

L.W. Hurtado, ed. *The Freer Biblical Manuscripts: Fresh Studies of an American Treasure Trove*. Text-Critical Studies 6. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006. Pp. x + 308. ISBN: 978-1589832084. \$34.95 USD, paper.

1. This volume focuses on the collection of six biblical manuscripts housed at the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. The editor of the volume, Larry Hurtado, coordinated a team of scholars who wrote fresh studies of this “American treasure trove” for the centenary year of the acquisition of the first four manuscripts. The studies were first presented in a special session during the 2006 Annual Meeting of the SBL in Washington, DC, held in the Freer Gallery of Art, where there was also a major exhibit including the manuscripts.

2. In the introduction of the volume Hurtado points out that the very important collection has received relatively little attention after the initial excitement following the time of their acquisition by Charles Lang Freer in 1906 and that the ten contributions are intended to help redress this unjustified scholarly neglect. Then he briefly discusses the historical background and the particular significance of the collection. Pride of place goes to the Gospels codex, dating from the fourth to sixth centuries (see below), which contains the famous edifying expansion after Mark 16:14 known as “Freer Logion,” added after Mark 16:14. The codex, known as Codex W among text-critics, has also been viewed as one of the key witnesses to the supposed “Caesarean” text-type. In this connection, Hurtado refers to his doctoral dissertation in which he showed that Codex W in fact did not align with other so-called “Caesarean text” witnesses. Nevertheless, it did exhibit a close affinity with \mathcal{P}^{45} , which points to a mutual textual tradition dating back as far as the early third century, if not earlier.

3. Hurtado’s focus on Codex W in the introduction is explicable due to its significance for New Testament textual criticism and his own familiarity with the codex. This is symptomatic for the rest of the volume—half of the essays are devoted to this witness(!) The imbalance is partly due to the fact that several scholars who initially offered to produce contributions to the volume were prevented from doing so, and that therefore studies of three other manuscripts, the Deuteronomy-Joshua MS, the Greek Psalms codex, and the Coptic Psalms codex, are absent.

4. Kent D. Clarke has written the leading essay (pp. 17-73) in which he offers a biography of Charles Lang Freer (1854-1919) with special attention to the fascinating story of how Freer obtained this splendid collection of Greek manuscripts. The essay is careful and detailed with generous footnotes. Clarke’s access to first hand material, specifically Freer’s own diary and correspondence preserved in the “Charles Lang Freer Papers,” proves very fruitful throughout the essay.

5. Charles Lang Freer was mainly an art collector, and it has often been pointed out that the biblical manuscripts marked an impulsive acquisition. However, Clarke’s detailed description of the purchase, based on Freer’s diary, gives us another picture. He suggests that Freer put considerable thought into his decision. After the purchase, Freer entrusted Francis W. Kelsey to take charge of the preservation and publication of the manuscripts, who in turn appointed Henry A. Sanders to produce critical editions of the Greek texts.

6. Clarke goes on to describe the Washington Manuscripts and the question of their immediate origin. He notes that Freer, Kelsey and Sanders expressed their certainty that Dimai, ninety

kilometers southwest of Cairo in the Fayoum region, was the long-time resting place of the Washington Manuscripts, but at the same time they sought every opportunity to verify this “fact.” Clarke reports that Dimai has been explored through several excavations up to 2004, and although a few Greek and Demotic papyri and ostraca have been discovered, there are no distinct Christian texts and no signs of Christian occupation at Dimai.

7. In the conclusion of the essay, Clarke describes Freer’s last years. Already in 1904, Freer had offered his magnificent collection of several thousands of items as a gift to the United States after his death. The gift was soon accepted by the Smithsonian Board of Regents, and the collection was to be displayed in a special building constructed with funds from his bequest. Eventually, the Freer Gallery of Art opened in May 1923, just four years after Freer’s death.

8. The second and much briefer essay by Kristin De Troyer (pp. 75-85) treats the Freer Minor Prophets Codex (FMP) and its text of Jonah. De Troyer points out that the text offers us a peek at the writing and rewriting of the Old Greek (OG) text, and she sets out to trace possible revisions of the language, or corrections of the translation towards its Hebrew source text.

