METHODS & AIDS FOR TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Resources
(in addition to those listed in William J. Larkin, Greek is Great Gain, Chapter Five)


Procedure

1. Note differences for a given textual critical problem.
   a. List the variant readings and note the differences.
   b. Decide provisionally what appears to be at issue among the readings and has caused the differences (if necessary, consult Metzger, Textual Commentary.)

2. Investigate the probabilities
   a. Extrinsic Probabilities (External Evidence)
      1) Classify the evidence for each variant reading according to date, text family, i.e., Alexandrian, Western, Caesarean, and Byzantine, and geographical location. See tables in UBS Greek text for dates. See Fig. 1 for a listing of witnesses according to text family.
      2) Evaluate each reading according to the following characteristic of the witnesses to it:
          (1) date
          (2) character (note the genealogical solidarity or lack thereof within each text family, i.e., Do members of the same text family support one or more than one reading?); and
          (3) geographical distribution
      3) Identify the preferred reading according to the following criterion

         CRITERION: The preferred reading is the reading whose witnesses are the most ancient, most thoroughly Alexandrian-Western, and most widely distributed geographically
b. Transcriptional Probabilities (Internal Evidence)
   1) Write out in *uncial* form leaving no spaces between words the readings along with the few preceding or following words from the immediate context. With the aid of the "Types of Unintentional Errors" list (see Fig. 2) identify which reading(s) may be the result of unintentional copyist errors.
   2) With the aid of "Types of Intentional Errors" list (see Fig. 3) identify which reading(s) may result from intentional copyist errors.
   3) Identify the preferred reading. Explain how it appears to have given rise, through unintentional and/or intentional copyist adjustment, to the other readings.

   CRITERION: The preferred reading is the "shorter and the more difficult" reading, i.e. more difficult for the copyist.

c. Intrinsic Probabilities (Internal Evidence)
   1) With the aid of grammars determine which reading is most grammatically harmonious with its context.
   2) With the aid of a concordance (Bibloi 8 or M&G) determine which reading is most harmonious with the author's style, vocabulary, theology, and purpose.
   3) NOTE: Often the "shorter and more difficult" reading has as its difficulty a lack of grammatical harmony with its context. In these cases, the longer and more harmonious reading is probably a secondary correction of the shorter reading and is therefore not original.

   CRITERION: The preferred reading is, in the main, the one which is most grammatically harmonious with the context and is congruent with the authors' style, vocabulary, theology, and purpose.

3. Conclusion: Identify the reading which meets the above criteria. This is the *preferred* reading, which most closely approximates the form (wording) of the original text.
FIGURE 1

WITNESSES ACCORDING TO TEXT FAMILY

The Gospels

Alexandrian:  \( p^1 \ p^3 \ p^4 \ p^5 \ p^7 \ p^{22} \ p^{34} \ p^{39} \ (p^{66}) \ p^{75} \)

\( \kappa \ B \ (C) \ L \ Q \ T \ (W, \text{Lk. 1:1-8:12; Jn. 5:12-21:25}) \ Z \Delta \ \Xi \\ (in \text{MK}) \ \Xi \ (in \text{Mk; partial in Lk and Jn}) \ 054 \ 059 \ 060 \ 0162 \)

\( 20 \ 33 \ 164 \ 215 \ 376 \ 579 \ 718 \ 850 \ 892 \ 1241(1342 \text{Mk}) \)

\( \text{vg \ cop(s) \ cop bo} \)

(Origen) (Cyprian) Athanasius (Jerome) Cyril of Alexandria Cosmos

Caesarean:  \( p^{37} \ p^{45} \)

\( N \ O \ (W, \text{Mk 5:31-16:20}) \ \Theta \ \Sigma \ \Phi \)

\( f^1 \ f^{13} \ 23 \ 565 \ 700 \ 157 \ 1071 \ 1604 \)

\( \text{syr s pal \ arm (Mt \& Mk) geo} \)

(Origen) Eusebius Cyril-Jerusalem

Western:  \( p^{25} \)

\( D \ (W, \text{Mk 1:1-5:30; Jn 1:1-5:11}) \ 1071 \)

\( \text{it e, k, etc. \ syr s, c, h \ cop(s)} \)

