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***New Testament Greek Papyri and Parchments: New Editions: Texts and Plates***

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Editions or reeditions of ancient manuscripts are always welcome, above all when their goal is to bring two academic disciplines closer together. This is here the case: we have papyrological evidence that is to be utilized mainly by theologians. Moreover, an edition of papyri or, as the title of these two volumes suggests, of papyri and parchments may attract even more attention among scholars of the relevant fields of theology if prepared by a theologian. Basically, this is the case with Stanley E. Porter (President and Dean, Professor of New Testament at McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario), a distinguished scholar of theology with a wide variety of interests and an admiring expertise in most of them, proved by a considerable number of publications as author or editor. Together with his wife Wendy J. Porter (Director of Music and Worship at McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario), who herself worked on ekphonic notation in manuscripts, he reedited a considerable number of New Testament manuscripts kept in the papyrus collection of the Austrian National Library in Vienna. However, in order to pick up the introductory sentence, editions (and reeditions) must do their readers a service: they must be reliable and accurate, easy to use, and comprehensive in relation to essential information.

In their introduction, the two editors justify the need for this edition and explain their method of dealing with and presenting the papyri and parchments. The first is rather self-

evident, whereas the latter is more complex and needs closer inspection. The original publication of the relevant Vienna manuscripts started in 1882 with P.Vindob.G 2325, the so-called Fayûm Fragment, and since then they were published here and there. The editors admire the work of papyrologists Peter Sanz and Karl Wessely, who extensively worked on the Vienna papyri. But at the same time they regret that the work of these was not received consistently and adequately and that neither Sanz nor Wessely, as most of their successors, provided detailed commentaries on their editions. As far as method is concerned, the editors supply “both a diplomatic text and a reading or normalized text, as well as brief commentary on each” (xii), reconstruct what is missing, if possible at all, by relying on Nestle-Aland<sup>27</sup>, and employ sigla, signs, short forms (e.g., the *nomina sacra*), sublinear dots, and so on to indicate what is really there and how it should be represented. Finally, they name the shortcomings of the traditional categories in New Testament textual criticism, among which are the implicit evaluation of manuscripts due to their positions in lists or the myth about their writing material. The word *papyrus*, for instance, still has some awkward effect on readers and scholars of textual criticism, whereas an entry 0165 (P. Berol. inv. 13271) does not really receive much attention at all, although it would certainly deserve it. The editors argue that the existing system of categorizing New Testament manuscripts does the lectionaries wrong, as more of them should be in a new first category of highest significance.

Of course, editors must make concessions, if their objective is to present as many pieces of information and texts as possible within the covers of a book, as is the case here. Nevertheless, it is a pity that the bilingual Greek and Coptic manuscripts are somewhat trimmed in their actual appearance and importance, because the editors decided not to transcribe the Coptic as well. From a subjective view, I have reservations about the inclusion of the apocryphal P.Vindob.G 2325, while other Vienna manuscripts are excluded from the edition, although they preserve verses from New Testament texts (P.Vindob.G 8032, 26034, and 30453). Of course, they do not offer a continuous text, the criterion of a biblical manuscript, but their exclusion leads to the omission of additional information of how a text was used, compiled together with others, and basically which texts were used in a specific way. Besides, it might be somewhat awkward when editors criticize an existing system of categorizing manuscripts, as it is done in the *Kurzgefasste Liste der griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments*, and then divide the manuscripts they present in the categories “papyri,” “parchments,” “lectionaries,” and “apocryphal Gospel.” That tells us two things: the editors have adhered to the system of the *Kurzgefasste Liste* (see the first three categories separated by material and purpose); they exclude minuscules from their edition, which are regularly neglected manuscripts in textual criticism (see xiii).

Leaving those minor points of criticism aside, the two volumes, lavishly produced with fine binding and paper and good-quality plates, represent an important tool for scholars of textual criticism. Those who want to find necessary information about the manuscripts in the Austrian collection and those who want to learn more about their variant readings will be pleased with volume 1; those who focus on more technical details and the outer appearance of the manuscripts will find the plates in volume 2 valuable. However, the plates are not that easy to handle, because captions with inventory number, recto-verso/hair-flesh side, or the text passage shown are missing, and that is something that could have facilitated orientation in volume 2. In volume 1, the manuscripts are presented as follows: (1) the heading offers the New Testament passage, subtitles then the inventory number, date, Gregory-Aland number, dimensions, and provenance; (2) the introduction supplies a detailed description of the physical features of the fragment and palaeographical reflections; (3) a diplomatic transcription is given, followed by notes about uncertain or doubtful letters, letter traces, punctuation, and diacritical signs; and (4) a reading text is provided, with accents and breathings, punctuation, reconstructed lines and diacritical signs, followed by notes on alternative reconstructions and variant readings. Eye-catching are the long discussions of letter traces and their reconstructions, something not often found in papyrological editions but worthwhile to read by biblical scholars who must know about the real state of the text preserved by a manuscript.

