

# Revelations from the *apparatus criticus* of the Book of Revelation: How Textual Criticism Can Help Historians

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As a former colleague of John McGuckin in the University of Leeds, I have followed the various instalments (to use the spelling from John's old sod) of his impressively varied career to date, not least his installation (again, to prefer British usage) to a named chair. It is with great pleasure that I submit the following article on the textual variants in the Book of Revelation in his honor (and here I allow US spelling), knowing of his interest in New Testament Greek manuscripts and their influence on early Christianity.

## I PREAMBLE

As well as collecting, cataloguing, reading, and comparing manuscripts one of the major tasks of a textual critic is the presentation of a critically edited text, typically with an accompanying *apparatus* of alternative readings. As far as the New Testament is concerned, today's text-critics have become aware that it is their responsibility less to create a supposedly original text<sup>1</sup> and more to allow a reader to see the range of variation to which ancient literatures are prone. For texts deemed sacred by their users it was inevitable that deliberate changes were made to remove alleged ambiguities and to restore, or rather *create*, texts that follow a given party line.<sup>2</sup>

Obviously, once a text became established as uniquely authoritative, deliberate change would be discouraged by those charged with maintaining orthodoxy. (Naturally, accidental errors that all hand-written copying is prey to would happen to any text.) The finalizing of the New Testament canon by the fourth century put a stop to much deliberate change, but by then some three centuries of freer copying had elapsed. It was in those earliest Christian centuries when deliberate changes were made, that is, prior to the writing of most of the extant manuscripts. Obviously the date of a manuscript is no clue to the history of the text it contains, and in the case of our huge cache of Greek New Testament manuscripts we can often detect in even comparatively late witnesses readings that were the results of changes in early Christianity.

The picture is not uniform throughout the New Testament. Most textual variation is found within the Gospels, particularly in those harmonizing variants created to remove apparent discrepancies, especially within the synoptic parallels. Acts seems

1 The dilemma in establishing the original has been strikingly articulated by Eldon J. Epp in his article "The Multivalence of the Term 'Original Text' in New Testament Textual Criticism" reprinted as chapter 20 in his volume *Perspectives on New Testament Textual Criticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2005) = *Supplements to Novum Testamentum* 116.

2 A view set out by Bart D. Ehrman most notably in his *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) and also see David C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

to have circulated early in two radically differing forms; two divergent texts survive. And for those texts that were admitted comparatively late into the canon, such as Jude, the textual picture, which is very complex and variegated, suggests greater and freer copying for longer.

The same is true of the Book of Revelation. Its acceptance into the canon of New Testament scripture came late and, as far as the Eastern Church was concerned, only with great reluctance. Orthodox churches still exclude readings from this book in their ecclesiastical lectionary. Nonetheless, Revelation has had a profound effect on eastern churches' spirituality, and hence we concentrate on that book in this essay dedicated to John McGuckin.

The textual situation in Revelation differs in many respects from the manuscript heritage for other parts of the New Testament and, as a consequence, evaluating textual variation in the book differs too. There are comparatively fewer Greek manuscripts of Revelation than for other New Testament books, only 307 out of a total of about 5000;<sup>3</sup> there is a greater necessity for editors to depend on late minuscule witnesses.<sup>4</sup> Only some twenty manuscripts containing this book are given a date before the ninth century. However, the Greek text of Revelation has been subjected to authoritative and thorough academic scrutiny in the past century,<sup>5</sup> resulting in a firmer understanding of its textual character. The use of the conventional text-types, if ever this is valid in assessing variation even in the Gospels, certainly cannot apply in the same way to Revelation. Even the proponents of the majority text-type cannot readily rely on their one favored corpus of witnesses as the majority of manuscripts are often divided.

Most minuscule manuscripts of Revelation are accompanied by a commentary, and these represent an unusually high proportion of witnesses. Revelation was clearly a book that needed to circulate with patristic explanations. In many cases the text represented by the commentary is older than the (often very late) manuscript in which it is found. The main Greek commentaries are by Oecumenius, possible from the sixth to seventh centuries, now found in nine minuscules and twenty-three partial witnesses, and by Andreas of Cappadocian Caesarea 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> C. found in some one hundred and eleven manuscripts, eighty three of which have this commentary in its earlier form (although manuscripts 35 88 205 209 632 2886 now lack the commentary itself). Some thirteen manuscripts contain only an abbreviated form of Andreas' commentary and fifteen contain scholia (i.e. marginal notes based on the commentary).<sup>6</sup> Another commentary was by Arethas of Caesarea 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> C. found in fifteen manuscripts. Some later Ottoman commentaries are also found in

3 There are seven papyri: P18 P24 P43 P47 P85 P98 P115 all containing only Revelation; twelve majuscules: 8.01 A.02 C.04 P.025 046 051 052 0163 0169 0297 0229 0308 eight of which contain only Revelation; the remainder, 288, are minuscules.

4 See J.K. Elliott, "The Greek Manuscript Heritage of the Book of Revelation" in the *1900th Anniversary of St John's Apocalypse: Proceedings of the International and Interdisciplinary Symposium (Athens-Patmos, 17-26 September 1995)* (Athens: Holy Monastery of Saint John the Theologian in Patmos, 1999) pp. 217-26.

5 Notably by Josef Schmid especially in his *Studien zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypses-Textes* 2 volumes in three parts (Munich: Zink, 1955-6).

6 David E. Aune, *Word Biblical Commentary: Revelation* 3 vols. (Dallas: Nelson, 1997-8) calculates only ninety-eight manuscripts contain a commentary (not always in its entirety)!

manuscripts of Revelation e.g. Maximus the Peloponnesian in 2114 2402<sup>7</sup> (these two manuscripts are bracketed in the official register of Greek New Testament manuscripts to indicate that their inclusion is doubtful). The ways in which Revelation was read and understood may be discerned in these accompanying commentaries, but our concern now is to examine changes within the copies of the Greek text. Obviously in a short article only a small sample can be presented with adjoining notes but the motive here is to encourage readers of the Greek testament to keep a close eye not only on the running text but on the subjoined *apparatus* where many treasures lurk and which an exegete avoids at her peril.

The text and its *apparatus* together reveal changes that may affect meaning, show changes to the style and grammar, and sometimes even theology. Historians of the Greek language<sup>8</sup> and of early Christian theology and exegesis learn much if their focus is not directed exclusively on a printed text established by modern scholars, especially working in a committee! The direction of change from an earlier to a later form needs to be decided: I proffer a few objective pointers to the likeliest direction of change in my examples to follow.