9. In order to answer the question of what sort of early pre-Hexaplaric revisions or corrections one can observe in FMP, De Troyer first compares the readings in Jonah in the FMP with the Minor Prophet Scroll of Nahal Hever, labeled as the *kaige* text, which represents one particular revision towards a Hebrew text. Secondly, she takes a closer look at some variant readings in Jonah that Sanders thought reflected a Hebrew text different from the *kaige*, using fresh evidence from the Judean desert.

10. De Troyer rightly concludes that “the text of the book of Jonah copied by the first scribe of the Freer Minor Prophets Codex firmly stands in the tradition of the Old Greek tradition” (p. 85). She further states that the corrections by the second hand do not reflect a systematic revising of the OG text towards the MT. Instead most of the corrections are toward the OG text, aside from the corrections of the Greek language itself. The observation concerning the corrections is based on a very small sample—only seven corrections, two of which move in the direction of the *kaige*, and four others that move toward the OG. De Troyer suggested five cases of correction toward the OG, but the correction in 3:1 should not have been counted since the *kaige* is not extant and since the second hand clearly attempted to correct the Greek. A fuller examination of the corrections is desirable, but in my opinion these preliminary observations of sporadic corrections seem compatible with Sanders’s statement that the second corrector added elements derived from his own knowledge of Hebrew rather than from any known translation, as cited by Malcolm Choat in the third essay (p. 94).

11. In the third essay, Malcolm Choat concentrates on the unidentified text in the Freer Minor Prophets Codex (pp. 87-122). First, he gives some background about the acquisition and provenance of the FMP. Apparently, the codex was among the papyri purchased unseen by J. P. Morgan and Charles Lang Freer in 1916. The two had agreed to divide the lot of papyri whereby Morgan would take the Coptic texts and Freer the Greek ones. This codex turned out to be the only Greek item. In his edition of the Freer Minor Prophets Codex (MS V), Sanders connected this papyrus and the Coptic texts of the same lot with the collection acquired by Morgan in 1911 that came from the monastery of St. Michael at Hamouli in the Fayum. This connection has been doubted by subsequent scholars. In fact, Choat points to a number of factors pointing away from

the Fayum, e.g., the dialect of the Coptic glosses which is Sahidic. However, the codex could still have found its resting place at Fayum at some point, but the provenance is best described as “unknown.”

12. Choat goes on with a physical description of the codex. The codex was constructed in a single quire, characteristic of many early second-third century codices. Choat points out that the date of the codex must ultimately be based on palaeography. He suggests “the second half of the third century C.E., perhaps toward the close of the century” (p. 93). The Minor Prophets stood on the first thirty-nine leaves of the codex. Choat then thinks that an unidentified work was copied on one or more of the blank pages at the end of the codex. This is not certain, but some fragments of an unidentified text were found in the same two boxes that contained the FMP, to which it also compares in its quality and production. Sanders reached the same conclusion. Following the completion of the manuscript, the text was adjusted in various ways. Sanders referred to the second hand (the first corrector) as the *diorthotes* of a scriptorium. Choat refers to Kim Haines-Eitzen’s work on private scribal networks and states that the first corrector was more likely the codex’s first owner than an employee of a scriptorium. However, these are certainly not the only two alternatives. In fact, Choat himself later says, “That the production of the codex took place within the confines of such ‘churches’ as existed in the second half of the third century should remain a possibility” (p. 98). In the light of his subsequent observations, I think this “possibility” of a close connection to a Christian community is underestimated by Choat, as reflected in his conclusion: “If we assume one ancient home, then it must have contained ... a good library, the presence of those with above-average knowledge of the text (i.e., ‘scholars’), and a multilingual character” (p. 99).

13. The main part of Choat’s essay is a much improved edition of the unidentified text. He has done original work in assembling some further fragments, and he offers a fresh reconstruction of the text, which remains unidentified. Therefore, Sanders’s statement is repeated that the text is offered “as an assistance towards identifying the work” (p. 108), but Choat speculates whether it may be a lost work of Clement or Origen. In any case, the composer must have had an impressive library (or memory), judging from the standard of quotations, which are drawn from both the LXX and Symmachus’s version. The text opens with a quotation of LXX Isa 54:12-15. Further on we find the words “For the Apocalypse,” introducing a passage that describes how the Isaiah prophecy is fulfilled or developed in the New Testament in Rev 21. Choat concludes that this and other features suggest that the composer was concerned with millenarian issues.