All in all, the editors cover a considerable number of manuscripts, including a large portion of important ones in respect of their Gregory-Aland numbers and the *Kurzgefasste Liste*. For papyri, there are P<sup>3</sup>, P<sup>33</sup> = P<sup>58</sup>, P<sup>34</sup>, P<sup>41</sup>, P<sup>42</sup>, P<sup>45</sup>, P<sup>55</sup>, P<sup>56</sup>, P<sup>57</sup>, (P<sup>58</sup> = P<sup>33</sup>,) P<sup>76</sup>, P<sup>96</sup>, and P<sup>116</sup>. For parchments, we find N 022, 058, 059 = 0215, 070 (= 0178 + 0179 + 0180 + 0190 + 0191), 0101, 0105, 0148, 0177, 0181, 0182, 0183, 0184, 0185, 0213, 0214, 0215 = 059, 0216, 0217, 0218, 0219, 0221, 0222, 0223, 0224, 0225, 0226, 0227, 0228, 0237, 0238, and 0256. Lectionaries are *l* 1043, *l* 1575, and *l* 1739. There is one apocryphal Gospel: the Fayûm Gospel (P.Vindob.G 2325). The manuscripts are not given in the order of their number (Gregory-Aland/*Kurzgefasste Liste*) but according to the order of the New Testament text (from Matthew to Revelation) for each category. In addition, as can be seen in the enumeration of manuscripts above, the presentation of the manuscripts differs from that in the *Kurzgefasste Liste*, where, for example, the bilingual Greek and Coptic majuscule 070 subsumes other majuscule fragments (i.e., 0110, 0124, 0178, 0179, 0180, 0190, 0191, 0193, 0202) that are kept in six different collections or libraries. In the Porters' edition, the bilingual majuscule 070 covers edition numbers 32 to 36, as the different parts with individual inventory numbers are treated separately (0178, 0179, 0182, 0190, 0191). This might be baffling for some scholars who are used to the conventions of the *Kurzgefasste Liste*. Others, however, might get a feeling of the history behind identifying one piece as part of the other or, in other words, as two manuscripts

belonging together and forming a larger manuscript thereafter; this is more easily seen with the way the editors present their manuscript fragments.

Among all those reeditions there is one genuine new edition. The majuscule 0148 from the eighth century preserves Matt 28:5–8, 8–11; 28:11–15, 15–19, a couple of diacritical marks, and “a number of biblical textual novelties” (95) that are discussed in detail in the notes. In addition, very convenient indexes alleviate orientation in the book, as there are lists of “new Greek readings” (95–297), “corrections to previous editions” (298–303), and a “concordance of Vienna editions” facing a list of “inventory numbers” and their corresponding edition number in the present volume (304–5). Number 28 (P<sup>56</sup>) from the sixth century (?) with Acts 1:1–4, 7–10 also deserves attention, because the Porters (re)edited it in 2001, so that there is a second item the editors are genuinely responsible for.

Minor mistakes in a work like this are inevitable, especially when it comes to printing transcriptions in Greek with diacritical and editorial signs and symbols; anyone who has edited a manuscript knows about that. However, my spot check of the manuscripts with which I am familiar or have worked on shows that the editors apparently worked accurately and present their editions in a sound and readable way. Of course, the reading of doubtful letters or letter traces, editorial decisions how to reconstruct *lacunae* or the end of lines, and the reconstructions of longer sections when it comes to style and grammar are cases for alternative opinions and solutions, so that the editors are on the safe side as long as they reveal their reflections in detail; this is exactly what they do.

Although relevant and indispensable, black-and-white plates can also betray the viewer. But often authors seemingly have no other alternative than to accept plates in black and white in their editions. In the case of Austrian National Library Theol. Gr. 31 = Gregory-Aland N 022 from the sixth century, it is sad for the readers that they cannot see the splendid appearance of the two folios kept in Vienna (others parts of it are in Thessaloniki, St. Petersburg, Rome, New York, London, Athens, Lerma/Alessandria, and Patmos): the delicate parchment is of high quality, and its purple color is enchanting and captivating, as is its text in silver and the *nomina sacra* in gold. Having seen the two folios of the Codex Petropolitanus Purpureus in Vienna, I regret that there are no color plates in volume 2. Be that as it may, an impression of what such codices look like might be possible with the help of images of Codex Purpureus Rossanensis (Gregory-Aland Σ 042) on the Internet, although the illustrated evangeliar is rather special. Rather striking is, however, that the single leaf of P<sup>45</sup> from the third century with Matt 25:41–26:17, 18–39 in Vienna is reconstructed without taking the fragment in Dublin seriously into account. While the editors choose to reconstruct the text on the grounds of Nestle-Aland<sup>27</sup>, a look at the adjacent papyrus in Dublin would have helped to reconstruct the relevant passage

(here Matt 26:23) more accurately, that is, on the basis of the Gospel codex P<sup>45</sup>. That occurs as an oversight or a negligence of other manuscript material available, something that occurs just as slips of the pen. Some remarks about the rather large margins, the small script, and the wide line spacing are also appropriate, because this is something readers should also be made aware of.

Be that as it may and apart from these minor aspects of criticism, the editors are to be congratulated for their work: readers are now able to get a real overview of the most important New Testament manuscripts in the papyrus collection of the Austrian National Library. The Porters' seemingly did a good job also in respect of being accurate and informing their readers to a remarkable extent. Nevertheless, an edition and the reconstruction of a text are never more than an interim solution or a snapshot from which future generations of scholars should and must start their work anew. However, this is what editors know from the very beginning of their work, and they are fully aware of the goal they have to achieve by their work: to provide (reliable) editions for those who need to work with them and who base their theses on them thereafter; consequently, editors will be criticized for this and that small detail. That is why editors are to be thanked for their work, especially if it is done the way the editors of the volumes under review have done it.