Before turning to that sample, it is worth ‘reminding’ readers (to use this conventional tactful verb) that more work needs to be done on describing the contents of manuscripts containing Revelation and other writings. (We are particularly interested when those manuscripts contain only Revelation from among canonical texts.) Again, this may say something about how this manuscript was regarded and used, especially by a Greek church that only belatedly accepted Revelation into its canon. The New Testament Greek manuscripts that contain only Revelation from the New Testament canon also include the following:

046 (Gregory of Nyssa) 2023 (Gregory of Nazianzus) 2025 (Job, Justin Martyr, *Exhortation to the Greeks*) 2027 (Basil, Maximus the Peloponnesian, Theodoret) 2030 (Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Peter of Alexandria) 2050 (ascetic sermons, writings by Chrysostom and other works) 2054 (Life of St Elias and Life of St Gregory the Armenian) 2055 (Dionysius the Areopagite, Basil, *Contra Eunomium*) 2059 (Dionysius the Areopagite) 2060 (Chrysostom) 2070 (Treatises of Isaac the Syrian, Song of Songs with the commentary of Psellus) 2078 (Chrysostom, John of Damascus) 2329 (Hippolytus on Daniel). The following manuscripts also contain non-Biblical material: 2015 2016 2017 2018 2020 2022 2024 2038 2042 2048 2049 2051 2052 2054 2056 2069 2074 2077 2083 2196 2428 2434 2436 2493 2663. Patristic scholars graduating from the McGuckin Schule may find many a research project here!

7 On these see A. Argyriou, *Les exégèses grecques de l'Apocalypse à l'époque turque (1453-1821). Esquisse d'une histoire des courants idéologiques au sein du peuple grec asservi* (Εταιρεία Μακεδονικών Σπουδών. Thessalonica, 1982).

8 Such as Chrys C. Caragounis. See his *The Development of Greek and the New Testament: Morphology, Syntax, Phonology and Textual Transmission* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006).

## II VARIANTS

Common principles that are applied when assessing textual variation in manuscripts are to accept as original those readings that agree with the author's proven style, or to reject readings that seek to improve on perceived infelicities in the language or grammar of the original, perhaps avoiding Semitisms or Hellenistic Greek. *Difficilior lectio potior* is another principle that may be applied, albeit only with care. Such principles may be found enumerated in standard text hand-books like K. Aland and B. Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*,<sup>9</sup> or in Metzger, *Commentary*<sup>10</sup> (pp. 12\*ff.). In the case of the United Bible Societies' edition (hereafter UBS) the principles are often all-too-readily jettisoned by the UBS committee if it or a majority deemed the supporting manuscript testimony to be 'weak'!

The methodology applied in this chapter to the Book of Revelation may be described as 'thoroughgoing' or 'radical,'<sup>11</sup> in which the age of a witness, its alleged reputation or superiority over other manuscripts or the number of manuscripts are less significant in the selection of the likeliest direction of change and the earliest recoverable form of the text in a given variation unit than the applicable internal reasons or probability. Thus the author's style or the likelihood of a reading fitting a first century context are factors often considered. In the brief discussions following each variation unit below it is arguments of that kind that encourage the selecting of one reading as the earliest and the describing of the alternatives as secondary or derivative.

The variants to follow are merely a small proportion of the total number of variants from our fund of witnesses, but the selection is made to demonstrate the differing types of change that occur in our manuscripts. Some variants are more significant than others. Some concern style, others language, syntax, or vocabulary; some are relevant to exegesis or translation; some are helpful in plotting Christian history; some variants are due to theological motives. Not all the variants yield unambiguous resolution; sometimes we must admit indecisiveness, and this is occasionally inevitable.

Variants here are for the most part capable of being displayed and assessed succinctly. Manuscript support and the alleged weight of manuscripts have not been decisive arguments in reaching decisions about the likely Ausgangstext, from which the other variants have derived. The generally freer and certainly different textual complexion of Revelation has supported a thoroughgoing eclectic approach to the variants here. It will be noted below that the proposed Ausgangstext is to be found in a wider range of witnesses than that found in the Nestle/ UBS text.

Many *v.ll.* (= *variae lectiones*) in Revelation, as in the rest of the New Testament, fall into certain categories. As a consequence, I combine here variants into three sub-headings: Author's Style; Improving Strange Grammar; Numerals.

9 K. Aland and B. Aland, *The Text of the New Testament* 2<sup>nd</sup>. English edition (Leiden: Brill, 1989) (hereafter Aland and Aland).

10 B.M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* 2<sup>nd</sup>. ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994).

11 For a description of this methodology see articles by J.K. Elliott, for example in Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes (eds.), *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) = *Studies and Documents* 46 chapter 20. (This volume is about to be reprinted in a revised and updated edition.).

## I. AUTHOR'S STYLE:

2:1ff.

In the phrase *τω αγγελω της εν ... εκκλησιας* at 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14 *τω* instead of *της* (the reading of most manuscripts) is found at:

2:1 by A.02 C.04 1854 2329

2:8 A.02 1734 2305

2:12 1734 2050

2:18 A.02 2305

3:1 046 2019

3:7 syr arm (pt) Prim Cassiod

3:14 syr arm (pt)

Critics should treat all seven variants together and consistently (not like the scribes) and read *τω αγγελω τω εν ... εκκλησιας*.<sup>12</sup> In such a formula we may expect our author's style would be consistent, rather than claim that scribes were responsible for standardizing or stabilizing our author's erratic usage. Here no single Greek manuscript is consistent as a guide to the original text. Versions are important especially at 3:7, 14. A.02 and C.04 make changes in three addresses but not all.

The rule is that participial or prepositional phrases should not stand between an article and its noun. If these are in an attributive position they follow the noun and the appropriate article is repeated, as here at ch. 2-3 and cf. 11:19. Kilpatrick asks if *τω αγγελω της* were original, why would it have been altered?<sup>13</sup>

2:7

θεου κ.01 A.02 C.04

θεου μου 1006 1611 1841 MajK

*θεου μου* occurs in the letters to the churches (Rev 2:1-3:22) at 3:2 and four times in 3:12. This may demonstrate our author's usage in the context. There is no reason why the pronoun would have been added had it not been present originally; its omission may be purely accidental and, once lost, would not have been seen as wrong. It is unlikely that the shorter text was augmented by scribes on the analogy of the references in the chapter following (3:2, 12).

2:20

γυναικα κ.01 A.02 C.04

γυναικα σου 1006 1841 1854 MajK

Commentators sometime argue that the text with the pronoun requires *αγγελος* in v.18 to be the leader of the church in Thyatira, but that is not necessary: the whole community has wrongfully accepted this prominent woman to corrupt them.

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12 *contra* Schmid 2 pp. 197-8.

13 G.D. Kilpatrick, "Professor J. Schmid on the Greek Text of the Apocalypse" *VigChr* 13 (1959) pp. 1-13.

σου is probably original; it occurs frequently in the context (vv. 19-20). Omission may have been a stylistic pruning of the perceived excessive number of occurrences; many stylistically conscious scribes tended to remove allegedly unnecessary possessive pronouns. Accept the reading of  $\aleph.01$  A.02 C.04.

4:11

ησαν και  $\aleph.01$  MajK  
 εισιν και P.025 MajA  
 εγενοντο και 2329  
 ουκ ησαν 046  
 om. 2019 2429

The text is difficult: the word order *εκτιθησαν και ησαν* is expected but, surprisingly, no such variation seems to exist in our stock of extant witnesses. Therefore we find several alternatives. *ησαν* implies that things existed before creation, thus the text was changed to *εισιν*.

