

A Textual Commentary on the Greek Gospels  
by  
Wieland Willker

Some notes on the Coptic Mt, Schoyen MS 2650 = mae-2

Manuscripts in the Schoyen Collection  
Coptic Papyri, Vol. 1  
Hans-Martin Schenke  
Hermes Publishing, Oslo 2001  
ISBN 82 8034 002 5  
(you have to order it from the publisher)

Compare: <http://www.nb.no/baser/schoyen/4/4.1/413.html#2650>

Mae-2 is a new (bought 04/1999) Coptic, middle-Egyptian MS, dated first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> CE. We already discussed this with respect to the Two Sons pericope. There are 39 leaves, with text from 5:38 to the end with many lacunae. Originally there must have been 46 leaves (92 pages).

The edition of the text is very good. Unfortunately all discussion is in German. It has all you need: Plates of all pages, the reconstructed text, a translation (German!), and a reconstructed Greek text. One problem I have with the presentation is that you have to look at three places for the discussion: 1. the apparatus of the Coptic, 2. the apparatus of the translation with different, complementary commentary and the Greek reconstruction at the end of the book.

Another problem I have is with Schenke's view that the text is something completely different and that our canonical text and this text both go back to a common original, possibly the Hebrew Matthew. Schenke's reconstruction builds on the view that the translator slavishly translated a Greek original. Therefore Schenke's Greek reconstruction looks very different from our canonical text (mostly minutiae). I am absolutely no expert and don't know Coptic at all, but from what I know now, I find it more probable that this text is just a free text, a free translation. There are many minor variations, but they are all really minor and can be explained simply as translation freedom, in my opinion. I may be wrong though. Schenke admits that his view is just speculation.

His main argument for the strangeness of this Coptic Mt is the scarcity of conjunctions:

	mae-2	mae-1
ALLA	23	33
GAR	39	104
DE	155	416
IDOU	8	23
KAI	142	315
OUN	14	54

On the other hand:

TOTE 83 49

(of the 49 in mae-1, 21 are NOT found in mae-2!)

Schenke says, that basically mae-1 can be explained as descend from a canonical Greek form, but not mae-2. Therefore mae-2 must come from a different Greek text, which he tried to reconstruct.

He also notes that, because of the very limited circulation of the mae-2 form and of certain secondary elements, this textform itself must be later than canonical Mt. He thinks that both the canonical Mt and the mae-2 form are translations of a Hebrew Ur-Mt.

All this I find rather improbable. A check of all variants in the TCG shows that the underlying textform of mae-2 is basically Alexandrian, most agreements are with O1, Co. Additionally it has many singular readings.

An analysis of the variants from the TCG for which mae-2 is extant (about 100) gives the following results. Agreement in %:

sa	64%	it	49	Theta	43
U01	63	f1	48	f13	42
bo	60	D	48	Sy-P	37
B	58	mae-1	46	W	32
Sy-C	52	892	44	Sy-H	29
Sy-S	49	L	43	Maj	22

This of course gives only a very rough view, because it is based on a selection of variants only ("significant" variants), and not on a complete collation. It basically shows that mae-2 is embedded in the Egyptian textual tradition. It is especially close to O1, with which it shares many minority readings. (This does not rule out basically Schenke's speculation that mae-2 might have been translated from a Hebrew Mt, but this Hebrew Mt then must have been quite close to O1, Co.)

One should note that f1 forms its own texttype in Mt and that D/it have a comparatively good text in Mt.

Unfortunately I didn't have the contents of mae-1 handy so I couldn't check if it has significant lacunae in Mt. If it's complete the above value of only 46% agreement with mae-2 is interesting.

#### W. Petersen comments on the TC list:

Subject: Re: Codex Schoeyen

From: "William L. Petersen" <wlp1@psu.edu>

Date: Wed, 14 Jan 2004 16:56:47 -0500

"Just a brief comment.

