generally is unfamiliar with the *nomina sacra* abbreviations, Trobisch's suggestion has not been implemented in this edition.

[30] Exceptions to this policy involve the μ^{6} text of the *Pericope Adulterae* (discussed above) and the lengthy Byzantine alternate reading encompassing Acts 24:6b-8a (see in context). In these two instances, the Byzantine alternative reading and its marginal variants appear separately, between the main text and the NA^{27} apparatus.

marginal numeric forms are not printed as the main text of this edition.

Some marginal entries reflect more than one alternative Byzantine subvariant. When word substitution or transposition is involved among the subvariants, the alternate readings are displayed, separated by an equals sign (=). When the subvariants concern a long and short reading, characterized solely by the addition or omission of a word or phrase, the removable words are surrounded by square brackets [ ]. The main text reading is not affected by the various divided marginal alternatives.

The Lower Apparatus

Variants from the main Byzantine text that occur in the base text of the NA27 and UBS4 modern critical editions appear in the lower apparatus. These variants are *not* marked within the main Byzantine text. In the lower apparatus, the reading of the Byzantine main text appears on the left, and is separated from the reading of NA27/UBS4 by a diamond (♦). The NA27/UBS4 variant appears to the right of the diamond. Some NA27/UBS4 readings *may* coincide with marginal Byzantine readings, but not with the main Byzantine text. Neither the UBS4 nor the more extensive NA27 apparatus cites *all* differences between their common text and the Byzantine Textform; many non-cited differences are text-critically and translationally significant, and are here clearly displayed in their totality for the first time.

Where the NA27/UBS4 main text includes bracketed words or portions of words, the brackets also appear to the right of the diamond. Some words that occur within NA27/UBS4 brackets *may* agree with the Byzantine main text (which has no brackets) or with the Byzantine marginal text. The brackets in modern critical editions are used to indicate various degrees of textual uncertainty as perceived by those editors. Double brackets in NA27/UBS4 indicate what those editors consider to be later and non-original interpolations.[31] The status of the Byzantine main or marginal readings is *not* affected by any modern critical text readings or brackets that appear in the lower apparatus.

[31] Double brackets in NA27/UBS4 that relate to the Byzantine main text appear at Mark 16:9-20; Luke 22:43-44; Luke 23:34; and John 7:53-8:11. The only NA27 double-bracketed portion not related to the Byzantine Textform is the so-called "shorter ending" of Mark, which NA27 inserts between Mark 16:8 and 9, preceding its double-bracketed "longer ending" (Mark 16:9-20). The NA27 "shorter ending" reads as follows: [[Πάντα δὲ τὰ παρηγγελμένα τοῖς περὶ τὸν Πέτρον συντόμως ἐξήγγειλαν. Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς καὶ ἄχρι δύσεως ἐξαπέστειλεν δι' αὐτῶν τὸ ἱερὸν καὶ ἄφθαρτον κήρυγμα τῆς αἰωνίου σωτηρίας. Ἀμήν.]]

The Apparatuses in General

In the marginal and lower apparatuses, instances of substitution, transposition, or addition are cited in full. When a word or phrase is omitted in relation to the main text, a dash (—) indicates the omission. Where a word affected by variation appears more than once in a given verse, the apparatuses provide sufficient context for clarity. Minor orthographic variants encompassing movable final letters, alternative punctuation, accentuation, and capitalization are not recorded in either apparatus.

Orthography

The orthography has been standardized throughout. Manuscript irregularities, inconsistencies, and itacistic peculiarities are not reproduced. Movable Nu (-ν) is always present; movable Sigma (-ς) is retained for οὕτως but is omitted from μέχρι and ἄχρι. Elision of final vowels (δι', ἀπ', ἀφ', etc.) follows the regular pattern; so too consonantal alterations preceding rough or smooth breathings (ἐξ, οὐκ, οὐχ, etc.). Compound forms reflect phonetic assimilation (ἐν- becomes ἐγ-; συν- becomes συμ-, συγ-, or συλ-; -λημπ- and -λημψ- become -ληπ- and -ληψ-). The generally abbreviated name of David ($\overline{\Delta\text{A}\Delta}$) is written in full as Δαυίδ, avoiding the itacistic form Δαυεῖδ found in the early Egyptian manuscripts. Other variant spellings of proper names are retained (Μωσῆς/Μωϋσῆς, Ἱεροσόλυμα/Ἰερουσαλὴμ, etc.), as well as the spelling of specific words that may reflect authorial preference. Iota subscript appears as such, even in initial capital letters; iota adscript is not used.

Chapter and Verse Numbers

A generally recognized chapter and verse numbering system is followed, although the positioning of verse numbers does not always correspond to that found in other Greek New Testament editions or translations. Verse references in the lower apparatus are keyed to the present edition; on a few occasions, the NA^{27} and UBS^{4} variant text may appear under a different verse number, differing by a single digit. Some early printed editions (usually Textus Receptus) and English translations include words or phrases that are not part of the Byzantine Textform (e. g., portions of Acts 9:5-6, 1 John 2:23, 1 John 5:7). The verse numbering is not affected by their absence.