J M Ross argues that the closing words of the doxology should read *ουκ ησαν και εκτιθησαν*.<sup>14</sup> He rejects the argument that the omission of *ουκ* before *ησαν*, which ruins the sense, and he understands the sentence to mean, “By thy will they were non-existent and then were created”—both states being due to God. The temptation to omit the negative deliberately (or accidentally after σου: σΟΥΟΥΚ) makes *και εκτιθησαν* redundant—and, in fact, everything after *εκτισας τα παντα* becomes unnecessary. Once the negative goes other changes were needed. A.02 (alone) omitted *και εκτισθησαν*; 2329 includes *εγενοντο* which made the words following even more redundant. The change of *ησαν* to *εισιν* by P.025 makes the distinction clearer but it would have been even better had it read *εκτιθησαν και εισιν*.

5:9

Nestle reads *τω θεω* with A.02 only. Metzger, in *Commentary* argues that this reading explains the origin of the other variants. *ηγορασας* has as an object *εκ...φυλην* but a more precise object is needed, therefore *ημας* before or after *τω θεω* was added or *ημας* was written instead of *τω θεω* but *ημας* does not go with *αυτους* in v.10 (although the Textus Receptus (= TR) reads *ημας* at v.10, supported by some versions, including Latin).

Variants are:

add *ημας* to provide an exact object:  
*τω θεω ημας*  $\aleph.01$  209 1006 Maj  
*ημας τω θεω* 94 2050 2344 (= TR)  
*ημας θεου* 2814  
 om. *τω θεω* OL (a c)  
*ημας* instead of *τω θεω* 1 2065\*

14 J.M. Ross, “Some Unnoticed Points in the Text of the New Testament” *NovT* 25 (1983) pp. 59-72, here p. 72.

5:12

τον πλουτον 1006 1611 1841 1854 MajK  
πλουτον κ.01 A.02 C.04

The repetition of the article (or a preposition) before a second but not subsequent member in a sequence seems to be characteristic of our author and so should be included as original. This time we read against κ.01 A.02 C.04.

[cf. other places where the so-called Byzantine witnesses preserve the *Ausgangstext* in similar circumstances:

3:17 read + ο before ελεινος in A.02 1006 MajK  
10:11 επι before λαοις 2351 MajK<sup>15</sup>]

6:1, 2, 3-4, 5bis, 7, 8

These *v.ll.* ought to be considered together.

Verse 1: ερχου A.02

ερχου και ιδε κ.01 MajK

Read + και ιδε, which may have been omitted by hom<sup>16</sup>  
(KAIιδεKAIειδον).

This longer text assumes that the verb ερχου was addressed to the Seer. ερχου alone is addressed to the rider as in vv. 3, 5a.

Verse 2: om. και ειδον 1854 2329 2351 MajK is due to hom (και ειδον και ιδου) especially if και ιδε was read at the end of v.1. or deliberately removed because these words were seen as superfluous after και ιδε. και ιδου και ειδον και ιδου is ugly style, requiring pruning.

Verses 3-4: ερχου και A.02 C.04 MajK

ερχου και ιδε και 205 209 2344

ερχου και ιδε και ιδου κ.01

Read + και ιδε as in v.1 possibly even και ιδε και ιδου ειδον και again with κ.01.

Verse 5: ερχου A.02 C.04 P.025

ερχου και ιδε κ.01 MajK

om. και ειδον 1854 2344 MajK

και ειδον κ.01 A.02 C.04

Verse 7: ερχου και ιδε κ.01 MajK

ερχου A.02 C.04 P.025

Verse 8: και ειδον κ.01 A.02

om. 1854 2344 MajK

<sup>15</sup> The same combination of manuscripts occurs at 9:15 v.l. και εις την ημεραν.

<sup>16</sup> This term was coined by A.C. Clark to indicate omission by parablepsis, occasioned by an accidental jump from the same or similar combination of letters to another later in the sentence, the conventional terms, homoioteleuton or homoiouarkton, being inappropriate in manuscripts with *scriptio continua*.

Read + *και ιδε* and + *και ειδον* throughout.

8:1

οτε κ.01 Maj

οταν A.02 C.04 1006 1611

*οταν* is found elsewhere in Revelation + indicative at 4:9 *v.l.* 8:1 *v.l.* οτε, but cf. 9:5; 10:7; 11:7; 12:4; 17:10; 18:9; 20:7 + subjunctive, often in the sense of a specific time when an event is anticipated, as here. Read *οταν. οτε* may be due to assimilation to οτε ηγοιξεν six times in ch. 6.

8:8

πυρι κ.01 A.02 P.025 1854 2344

om. 046 MajK

This noun was seen as redundant with *καιομενον* but our author does not avoid such otiose expressions. See *καιω* with *πυρ* at 4:5 19:20; 21:8. At 8:10 *πυρ* is not found, possibly because of this verse (*v.l.* + *πυρι*) or because *ως λαμπας* follows as an equivalent description.

9:12-13 CONCERNS PUNCTUATION AS WELL AS THE AUTHOR'S USAGE:

μετα δε ταυτα και.0207

μετα ταυτα. Και ορ μετα ταυτα και A.02 1611 1841 MajK

και 2053

και μετα ταυτα 046

μετα ταυτα P47 κ.01 2344

om. μετα ταυτα 2053

The initial *και* of v. 13 was moved to precede *μετα ταυτα* by 046 or omitted by P47 κ\*.01 2344. Elsewhere *μετα ταυτα* (or *μετα τουτο*) begins a sentence or clause in Revelation and therefore these words should stand first here. The only exceptions to this practice are 1:19; 4:1(sec.) which are different, as in those contexts the phrase refers to specific items. But the text in Nestle<sup>27</sup> is that of A.02, a reading that is in accord with the author's way of introducing angels previously mentioned as at 8: 8, 10, 12; 9:1 i.e. with simple *και* at the beginning. We are thus left with a dilemma!

10:10<sup>17</sup>

βιβλαριδιον A.02 C.04 P.025 2329 2344 2351 MajA

βιβλιδαριον 1006 1611 1854

βιβλιδιον P47<sup>c</sup> 2429

βιβλιον P47\**vid* κ.01 046 1006 1854 MajK

βιβλαριον 2329

17 See J. K. Elliott, "Nouns with Diminutive Endings in the New Testament" *NovT* 12 (1970) pp. 391-8.



New Testament authors often use diminutive forms without intending smallness of size.

In this context 10: 2, 8, 9 uses βιβλαριδιον and this form is to be preferred at v. 10 also. It was reduced to βιβλιον (a frequent form in Revelation) as may also be seen in a *v.l.* at v.8.

-αριδιον is a true diminutive and is post-classical; -ιδιον is classical.