Justin; Diatessaron; Marcion; Irenaeus; Clement of Alexandria; Hippolythus; Early Latin Fathers; Tertullian; Cyprian; Novatian; Victorinus-Pettau; Juvenecus; Hilary; Lucifer; Tychonius; Priscillian; Ambrose; Macarius; Magnes; Epiphanius; Gaudentius; Chromatius; Rufinus; Pelagius; (Jerome); (Augustine); Syrian Fathers to about 450 A.D.; Eusebius; Aphraates; Ephaem; Basil, the Great; Cyril-Jerusalem; Gregory-Nazianzus; Gregory-Nyssa; (Chrysostom); Theodore, of Mopsuestia; Euthalius. Sixth century ff. witnesses - Primasius; Cassiodrous; Bede.

Byzantine:

\( A \ E \ F \ G \ H \ K \ M \ S \ U \ V \ (W, \text{Mt. Lk. 8:13-24:53}) \)

\( \text{Y, } \Gamma, \ \Lambda, \ \Pi, \ \Psi \ (\text{Lk; Jn}) \ \Omega \)

Most minuscules excluding those cited above

\( \text{syr P \ goth \ eth \ (but often agrees with } p^{46} \text{ and B against all others) nub} \)

(Origen) Chrysostom Later Fathers from 450 A.D. onwards, except as noted above.
WITNESSES ACCORDING TO TEXT FAMILY

Acts

Alexandrian: p 8 p 45 (p 50 )

κ A B (C) Ψ 048 076 096

6 3 81 104 326 1175

vg cop (sa) cop bo

Clement of Alexandria (Origen) (Cyprian) Athanasius Jerome Cyril of Alexandria Cosmos

Western: p 38 p 41 p 48

D E 066

257 383 440 614 913 1108 1245 1518

1611 1739 2138 2298

it syr P syr h mg cop (sa)

Justin; Diatessaron; Marcion; Irenaeus; Clement of Alexandria; Hippolytus; Early Latin Fathers:
Tertullian; Cyprian; Novatian; Victorinus-Pettau; Juvencus; Hilary; Lucifer; Tychonius;
Priscillian; Ambrose; Macarius; Magnes; Epiphanius; Gaudentius; Chromatius; Rufinus;
Pelagius; (Jerome); Augustine; Syrian Fathers to about 450 A.D.: Eusebius; Aphraates; Ephraem;
Basil, the Great; Cyril-Jerusalem; Gregory-Nazianzus; Gregory-Nyssa; (Chrysostom); Theodore,
of Mopsuestia; Euthalius. Sixth century ff. witnesses - Primasius; Cassiodorus; Bede.

Byzantine: H α K α P L α P S P α 049

Most minuscules excluding those cited above

goth eth (but often agrees with p 46 and B against all others) nub

(Jerome) Chrysostom Later Fathers from 450 A.D. onward, excepted as noted above.
**WITNESSES ACCORDING TO TEXT FAMILY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pauline Epistles</th>
<th>and</th>
<th>Catholic Epistles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alexandrian:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p10 p13 p15 p16</td>
<td>p 20 23 72 74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p26</td>
<td>p</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A B (C) H I M P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ048 081 088 0220</td>
<td>Ψ, A B C P 048 056</td>
<td>0142 0156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 33 81 104 326</td>
<td>33 81 104 323 3 6 424c</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>424c 1175 1739 1908</td>
<td>1175 1739 2298</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vg cop(sa) cop bo</td>
<td>vg cop(sa) cop bo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Cyprian) (Jerome)</td>
<td>(Clement of Alexandria (Origen) (Cyprian)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmos</td>
<td>Athanasius Jerome Cyril of Alexandria</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cosmo</td>
<td>Cosmo</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(both groups of writings)

**Western:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D Dp E Ep FP GP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>88 181 (915 917 1836 1898 1912 - Paul only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it syr h mg syr ph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justin; Diatessaron; Marcion; Irenaeus; Clement of Alexandria; Hippolytus; Early Latin Fathers: Tertullian; Cyprian; Novatian; Victorinus-Pettaiu; Juvenecus; Hilary; Lucifer; Tychonius; Priscillian; Ambrose; Macarius; Magnes; Epiphanius; Gaudentius; Chromatius; Rufinus; Pelagius; (Jerome); Augustine; Syrian Fathers to about 450 A.D.; Eusebius: Aphraates; Ephraem; Basil, the Great; Cyril-Jerusalem; Gregory=Nazianzus; Gregory-Nyssa; (Chrysostom); Theodore, of Mopsuestia; Euthalius. <strong>Sixth century ff. witnesses</strong> - Primasius; Cassiodorus; Bede.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Byzantine:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H K Ap L Ap S 049 (Paul only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most minuscules excluding those cited above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goth eth (but often agrees with p46 and B against all others) nub arm syr P syr pal (Caesarean)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Jerome) Chrysostom Later Father from 450 A.D. onward except as noted above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FIGURE 1 (continued)