In two passages the verse numbering has been adjusted for clarity. In some printed editions and translations, Matthew 23:13-14 appears in an order opposite that of the Byzantine Textform; the present edition maintains a consecutive numerical sequence within its own order of material. Also, the doxology generally published

as Romans 16:25-27 appears in the Byzantine Textform following Romans 14:23; in this location, the doxology is renumbered as Romans 14:24-26 (the epistle concludes at Romans 16:24 in the Byzantine Textform).

In four instances (Luke 17:36, Acts 8:37, Acts 15:34, Acts 24:7) a verse number appears alone in the main text, immediately followed by the next sequential verse number. These indicate lengthy portions of text that were included in some early Textus Receptus printed editions but which have never been part of the primary Byzantine Textform. The verse number is retained solely for reference, in order to preserve the traditional numbering of the remaining verses within the affected chapters. Elsewhere, the verse numbering is not affected.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The New Testament is God's revelation to his chosen people who comprise Christ's church. The Christian believer receives these scriptures as canonical and normative: the inspired and authoritative written word of God that serves as the infallible rule of faith and practice for God's people. The content of these scriptures is truth without mixture of error in all that they affirm. A corollary to these doctrinal beliefs is the confessional declaration that this revelation has been kept pure in all ages by the singular care and providence of God.

The Greek text of the New Testament therefore must be established and certified in a manner appropriate to its historical and theological significance. The task set before God's people is to identify and receive the best-attested form of that Greek biblical text as preserved among the extant evidence. Although no divine instruction exists regarding the establishment of the most precise form of the original autographs, such instruction is not required: autograph textual preservation can be recognized and established by a careful and judicious examination of the existing evidence. Scribal fidelity in manuscript transmission over the centuries remains the primary locus of autograph preservation.

God did not decree that identical copies of the autographs would be maintained during the era of manual transmission; indeed, no two manuscripts agree precisely. Yet the original Greek New Testament text has been preserved by ordinary means with a remarkable degree of accuracy in almost all manuscripts, through the unregulated dissemination and transmission of the New Testament documents. The basic integrity of this original text is confirmed by the apparently mundane labor carried out by generations of reasonably accurate scribes; the security and authority of the autograph text thus has been

preserved amid the complement of the total evidence presented within transmissional history. God has permitted the preservation of his inspired word in its best-attested form by means of the transmissional process: the extant Greek witnesses reflect a mutual consensus text that establishes and maintains the integrity and authority of the original revelation. This consensus text is the focal point of transmissional history. The divinely preserved autograph text exists and functions within the framework of *all* existing Greek source documents (manuscripts, lectionaries, patristic quotations). This text also is substantially reflected in the various ancient versions and non-Greek patristic quotations.

Since the divine method of autograph preservation resides in the totality of the extant Greek evidence, the strongest claimant for autograph originality remains the general consensus text preserved among that material. The New Testament text thus can be established securely and presented accurately by a proper use of the existing data. The Christian need only apply sound principles of evidence – transmissional, transcriptional, external, and internal – and frame these within a properly nuanced theory and praxis of textual criticism that avoids the hazards of subjective speculation. By these means the autograph text preserved among the extant witnesses readily can be recognized and established. While diligent labor, careful research, and a systematic methodology is required for optimal results, the establishment of the basic consensus text remains a clear and simple task. A consensus-based text – derived from the entire body of extant Greek witnesses – is fully compatible with the concept of a benevolent overarching providence that has maintained the autographs in their basic integrity by means of normal transmission.

No additional visible means of propagation was necessary to guarantee the integrity of the sacred originals. The testimony of the autographs has been preserved by means of independent transmission, scattered over a wide geographical area, amid a multitude of witnesses that span many centuries. The consensus Byzantine Textform thus is established by cooperation without collusion, requiring no imposition of external ecclesiastical authority. Special pleading is not demanded in order to maintain this perspective: everything corresponds to the extant preserved evidence.

The recognition of autograph originality amid the preserved Greek transmissional consensus found in the Byzantine Textform is far more reasonable than a multitude of conflicting speculations derived from various forms of eclectic methodology. The consensus-based approach does not appeal to favored individual manuscripts, local texts, or minority regional texttypes, nor to subjective internal

criteria that adopt an amalgam of individual readings with ever-changing degrees of minority support. The appeal is to the combined evidence that has been preserved among the extant Greek witnesses.

The Christian scholar need not speculate widely regarding the original form of the Greek New Testament text. That text can be recognized and established in its basic integrity by the application of proper and sound critical principles that take into consideration the consensus of the preserved evidence. The Byzantine Textform presented in this edition fulfills that goal: the Byzantine Textform is that which was transmitted and maintained as the dominant stream of manual Greek transmission within Christian history. Now, at the culmination of twenty-seven years of intense collaboration (1976-2003), the editors here present the newly edited Byzantine Textform as the strongest representative of the canonical autographs of the Greek New Testament text. It has been toward the fulfillment of this most noble and sacred goal that the editors have labored and now present the completion of their task.

On behalf of those who produced this edition, we would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to the various volunteers – too numerous to name individually – who gave of their time in proofreading and making corrections regarding the text and format of the present edition. Their efforts for the glory of God and the Lord Jesus Christ have greatly assisted the completion of this project.

May God be praised for his magnificent word!
All honor and glory to the Lord Jesus Christ!

WILLIAM G. PIERPONT
MAURICE A. ROBINSON

Downloadable at https://bibletranslation.ws