13:10

There are two related variants here:

a) εις αιχμαλωσιαν<sup>1</sup> A.02 is the reading often deemed accountable for the other readings; it is read by Nestle

εχει αιχμαλωσιαν 051\* MajK

εις αιχμαλωσιαν απαγει 2351 3244. The absence of a verb with the first clause prompted the addition of απαγει or συναγει 2059 2081 (= TR) or the altering to αιχμαλωτιζει 94 104 459 2019.

εχει is due to a misreading of εις.

om. εις αιχμαλωσιαν<sup>2</sup> om P47 κ.01 C.04 Maj

εις αιχμαλωσιαν<sup>2</sup> A.02 2351

The omission is due to hom.

b) αποκτανθηγει αυτον. A singular reading by A.02 accepted by Nestle (imperative or elliptical)

αποκτε(ι/ν)νει, δει κ.01 C.04 051\* 1006 1611\* 1854 2329 MajA (with Nestle27)

δει 051<sup>ul</sup> MajK

A verb is needed with the second clause, hence δει was provided by some manuscripts.

Delobel<sup>18</sup> accepts the balanced phrases:

10a ει τις εις αιχμαλωσιαν

10b εις αιχμαλωσιαν υπαγει

10c ει τις εν μαχαιρη αποκτανθηγει

10d αυτον εν μαχαιρη αποκτανθηγει

which seem to reflect teachings such as Jer. 15:2 (and, perhaps, Jer. 15:11 LXX), indicating the inevitability of God's plans being accomplished. It is therefore not referring to retribution such as in Matt. 26:52 (*lex talionis*). The addition of the verbs in 10a is secondary. In 10c and d the infinitive used twice is a Hebraism. Other manuscripts change c and d to: ει τις εν μαχαιρη αποκτενει/ δει αυτον εν μαχαιρη αποκτανθηγει thus transforming the meaning to one of retaliation, whether one reads

18 Joël Delobel, "Le texte de l'Apocalypse: Problèmes de méthode" in Jan Lambrecht (ed.), *L'Apocalypse johannique dans le Nouveau Testament* (Gembloux and Leuven: Peeters, 1980) = *BETL* 53 pp. 151-66 here pp. 162-5.

αποκτεν(ν)ει fut. or αποκτεινει pres.

14:1

το κ.01 A.02 C.04

om. P47 P.025 051 (= TR)

το refers back to the topic earlier as at 6:1 where the article thus serves an anaphoric function. cf. 5:8 to refer back to v.6. This is THE lamb of 5:6 where the noun is anarthrous. Of twenty-eight occurrences only the references at 5:6 and 13:11 ('any lamb') are anarthrous. If original, why was the article omitted?

14:3

ως A.01 C.04 1006 1841 2042 MajA

om. P47 κ.01 P.025 (= TR) (as in Nestle25)

ως is an echo of v. 2 where it occurs three times; maybe it was dropped because of 5:9 which lacks ως? But that is fairly remote, being many chapters removed.

Schmid 2, 137 cf. pp. 225-6 lists all existing textual problems with ως. Here ως is said to be the 'wahrscheinlich Urtext.'

ως : This is the style of our author cf. 4:6 *v.l.* om.; 6:6; 9:7; 19:1 *v.l.* om.; 19:6 (*tris*) *v.l.* om. first. Could the shorter text have been due to accidental omission?

[cf. 19:12

ως A.02 1006 1841 [Nestle27]

om. κ.01 P.025 046 051 Maj [Nestle25]

ως is very common in Revelation. It is unlikely to have been added through harmonisation with 1:14 ως εριον, which is a long way back. cf. also 2:18 ως φλογα.]

14:6

ειδον αλλον αγγελον κ<sup>2</sup>.01 A.02 C.04 P.025 051. This reading is deemed by many commentators to be the more difficult reading.

αλλον ιδον αγγελον P115*vid*

ειδον αγγελον P47 κ\*.01 046 Maj

No other individual angel has been mentioned since 11:15

Shortening of the text is possibly due to accidental omission through hom: (ειδONΑΛΛONΑΓΓελον).

14:8

αλλος αγγελος δευτερος κ<sup>c</sup>.01 (C.04) P.025 051 1611 MajA

αλλος δευτερος αγγελος A.02 046

The author's style is to place the adjective following a noun with *αλλος* after the noun (see 6:4; 10:1; 15:1) cf. v.9 *αλλος αγγελος τριτος* to show author's usage and also see 6:4; 10:1; 15:1 where *αλλος* is followed by a noun and another adjective.

Other *v.ll.* are *αλλος αγγελος* 61 69 (= TR) which omitted *δευτερος* because

the word may have looked tautologous after the second occurrence of *αλλος* in the context.

*αλλος δευτερος* P47 κ\*.01 1006. *αγγελος* omitted by hom (OΣ...OΣ)  
(Nestle reads against A.02.)

14:13

*λεγει* P47 κ \*.01 36 582 620 628 1918  
*και λεγει* 2018 2019 2053  
*λεγει και* 218 522  
*λεγει ναι* 2329 MajK  
*ναι λεγει* κ €.01 A.02 C.04 P.025 1006 1611 1854 2344

*ναι λεγει* represents the style of Revelation (1:7; 16:7; 22:20) but Aune p. 788 argues that this is a matter of punctuation and that *απ' αρτι* should be *απαρτι* (equivalent to *αμην* "certainly I say to you"); the original reading is then *απαρτι λεγει* without a need for *ναι*. Only after *απ αρτι* was read was *v.l.* + *ναι* introduced. An alternative view is that an original *ναι* was later misread as *και*.

14:18

*εξηλθεν* has been added from v.17 either after *αγγελος* (by κ.01 C.04 P.025 Maj among others) or after *θυσιαστηριου* (by 051 1854 2073). It is absent from P47 A.02 1611 2053, but its inclusion fits the repetitive style of Revelation, and thus could have been deleted to improve the style.

*εξηλθεν* is given a 'C' rating by UBS<sup>419</sup>

Nestle reads with C.04 against A.02

[Another *v.l.* in this verse: +/- def. art. before *εχων* is bracketed in UBS and Nestle but bizarrely is left without a note in the *Commentary*! The article is needed because we are hearing about this particular angel who is identified as the one with authority over fire. The repeated article is characteristic (see 2:1; 14:1)].

16:3

*αγγελος* 051 2344 Maj  
om. P47 κ<sup>2</sup>.01 A.02 C.04  
cf the same *v.l.* at 16: 4, 8, 10, 12, 17.

Hodges and Farstad claim that the noun was added to conform to other occurrences.<sup>20</sup> (They include at v.2 *v.l.* + *αγγελος*, not in the Nestle apparatus, with their groups M<sup>b</sup>M<sup>d</sup>.)

Again we note our author's repetitive style if we accept the longer reading throughout the chapter.

19 Rating letters are characteristic of the UBS editions and the allied *Commentary* edited by B.M. Metzger. The statistics for UBS 4<sup>th</sup> revised edition are that of the seventy-three such letters in the apparatus of Revelation, 23 are 'A'; 31 are 'B'; 18 are 'C'; 1 is 'D'.

20 Zane C. Hodges and Arthur L. Farstad, *The Greek New Testament according to the Majority Text* 2<sup>nd</sup>. ed. (Nashville: Nelson, 1985) p. xxxvi.