WITNESSES ACCORDING TO TEXT FAMILY

Revelation

Alexandrian: \( p^{18} \ p^{24} \ p^{47} \)

\( \kappa \ A \ (C) \ P \ 0207 \ 0169 \)

61 69 94 241 254 1006 1175 1611
1841 1852 2040 2053 2344 2351

vg \ cop^{sa} \ cop^{bo} \)

Hippolytus (Cyprian) (Jerome) Cosmos

Western: Finegan and Metzger observe that no specifically Western witnesses have been identified for the Book of Revelation

Byzantine: 046 051 052

82 93 429 469 808 920 2048
Most minuscules excluding those cited above

go\( t\) (but often agrees with \( p^{46} \) and B against all others)

(Jerome) Chrysostom Later Fathers from 450 A.D. onward, excepted as noted above.
 TYPES OF UNINTENTIONAL COPYIST ERRORS

1. Errors of Sight  
   a. Mistaking of Letters (one for another)  

   \[ \Sigma, \ E, \ O, \ \Theta \]  
   \[ \Gamma, \ \Pi, \ T \]  
   \[ \Lambda\Lambda, \ M \]  
   \[ \Lambda\ I, \ N \]  
   \[ \Delta, \ \Lambda \]  
   \[ \mu, \ \nu \]  
   \[ \beta, \ \nu \]  
   \[ \beta, \ \nu \]  

   Misunderstanding of contractions

   b. Omission of Letters, Words, Phrases, Lines, (parablepsis). - Haplography (“written once”): often caused by words with the same beginning (homearchton) or same ending (homoeoteleuton) letters in close proximity which aids the eye in skipping ahead.

   c. Repetition of Letters, Words, Phrases (Dittography—“repeated writing”)  

   d. Misunderstood Word Division - when breaking down a scriptio continua text which placed all words together without division.

2. Errors of Hearing  
   a. Mistaking of Letters (Itacism): confusion because of similarity of sound in pronunciation

   Vowels  
   \( \text{o, } \omega \)  
   \( \text{ai, } \varepsilon \)  
   \( \text{ou, } \upsilon \)  
   \( \text{eta, } \epsilon \iota, \ \lambda, \ \omicron, \ \upsilon, \ \eta = \xi \)  

   Consonants  

   single vs. double; \( \varepsilon, \ \sigma, \ \zeta \)  

   Smooth/Rough Breathing—failure to distinguish

   b. Misunderstood Word Divisions  

   c. Interchange of Consonants.

3. Errors of the Mind  
   a. Substitution of synonyms

   b. Assimilation to a parallel biblical passage

   c. Transposition of letters, words

4. Errors of Judgment  
   a. Insertion of Marginal Readings into text (including lectionary editorial comments)
Figure 3

TYPES OF INTENTIONAL COPYIST ERRORS

1. Corrections
   a. Spelling and Grammar - corrections from less familiar, refined, or elegant spelling, vocabulary or grammatical syntax to commonplace forms and syntax in accord with contemporary atticing preferences.
   b. Harmonization of Parallel Biblical Passages - whether OT quotation or Synoptic Gospel material, discrepancies in wording removed.
   c. Harmonization of Historical and Geographical Difficulties
   d. Doctrinal Considerations
      eliminate unacceptable material content which is harsh, superfluous, contrary to pious belief, liturgical use, ascetic practice.

2. Additions
   a. Stylistic Smoothness: add pronouns, conjunctions, interjections, complements to complete ellipses.
   b. Conflation: combining of a number of variant readings from prior manuscripts.
   c. Miscellaneous Details: provision of information, e.g. traditional names of biblical characters, to satisfy the curiosity of the faithful.
   d. Doctrinal Considerations: addition of material to serve as proof for theological tenets or practices.