14. In the fourth essay (listed by Hurtado as the fifth in the introduction), Jean-François Racine examines the textual affiliation and “quality” of the text of Matthew in the Freer Gospels Codex (W) (pp. 123-146). In the *editio princeps*, Sanders provided a full collation of the Gospel texts against the TR. Racine builds on Sanders’ collation data and in the first part conducts a quantitative analysis in which he compares the text of Matthew in Codex W with twenty other manuscripts, organized in the following textual groups: “Primary Alexandrian,” “Secondary Alexandrian,” “Caesarean,” “Byzantine,” and “Western.” The variation units were chosen “at random”; specifically, they represent passages in Matthew quoted by Basil of Caesarea, since Racine had prepared this collation data for a previous study. The results are presented in nine different tables. Racine concludes that Codex W has “a significantly higher rate of agreement with the Byzantine textual group than with any other, which indicates that W belongs more naturally to that group” (p. 133). Although Racine adds that a larger sample would be desirable, I

think his general conclusion is valid. However, the pre-conceived groups with various number of witnesses in each group raises serious questions. The problem with pre-conceived groups is most easily illustrated by looking at Racine's results in relation to the "Caesarean" group, in which Racine has placed Θ and f^{13} (whereas, e.g., f^1 is placed in the "Secondary Alexandrian" group). For example, there are 63/112 (56,3%) agreements between Codex W and Θ in Matt 25-28, but 89/112 (79,5%) between W and f^{13} in the same passage, which calls into question the integrity of the "Caesarean" group. Racine seems to be partly aware of the problem, since he notes the strong Byzantine character of f^{13} and says that Θ is the single strong witness of the group (see p. 124, note 7). It would have been interesting to see a full table where one can compare all witnesses against each other, but that would of course take a lot of space.

15. The second part of Racine's essay examines the text from a qualitative point of view. He compares the "textual cohesion" of the text in W and in Codex Vaticanus (B 03). Racine defines "textual cohesion" as "the set of resources available to a writer for constructing relations in discourse that transcend grammatical structure" (p. 135). In the analysis he then attempts to show that Codex W has a greater cohesion than B, because of its greater usage of reference, conjunctions, and lexical cohesion. When Racine attempts to explain why this is so, he says that it is not because of some thoughtful editorial strategy systematically applied through Matthew in W. Of course it is not! Since W stands in the Byzantine textual tradition, as demonstrated by Racine, this cohesion must be the result of a long process. When Racine says that "the superior textual cohesion exhibited by W is not the result of a conscious project but rather the result of sporadic modifications of the text" and that "we should therefore not be surprised with the inconsistency of the editorial work" (p. 143), it reflects a basic misunderstanding on the part of Racine: he ascribes the variants between W and B to their respective scribes (or "editors")! An analysis of the singular readings of the two witnesses would have been significant in order to characterize the scribes. Therefore, the final sentence is very apt: "In addition, variant readings unique to W in Matthew could be studied to see more fully the specificity of this manuscript" (p. 146). This is in fact what Dennis Haugh does in the sixth essay (see below).

16. In the fifth essay J. Bruce Prior analyses the abbreviations of certain words known as *nomina sacra* (pp. 147-166). Prior mentions several important studies from Ludwig Traube's seminal monograph in 1907 in which he coined the expression "*nomina sacra*." Prior uses Roberts's and Hurtado's useful organization of the fifteen words identified by Traube as *nomina sacra* in three groups depending on the regularity of their usage: primary group (Ιησους, Χριστος, κυριος, θεος); secondary group (πνευμα, ανθρωπος, σταυρος); tertiary group (πατηρ, υιος, σωτηρ, μητηρ, ουρανος, Ισραηλ, Δαυειδ, Ιερουσαλημ). Prior then notes all uses of *nomina sacra* in the Freer Gospel of Matthew and confirms that the four words (or word families) in Hurtado's first group exhibit the highest regularity of usage, as expected. However, Prior's second group is made up of πνευμα, πατηρ, μητηρ, ανθρωπος, whereas the words Ισραηλ and Δαυειδ form a third group. The remaining words are never abbreviated in Matthew (but σωτηρ does not occur in the text). Prior's results are based on a sufficient range of data, which will be useful in future study of this interesting phenomenon. The accentuation and spelling of the Greek should have been checked more carefully, since there are several errors and inconsistencies.