18:22

πασης τεχνης C.04 P.025 plus many minuscules is a reading in harmony with the author's repetitive style. It is unlikely to have been inserted.

om. πασης τεχνης κ.01 A.02. The omission is likely to have been accidental through hom (HΣ...HΣ...HΣ).

και πασης τεχνης 2053 2138 is probably a mechanical blunder (again!), cf. the repetition of the copula five times in 22a.

[Nestle reads with C.04 against κ.01 A.02]

18:24

αιματα 046<sup>c</sup> 051 maj

αιμα κ.01 A.02 C.04 P.025 046\*

αιματα is Semitic and may therefore be original, although there is no firm example of the plural in the New Testament.

The same *v.l.* is found at 16:6, again with reference to the prophets.

19:6

Nestle/UBS print κυριος ο θεος ημων against A.02. UBS rates this as 'C'

κυριος ο θεος ημων κ\*.01 P.02 046 MajK agrees with vv. 1, 5

ο θεος ημων MajA

ο θεος ο κυριος ημων κ\*

ο θεος θεος ημων 598 2057

ο θεος 2814 2429

κυριος ο θεος A.02 254 792 1006

The possessive may have been deleted because it was seen as inappropriate with κυριος ο θεος ο παντοκρατωρ but there is no possessive in comparable examples at Rev 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 21:28 thus indicating the author's preferred style.

Delete ημων. Read with A.02.

19:11

om. καλουμενος A.02 P.025 051 2042 2081 2814 MajA

καλουμενος is found at different points; 'floating' readings often betray their secondariness:

πιστις καλουμενος και αληθινος κ.01

πιστις και αληθινος καλουμενος 2028

πιστις καλουμενος (om. και αληθινος) 2329

καλουμενος πιστις και αληθινος 1611 1841 1854 MajK

και καλουμενος πιστις και αληθινος 1006

Here Nestle/UBS read with MajK against κ.01 A.02; UBS rates this 'C'.

If καλουμενος were original and as in the position in κ.01 it may have been omitted through hom: ΚΑΛεγουμενοςΚΑΙ. Or it could have been a deliberate omis-

sion to avoid the impression that the rider was only *called* faithful and true and thus that he was not actually so.

If *καλούμενος* is accepted then its position after *πιστος* is likely to be original. The repositioning may have been to place *πιστις και αληθινος* together as in 3:14 (in a similar titular use); 21:5; 22:6. But naming the rider is against 12:9 and as *καλούμενος* is not in the style of author elsewhere, it should therefore not be included.

Read *πιστος και αληθινος*.

20:2

The inconcinnity of the nominative *ο οφης ο αρχαιος* read by A.02 1678 1778 2080 virtually alone is a solecism. But it is a characteristic of the author to use the nominative for a title or proper name in apposition to a noun in an oblique case. See 1:5; 2:13 and also with participles at 2:20; 3:12; 8:9; 9:14; 14:12, 14. Pedantic scribes altered this to the grammatically correct *τον οφιν τον αρχαιον*  $\aleph$ .01 P.025 046 051 Maj (whence TR).

20:6

*τα χιλια*  $\aleph$ .01 046 1611  
om. *τα* A.02 051 Maj

Metzger, *Commentary* gives no decision.

*χιλια* occurs elsewhere in the context (20: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7) but after the introduction in v.2 where it is anarthrous the article is characteristic and expected and found in all these verses (*v.l.* om. at v.4).

21:4

*εξαιλειψει*  $\aleph$ .01  
*εξαιλειψει ο Θεος* A.02 1006 1841 2814  
*εξαιλειψει απ' αυτων* MajK

If *απ' αυτων* were not original it is unlikely to have been added; its apparent redundancy with *αυτων* preceding makes it likely to be original.

The pious addition of the divine name is secondary.

[Note the preceding verse (21:3): Like Bousset, Schmid treated text and language together but see Schmid 2 p. 125: "Gegen die Form von Av Ap die man als die *beste* annehmen möchte, spricht ihre, wie Charles glaubt, ganz ungenügende Bezeugung" (italics mine).

*μετ' αυτων εσται αυτων θεος* A.02 2030 2050 2053 2329. This unemphatic position of the possessive is unusual in Revelation – and is to be found only at 18:5a.

*μετ' αυτων εσται* MajK (as in Nestle25)

*εσται μετ' αυτων*  $\aleph$ .01 2814

*εσται μετ' αυτων θεος αυτων* P.025 051supp. MajA looks ugly and may have cried out for change (NA27)

*μετ' αυτων εσται θεος* 1006 1611 1841

*μετ' αυτων εσται θεος αυτων* 1854

θεος with αυτων may have been seen as superfluous and therefore omitted or, conversely, it was added as a gloss taken from Isa. 7:14; 8:8. The preceding clause και... εσονται needs a parallel but which is the likelier, bearing in mind that this may have been provided either by the author or by a later scribe? θεος αυτων could have been a preferred sequence designed to avoid αυτων εσται αυτων.]

21:12

τα ονοματα A.02 1611 1854 2053 2377

ονοματα 1006 2062 MajK

om. κ.01 P.025 051 MajA (read in Nestle25)

τα ονοματα is likely to be original. The repetition is characteristic of our author as is the repetition of the definite article.

## 2.) IMPROVING STRANGE GRAMMAR

Related in several respects to the variants listed under (1) above are those variants where alleged breaches of normal grammar are detected and which may therefore indicate their primitiveness.

1:4

απο+ nominative

απο ο ων P18vid κ.01 A.02 C.04 P.025 must have looked bizarre to a literary-minded scribe. Improvements were either

+ θεου Maj

+ κυριου (according to Tischendorf) 2016

+ του 61mg 385.

1:6

The use of και joining the finite verb εποιησεν “strains the rules of Greek syntax beyond the breaking point” (Metzger, *Text<sup>4</sup>* p. 262<sup>21</sup>).

Some scribes altered the indicative to the aorist ptc. ποιησαντι 046 1854.

1:13

ομοιον υιον ανθρωπου κ.01 MajK where υιον has been attracted to ομοιον. ομοιος seems to have been treated as if it were ως, i.e. not affecting the case of the noun, but note *v.l.* ομοιον υιω ανθρωπου A.02 C.04 MajA to improve the grammar.<sup>22</sup>

[cf. 14:14 ομοιον υιω κ.01 A.02; υιος P47 C.04]

1:15

Nestle/ UBS πεπυρωμενης with A.02 C.04 only. ‘C’ rated in UBS. This was

21 B.M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament* 4<sup>th</sup>. ed. with B.D. Ehrman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

22 See Schmid 2 p. 249.

deemed to be the most difficult reading.<sup>23</sup> The genitive does not agree with anything and so was altered to either the dative (πεπυρωμενω κ.01 2050 2053 2062) to agree with καμινω (or perhaps to χαλκολιβανω understood as feminine) or the nominative (πεπυρωμενοι Maj) to refer to οι ποδες. The genitive absolute construction here in an abbreviated form, with αυτης understood, is found elsewhere in Revelation only at 17:8.

2:20

η λεγουσα κ\*.01 A.02 C.04 2052 2329 is a pendant noun in apposition to την γυναικα and was therefore altered to την λεγουσαν κ'.01 1854 2050 MajA. (Another *v.l.* is ηλεγει 1006 1611 MajK.)

5:13

και<sup>5</sup> without additions as read by κ.01 1611\* is the text in Nestle, reading against A.02.

A verb is needed after θαλασσης for the relative clause hence εστιν και, α εστιν, or οσα εστιν και was added:

εστιν και A.02 1006 MajK as in Nestle<sup>25</sup>

α εστιν και P.025 046 2050 MajA

οσα εστιν και 2053 2351

1611 2050 MajA add εστιν after ο

Simple και is likely to have been the origin of the variants.

6:17

αυτων κ.01 C.04 1611 1854 2053 2344 read by Nestle against A.02

αυτου A.02 P.02 046 Maj is the easier reading as it avoids the ambiguity of the genitive plural and carries a reference to της οργης του αριου in v.16. Aune disputes that there *is* any ambiguity; αυτων refers to the one on the throne and to the lamb.

11:1

ραβδω P47 κ\*.01 A.02 Maj

In this rough sentence (εδοθη μοι...λεγων) λεγων lacks an antecedent.

The addition of και ειστικει ο αγγελος κ<sup>2</sup>.01 046 1854 2329 2351 (= TR) relieves the construction by providing a subject.

11:12

ηκουσα P47 κ\*.01 Maj

ηκουσαν κ\*.01 A.02 P.025 2053

ηκουσονται 2329

<sup>23</sup> Roger Gryson, (ed.), *Vetus Latina 26/2 Apocalypsis* 10 parts (Freiburg: Herder, 2000-03) p. 94 says of πεπυρωμενης “c’est pousser le principe de la *lectio difficilior* jusqu’à l’absurde” cf. Metzger’s similar comment at 1:6.

ηκουσα which occurs twenty-four times in Revelation may have encouraged the change to the 1 p.s. here.

11:17

στι ϛ<sup>c</sup>.01 A.02 P.025 046 1611 explains the origin of other *v.l.*: ο ερχομενος στι 051 1006 (= TR) is a Byzantine accretion to follow ο ων και ο ην and is based on 1:4, 8 cf. 4:8 but the coming of God has occurred or is occurring and may be original, and so it demands omission. και στι P47 ϛ<sup>c</sup>.01 C.04 2344 is described in Metzger, *Commentary* as yet another place where there is a scribal blunder straining syntax, but surely for those reasons it may be the original reading needing emendation.

11:19

ο A.02 C.04 1006 looks like a grammatical improvement but the style of Revelation frequently has a repeated article cf 1:4; 2:24; 5:5; 8:3; 11:16; 16:12; 19:14; 20:8; 14:17; 20:13 many with *v.l.* om. article – this is clearly not a popular usage with scribes.<sup>24</sup>

Omit ο P47 ϛ.01 P.025 046 051 Maj. This seems a transcriptional oversight.

12:10

κατηγωρ α.λ. in New Testament (although found in Rabbinic literature) is read by Nestle with A.02 only.  
*κατηγορος cett.*

This is a colloquial back formation from the genitive plural *κατηγορων* (found later in the verse) on the analogy of *ρητωρ* from *ρητορων* or *διακων* from *διακωνων*.<sup>25</sup>

13:1

ονομα P47ϛ .01 C.04 P.025 2329 giving the meaning ‘one name on each head’

ονοματα A.02 051 205 1611 2053 2344 MajK – each head bears more than one blasphemous name and therefore ‘names’ is required. *ονομα* may have been changed to *ονοματα* because of *κεφαλαις* preceding. *ονοματα* cf. parallel in Revelation 17:3 but note *v.l.* singular read by 046\* only.

hom may account for the shorter, singular, form (*ονοΜΑΤΑ*).  
Nestle/UBS read the plural with A.02.

13:6

και τους εν τω ουρανω σκηνοουντας ϛ<sup>c</sup>.01 P.025 046\* 051 MajA.

It is unusual to find a prepositional phrase inserted between an article and a

<sup>24</sup> See Schmid 2, pp. 89, 196-7.

<sup>25</sup> See W.F. Howard, *Accidence and Word Formation* vol. 2 of J. H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1929) pp. 127-8.



substantive, but see the introductions to each proclamation 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14; 19:9. *και* was probably added to relieve ‘strained syntax.’

*τους... σκηγουντας* (κ\*.01) A.02 C.04 MajK without the copula may be read in apposition to *την σκηγην αυτου* and is then more difficult than the reading *και τους... ομ. τους σκηγουντας* by P47 was possibly to ease the syntax, although we ought to note that P47 is prone to omission.

13:15

*ποιηση ινα* A.02 P.025 1006 2065 2344

om. *ινα* κ.01 Maj

*ινα αποκτανθωσαν* 051 1854 2073 2814 (= TR)

The amelioration of the difficulty caused by *ινα...εαν* and two verbs in the subjunctive mood requires *ινα* before the subjunctive *αποκτανθωσαν* and this suggests the longer text is secondary. The absence of *ινα* in κ.01 046 1611 1859 makes the second beast (not the image of the beast) the one that causes people to be killed. That too could have caused problems.

+ *ινα* rated ‘C’ by UBS.

13:17

*και* P47 κ<sup>c</sup>.01 P.025 046 051 1006

om. κ\*.01 C.04

Om. *και* may be secondary due to a misunderstanding of vv. 16-17 (*ινα μη* was taken to be dependent on *δωσιν*, and therefore *και* may have been deemed redundant). But the clause *ινα μη* is dependent on *ποιει* and thus coordinate with *ινα δωσιν* (v.16).

16:4

*εγενετο* is the *lectio difficilior* read by κ.01 C.04 P.025 046 051 and accepted by Nestle<sup>27</sup> against A.02.

*εγενοντο* P47 A.02 1006 1854 2053 occurs because scribes mechanically conformed this verb to the preceding plurals.

The subject of the verb may be ‘waters.’ As a neuter plural it can be found with a singular verb but if *οι ποταμοι και αι πηγαι των υδατων* is the subject that of course requires a 3 p.p. verb.

*εγενετο* occurs in v.3.

17:8

*υπαγει* A.02 1611

*υπαγειν* κ.01 P.025 046 051 Maj

Final nu is not always written; the infinitive is needed after *μελλει*, so *υπαγει* may well have been intended as the infinitive, but according to Schmid 2 p. 92 assimilation to the infinitive of the preceding *μελλει αναβαινειν* is more probable than the reverse.

18:17

Rylke Borger in his perceptive review of the Nestle text<sup>26</sup> points out problems in its apparatus here.

τοπον is difficult. It is found in A.02 C.04 and many minuscules. τον τοπον is read by  $\kappa$ .01 046. τοπος = one who sails to a place i.e. seafarer. A similar expression is found in Acts 27:2.