17. Dennis Haugh studies the singular readings of Codex W across the Gospels in the sixth essay (pp. 167-184). Haugh seeks to establish whether the original scribe was faithful to a number of

exemplars or acted as a self-conscious redactor, modifying the text to suit the needs of his community. The starting point for Haugh is Hurtado's examination of W in Mark, in which he left this question open. Haugh concludes that the type and number of unique variants in Mark are not reflected in Matthew and John, which means that it is unlikely that the scribe acted as a redactor—the various unique variants more likely reflect scribal changes made previously in the process of textual transmission of the individual gospels. This basic conclusion seems to be sound, but there are problems with the more detailed discussion that follows.

18. Haugh makes the observation that the text of Mark in Codex W shows more than twice as many “intentional variants” in the same number of verses in Mark than in John (p. 172). Here one should note that there are more textual variants in the Gospel of Mark in general. In John Haugh finds five changes from the aorist to the perfect which he believes are an expression of a “theological conviction” (p. 174), whereby an earlier “editor” (not the scribe) attempted to “heighten the relevance [for his contemporary readers] of the four last chapters of John, the passion narrative in particular” (p. 175). To speak of an “editor” displaying this particular theological tendency, based on five readings seems very speculative to me. Haugh notes, but does not discuss, the reading in 17:8, where the manuscript has a unique aorist instead of a perfect. Nor does he note the correction by the first hand in 17:22 of a perfect to an aorist affecting the same verb, παραδίδωμι, as in two of his five cases (cf. Royse's study, pp. 196, 219), which shows how easily these changes back and forth occur in the transmission process—how many similar slips of this scribe affecting the verb tense remained uncorrected? One should be careful to speak of an editor when looking beyond the scribe of a manuscript, considering that changes are accumulated during the transmission process (cf. also the variants in 20:13).

19. In the seventh essay James Royse takes a fresh look at the corrections in Codex W (pp. 185-226). In this careful and extensive examination Royse classifies the corrections as to the different hands involved. He supplies a very useful list of 168 corrections in W, and another 11 in the supplemental quire of W (in John 1:1-5:11a). Just over one half of these corrections were made by the original scribe. Royse believes that the original reading in most of these cases was a slip or oversight and that the correction restored the original. Most of the rest of the corrections were made by a second hand who also intended to restore the text of the exemplar. Two later correctors made a few additional changes at various places. Royse finds no consistent effort to shift W from one textual tradition to another, nor any evidence of an overall redaction reflecting doctrinal motives. Instead, he concludes: “Codex W reflects a concern simply to copy with reasonable care” (p. 216).

20. Ulrich Schmid reassesses the palaeography and codicology of Codex W in the eighth essay (pp. 227-249). He effectively exposes the problems with Sanders's analysis of the prehistory of the supplemental quire of John. The scribe of this quire accidentally omitted John 5:12. Sanders thought the omission was genealogically significant. He suggested that the first quire was made as a replacement quire made for an older, now lost manuscript, which was the likely parent of all other witnesses that omit John 5:12, including Latin and Syriac witnesses of the fifth century. Thus, Sanders dated the replacement quire to the late fourth/early fifth centuries, and Codex W not much older. However, Schmid points out that, ironically, the scribe of Codex W proper must have made the exact same mistake independently, because he did not start transcribing with John 5:12, but mistook the final words in the supplemental quire, John 5:11, as the end of John 5:12. Thus, he concludes: “One cannot rightly build a genealogical connection of textual witnesses on

a single variant that could easily have arisen more than once coincidentally” (p. 235). This in turn means that Sanders’s *terminus ante quem* for dating the various parts of W is useless.