Other variants are:

των πλοιων πλεων P.025 051 MajA

ο επι τουτον πλεων 469 582 2254 (“everyone who travels by sea”)

Syriac has [ο επι των πλοιων επι τοπον πλεων]

ο επι τον ποταμον πλεων 2053 2062

“those who sail from a distance” Ps-Amb

επι των πλοιων ο ομιλος 296 2049 2814 (= TR) (“the whole crowd of people who travel in ships”)

Oecumenius “everyone who sails on a river.”

19:5

και<sup>2</sup> A.02 046 051 *rell.* read by UBS/Nestle. Rated ‘C’

om.  $\kappa$ .01 C.04 (in Nestle25)

Either the copula was added to avoid asyndeton

Or

It was deleted if it was misunderstood as ‘and’ rather than, as here, ‘even,’ and as a consequence it was thought that a different group was implied. Aune claims that και is exegetical i.e. that there are not two groups, merely that the first required further definition.

Schmid 2 p. 108 claims not to be clear who the God fearers are, but clarity is not a characteristic found in this Biblical author!

19:7

δωσωμεν rated ‘C’ by Nestle with P.025 against  $\kappa$ .01 A.02

δωμεν  $\kappa$ \*.01 046 051 MajK

δωσωμεν 2062 2329 MajA

δωσωμεν  $\kappa$ \*.01 A.02 2053 is ‘intolerable’ Greek after two hortatory subjunctives according to Metzger, *Commentary*. Schmid 2 p. 133 also judges this a scribal blunder but could it not rather have come from the infelicitous pen of the original author?

The ο/ω interchange is common.<sup>27</sup>

21:4

Nestle/UBS reads οτι τα πρωτα with 1854 2050 2814 MajK. Rated ‘C’

by UBS.

<sup>26</sup> “Nestle-Aland26 und die neutestamentliche Textkritik” *Theologische Rundschau* 52 (1987) pp. 1-58, 326, here pp. 51f.

<sup>27</sup> cf. Mark 6:37 where there are readings δωσωμεν, δωμεν, δωσωμεν.

ετι τα πρωτα A.02 P.025 051supp 1006 MajA

Asyndeton is avoided by the addition of *γαρ* after *τα 94* or by *οτι τα πρωτα* (i.e. om. *ετι*)  $\aleph^1$ .01.

*οτι* may have been deliberately omitted because of *ετι* or accidentally omitted through hom (ETIOTI).

[ $\aleph^*$ .01 reads *ετι τα προβατα!*]

### 3.) NUMERALS

Given the frequency of figures in Revelation, it is not surprising that some variants involve numerals. Here are some that seem significant:

5:6 +/- *επτα*

+ P24  $\aleph$ .01 046 MajK

om. A.02 205 209 1006 1611 MajA

This number occurs twice already in this verse. Therefore some scholars consider it to have been added, but our author is fond of repeating numerals. See 1:4; 3:1; 4:5 (of spirits).

[cf. 1:13 *επτα* before *λυχνιαν v.l.* omitted in Nestle but the longer text is likely to be original and accidentally reduced through hom: *ΤαεπΤΑ.*]

9:13

+/- *τεσσαρων*

+ 205 209 Maj

om. P47  $\aleph^1$ .01 A.02 2344

Either a longer text was reduced by hom (*τΩΝτεσσαρωνΩΝ*) or the longer text was written to provide a parallel to the four angels in v.14.

$\aleph^*$ .01 omits the phrase *μιαν... κερατων*.

13:18

The number of the beast is perhaps one of the best-known figures from Biblical literature in popular speech. But is it 666? And, if not 666, what is it?

The variant 616 was known to Irenaeus.<sup>28</sup> This reading (in letters) is in the recently published Oxyrhynchus papyrus P115, and in words in C.04. It was also in manuscripts known to Tischendorf. Other readings are:

615 in 2344

666 as a numeral or in words in P47  $\aleph$ .01 A.02 051 Maj

Some other numbers exist in Latin witnesses (see Gryson *VL*) and in Armenian.

Gematria and the symbolic significance accorded to names and their numeri-

<sup>28</sup> This variant is discussed with appropriate citations by D.C. Parker, *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts...* pp. 242-4. See also J.N. Birdsall, "Irenaeus and the Number of the Beast: Revelation 13, 18" in A. Denaux (ed.), *New Testament Textual Criticism and Exegesis (Festschrift Delobel)* BETL 161 (Leuven, 2002) pp. 349-59.

cal equivalents gave rise to ingenious word/number play in antiquity. Here the Greek form Neron Caesar gives (in Hebrew) the number 666. The Latin Nero Caesar is 616 in Hebrew. Either number therefore could be applied to the same bestial character. 616 could also be read as Gaius (Caligula). But 666 is the more dramatic, being a threefold repetition of a number (6) that falls short of the perfect number, 7. But, as such, 666 could be a secondary improvement.

14:20

The number of stadia is uncertain. Most manuscripts read 1600 but there are variants: 1200, 1606, and one Old Latin manuscript (gigas) reads 1500. 600 occurs in manuscript 2065. As with 666, these figures doubtless had different symbolic functions. Modern scholarship has not elucidated the significance of these alternatives and thus the jury is still out over this problem!

#### APPENDIX

A few other interesting variants merit attention:

1.) 8:13

αετου κ .01 A.02 046 MajK

αγγέλου P.025 2186 2814 MajA (= TR)

It is not likely that either word was accidentally misread for the other. It is sometimes claimed by commentators that an eagle is more appropriate than an angel but cf. 14:6 for a comparable image, where it is an angel that is in mid-heaven. On the other hand, an angel was possibly introduced by scribes from later in the verse.

αγγέλου και αετου is a conflated reading found in 42

2.) 12:18

This concerns punctuation.

και εσταθη P47<sup>x</sup> .01 A.02 C.04 1854 2344

και εσταθην P.025 046 051 Maj (= TR).

This seems to be the secondary reading – one that was needed when copyists accommodated εσταθη to ειδον as 1 p.s.<sup>29</sup> but von Soden's valuable section "Die Apokalypse"<sup>30</sup> argues that εσταθη was based on ωργισθη in 12:17 describing it as "gedenkenlos assimilirt (*sic*)."

και εσταθη refers to the dragon (Jesus was mentioned last in v.17) and therefore it concludes the section 11:19-12:17 prior to the transition to 13:1-18; εσταθην refers to John and introduces a new unit (12:18-13:18).

και εσταθη refers to 13:1 and was taken to refer to ειδον.

3.) 15:3

29 See the context and word divisions in *VL Apocalypsis ad loc.*

30 H. Freiherr von Soden, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments I Untersuchungen* (Berlin: Glaue, 1907) I 2042-97 see p. 2076.

εθνων κ<sup>a</sup>.01 A.02 P.025 046 051 Maj  
αιωνων P47 κ<sup>\*</sup>.01 κ<sup>c</sup>.01 C.04 1006 1611 1841

Did scribes add αιωνων from 1 Tim 1:17? This is unlikely, given its remoteness, but ‘King of (the) Ages’ was well known and popular in the Old Testament.