21. In the second part of Schmid’s essay he goes on with a brief palaeographical study of Codex W, in which he cautiously suggests that it be assigned to the sixth century. He shows that the examples with which Sanders compared the manuscript are dated differently today. Moreover, Schmid finds in Codex W various letter forms reflecting the “sloping pointed majuscule,” which other scholars have found to be indicative of a later date (late sixth-century), but, curiously only when found in other manuscripts. However, Schmid is very cautious and asks for further studies of the issues relating to the date of Codex W. I don’t see anything “controversial” in Schmid’s discussion (cf. the editor’s description on p. 15). The only minor change I have to suggest is in the title, where “codicology” could have preceded “palaeography,” following the outline of the essay.

22. Thomas A. Wayment examines the scribal characteristics of the Freer Pauline Codex on the basis of new electronic images in the ninth essay (pp. 251-262). He starts by pointing out that this manuscript, Freer Codex I (Washington MS IV; Gregory-Aland 016; van Haelst 507) has received little attention. It is evident also from this collected volume that it stands in the shadow of the Freer Gospels Codex. Wayment proposes that the singular readings in 016 confirm an oral background of the text, i.e., that it was copied from a lector’s reading, since the text shows consistent confusion of *homophones*. The resultant confused readings would have been corrected had this practiced scribe had the exemplar before his eyes. Nevertheless, Wayment notices an important shift after Galatians, where the number of “singular” textual variants increases dramatically, e.g., to double the amount of itacism per line. A palaeographic analysis, however, shows that the codex is the work of a single scribe, so Wayment explains the difference between the two halves by suggesting that the codex was completed in a scriptorium, and that the lector, not the scribe, changed at the beginning of Ephesians. This seems plausible. However, it would have been interesting also to examine the textual characteristics of the two halves, in order to exclude the possibility that the scribe changed exemplars.

23. Wayment goes on to analyse the “singular readings” in 016. He defines “singular readings” as those that are not found in NA²⁷, and the editions of Gebhardt, von Soden and Swanson (p. 256, note 20). I have not verified the readings which Wayment isolates as singular, but I did become very suspicious when I read: “In 1 Tim 1:1 and 2 Tim 1:1 the scribe inverted the construction, $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \iota\eta\sigma\omicron\upsilon$, probably because of his familiarity with the formulation, ‘Jesus Christ’” (p. 257). This variant is certainly not a singular reading, as is evident from von Soden’s edition. Moreover, the discussion in which Wayment attempts to differentiate between singular readings that originated either with the scribe or from the text of the exemplar is often unconvincing and far too speculative. For example, in the comment on the reading in 2 Cor 3:16, which he admits is not a singular reading, he says that “the scribe records $\delta\prime\ \acute{\alpha}\nu$ instead of $\delta\grave{\epsilon}\ \acute{\epsilon}\acute{\alpha}\nu$ (wrongly accentuated). This change in text may result from auditory confusion where the scribe failed to recognize the elision on the vowels, but ... it may also reflect the influence of phrasing from the Old Testament passage (Exod 34:34 LXX) that is echoed in 2 Corinthians here” (p. 258).

24. In the final essay, Timothy J. Finney provides the readers with an introduction of “manuscript markup” (pp. 263-287). “Markup” signifies a method for transferring the text of a

biblical (or any) manuscript into the computer medium. One specific and important goal with such digitization is to create an online archive of our biblical manuscript heritage. In order to achieve the goal, it is necessary to agree on a unified standard. For example, the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) guidelines provide such a standardized and practical transcription system. Hence, the “markup” is done in a so-called TEI XML document (written in XML code according to TEI guidelines). In order to demonstrate how the method works, Finney supplies a case-study in the form of a transcription of the Freer Pauline Codex (016) in Hebrews. Although I am rather unfamiliar with Finney’s area of specialization, I welcome his contribution and effort to reach the necessary goal of manuscript digitization.

25. This volume brings together ten valuable essays, each focusing on some important aspect of this “American treasure trove.” Especially in Clarke’s leading essay about the great philanthropist Charles Lang Freer, who in great enthusiasm purchased the manuscripts from Egypt, we can mirror our own fascination for these biblical manuscripts. As Clarke says, Freer did not collect these items for the purpose of amassing materials in the pursuit of wealth but instead to encourage a sensitivity of “the beautiful” that would arrest the materialism of his own age (p. 21). This volume of essays highlights this beauty and is therefore a treasure in its own right.

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