εθνων fits the context (v.4) so a change in the opposite direction is less likely.

αγιων 296 2049 (= TR) was due to confusion in Latin manuscripts if *sanctorum* was written as *sctorum* and *saeculorum* was written as *sclorum*.

4.) 18:3

του θυμου του θυμου της πορνειας κ.01 046 1006 2138 MajK

του θυμου του οινου της πορνειας P.025 051 MajA

του θυμου της πορνειας A.02 1611

του οινου της πορνειας 792 1854 cf. 17:2

της πορνειας του θυμου C.04

[cf. Revelation 14:8 n.b. οινου του θυμου της πορνειας (no *v.ll.*) and πεπτωκαν *v.l.* πεποτικεν and the variant following next.]

Schmid 2 p. 93 who generally prefers to follow A.02 C.04 says here that the omission of του οινου is a “bloßer Nachlässigkeitsfehler.” Many modifications in these verses are due to carelessness and to a lack of understanding. This is typical of much of the copying of Revelation but is not generally true of the rest of the New Testament.

5.) 18:3

Nestle reads πεπωκαν with 1006<sup>c</sup> 2329 only against κ.01 A.02 C.04.

πεπωκαν is supported by “*pauci*” in Nestle but this is ‘unlikely’ according to Borger.<sup>31</sup> It is rated ‘D’ in UBS.

Other readings are:

πεπωκεν P.025 051 2814

πεποτικεν 2042

πεπτωκαν A.02 C.04 69 2031

πεπτωκεν 1854 2062

πεπτωκασιν κ.01 046 MajK

πεπτωκα(σι)ν is less suitable in the context and the inclusion of this verb seems to have been caused by the occurrence of πιπω in v.2. εκ belongs better to a verb of drinking as do the possible references to Jer. 25:15; 51: 7, 39. Schmid 2 p. 142 says πεποτικεν is “...eine bloße allerdings eine treffliche Konjektur und nicht mehr.”

Orthography in manuscripts is not reliably consistent (see Schmid 2 pp. 96, 183, 188).

6.) 22:14

πλυνοντες τας στολας αυτων κ.01 A.02 1006  
 ποιουντες τας εντολας αυτου 046 Maj (= TR)

The variation here, whatever the direction, looks like a deliberate change.

The observation of the commandments elsewhere uses τηρειν (τας εντολας) 12:17; 14:12 but ποιειω is used in an ethical context twice in this passage vv. 11, 15 and cf. ποιειν τας εντολας 1 John 5:2.

Is the change to ‘washing one’s robe’ a pious alteration, based on 7:14 (‘to wash one’s robes’ implies martyrdom or baptism)? Martyrs of ch. 7 were accepted because they had washed their robes *in the blood* of the Lamb. If our author is using the ideas of chapter 7 he would have emphasized that detail. Moreover the ‘blessed ones’ of 22:14 differ from those in ch. 7. (These are still on earth at the coming of the Lamb and have not eaten of the tree of life.<sup>32</sup>)

7.) 22:19  
*ligno to libro.*

This change was due to a misreading of Latin *via* Erasmus, which appeared in the KJV; it is without Greek support.

8.) 22:21

There is confusion as to what our author wrote at the end of his book and also why his original words were changed. There is no obvious motive in any direction.

παντων with A.02 alone (but with Lvg) as read by Nestle27, but this is possibly caused by hom: πανΤΩΝΤΩΝαγιΩΝ

The *v.l.* are:

των αγιων κ.01  
 μετα παντων των αγιων αυτου 2030  
 μετα των αγιων σου 2329  
 μετα παντων των αγιων 051supp 205 209 1006 Maj cf. 8:3

παντων (η)μων supported by “2050 *pc*” according to the Nestle apparatus, but Rylike Borger (*op. cit.* pp. 56f.) indicates the problems here: he shows that the apparatus to Nestle27 has “π. (η)μων 2050 *pc*.” What does this mean? The TR has μετα παντων ημων. Such a reading may have come from 2 Cor. 13:13; 2 Thess. 3:18. The reading is not in UBS but Metzger, *Commentary* has this as the reading of 296, which is a handwritten copy of a printed edition. Is that one of the “*pc*.”? What others can *pc*. conceal? And who has υμων? Tischendorf’s apparatus shows the apparent absences of Greek manuscripts behind the TR with a stigma + cum? (and sometimes with “*sine testel sine codice*” (e.g. Revelation 2:2).<sup>33</sup>

32 For further discussion of the *v.l.* see J. M. Ross, “Further Unnoticed Points in the Text of the New Testament” *NovT* 45 (2003) pp. 209-21. Here pp. 220-1.

33 Borger, *op. cit.* p. 57 omits a reference to 22:16.

Of the fifteen New Testament books that end with a salutation six (Rom., 1, 2 Cor., 2 Thess., Tit., Heb.) conclude with *μετα παντων υμων*. (The conclusion in 2 Thess. in particular is very similar to Revelation.)

Could the reading of A.02 have come from 051, or is 051 a conflate reading?

Ross<sup>34</sup> argues in favour of *μετα των αγων σου* read by only 2329<sup>35</sup> (a *v.l.* not in the NA/ UBS apparatus but see *Commentary*). This occurs in a rewritten verse that seems later and liturgical, beginning with *αμην ερχου κυριε Ιησου* and omitting *η χαρις... Ιησου*.

This tiny selection represents but the tip of a very large iceberg of variants to be found in the relatively small cache of extant Greek witnesses plus versional and patristic support, but my sample is intended to demonstrate, albeit briefly, how such variants can be the start of ongoing discussions about the motives for change in the manuscript tradition. Apart from errors that merely expose scribal carelessness, most variation units are indicative of the thoughtful attention of copyists determined not simply to preserve doggedly a text that increasingly was becoming—or indeed had already become—accepted as authoritative, canonical, and scriptural, but also to make sure that that *living* text was being promoted as understandable in and for its own generation.

Adjacent commentary obviously aided such a process of comprehension but deliberate changes to the wording of the Book of Revelation itself were made to improve and clarify the force of its message. An approach to the textual criticism of the New Testament that recognizes that such motives were behind many a variant and that seeks to recover, discover, and uncover such clues can expose early exegesis in the variants located within our stock of manuscripts as conventionally exhibited in the apparatus to a critically edited text. It can thereby alert us to much in early Christianity's changing and vibrant history and its burgeoning doctrines—areas of research successfully applied by our honoree.

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34 J. M. Ross, "The Ending of the Apocalypse" in J.K. Elliott (ed.), *Studies in New Testament Language and Text* (Leiden: Brill, 1976) = *Supplements to Novum Testamentum* 44 pp. 338-44.

35 See Hoskier under 200 i.e. his number for 2329. For Hoskier's numbers see the key in J.K. Elliott, "Manuscripts of the Book of Revelation Collated by H.C. Hoskier" *JTS* 40 (1989) pp. 100-111.