I have not studied the text itself, nor Schenke's edition. However, about three years ago, just when the book appeared, I spoke with Prof. Tjitze Baarda (Free University of Amsterdam, now emeritus) about it. As I recall, he had been asked to review it, and his view was very negative. I should add that he and the now-deceased Schenke (obit 2002) were friends; he even arranged for Schenke to serve as a visiting lecturer at the Free Univ. for a period. Anyone interested should check for Baarda's review (I'll contact him and see if/when it appeared [or will appear]; I will notify the list of what I learn; I suspect he was doing it for \*Novum Testamentum\*). Baarda told me that his examination showed that far from being an "independent" Matthew, the Schoeyen Codex was simply (from his analysis of the variants) a rather adulterated text, filled with variants paralleled elsewhere in the MS tradition of Matthew (Greek, Latin, Syriac, etc., etc.) and/or the commentary traditions. He was disappointed in Schenke's rather - from his point of view - facile analysis of the text and failure to notice parallel variants elsewhere in the MS tradition. If this is so, then it is one more example of a familiar phenomenon: a new MS is brought to light; an editor publishes it, failing to thoroughly research its "curious" readings, and fails to note already-existing parallels; the editor proceeds to proclaim his newly-discovered manuscript exceptionally important, and epoch-making for the field. Later, however, a closer analysis shows that over-enthusiasm and a failure to thoroughly excavate other MSS for parallels has led the editor to mischaracterize the find. Caution is warranted, for Baarda is an expert Coptologist and has Middle Egyptian; the meticulousness of his work is well known."

Subject: Codex Schoeyen

From: "William L. Petersen" <wlp1@psu.edu>

Date: Thu, 15 Jan 2004 15:41:56 -0500

Baarda replied quickly; here is the information.

He indicates that, indeed, the review of Schenke's introduction & edition were done for \*Novum Testamentum.\* Proofs have been corrected, and he expects the review (he also mentions an article--presumably also for \*Novum\*) to appear in 2004.

My recollections of his views were correct. He explicitly praises three aspects of Schenke's work, and criticizes two points. He praises the short time it took to produce the edition (in contrast with the decades other editions have required...); the "wonderful" vocabulary and grammatical information, which aids readers with only Sahidic and/or Bohairic; and the good--although not flawless--German translation.

He criticizes the retrotranslation from ME into Greek (he finds the Greek retrotranslation flawed at "many" points); and the textual analysis is, in his judgment, insufficient, for it fails to take account \*not only\* of the expected features of translation literature, \*but also\* of the diversity of Greek texts \*already\* recorded in the apparatuses--including even in NA-27 (which it seems Schenke hardly consulted when drawing this textual conclusions).

Baarda rejects Schenke's theories about the origins of the text in the Schoeyen MS.

We will have to await the review and article later this year. Baarda is well-known for basing his very cautious conclusions on specific textual examples, so the fact that he is this outspoken--and on the work of a friend--says much.

In the interval, I would suggest that those who are interested start to examine the variants in the MS against the versions (esp. Coptic and Vetus Syra) and the Greek apparatuses (von Soden, Tischendorf, IGNTP, etc.), for, apparently, there is much in these apparatuses that was overlooked (or ignored) by Schenke. The problems with translation literature are well known: many words are polysemous (have two or more meanings): if I am studying German translations of an English work, and find that some German translations read "schnell," while others read "lebhaft," it does not mean that there were two exemplars or "traditions" in the English, or that I should hypothesize two English traditions, one of which read "quick" and one of which read "living"....

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T. Baarda's article is out now:

TJITZE BAARDA

"MT. 17:1-9 IN CODEX SCHØJEN"

Novum Testamentum 46 (2004) 265-287

Abstract

"The magnificent edition of a new Middle-Egyptian Coptic text of Matthew (Codex Schøjen), published by the late Hans-Martin Schenke, is an unexpected contribution to New Testament scholarship. Its text differs in many respects from all later Coptic versions including the famous Codex Scheide, published by the same author, which was written in the same dialect. This new and certainly most intriguing text requires a diligent investigation by textual critics in view of the far-reaching conclusions which Professor Schenke drew from its textual character. Only a thorough investigation of Matthew's text as far as it is preserved in this codex will enable textual critics to give a final and fair judgment of Schenke's hypotheses. This contribution can only be a first step to reach such a judgment."

He concludes:

"The result of this preliminary research did not leave me with the impression that Schenke's hypothesis is well-founded. It is true that there are many peculiarities in this Middle Egyptian Coptic text which demand an explanation, but they hardly gave me a reason to accept his daring thesis that this new text puts us on the track of a hitherto lost Greek translation of the original Semitic Matthew.

My general impression is that the famous editor has not proven his case. One of the reasons is that Schenke apparently did not take into account the diversity in textual transmission; his textual apparatus is far from satisfactory, as I will show in the course of this contribution. One could, of course, not expect a full apparatus as I have tried to give here for the pertinent pericope; however, one might have expected that the editor should at least have consulted a textual critic acquainted with textual transmission especially in versional texts. But even a quick glance at the great variety of variant readings collected in the

apparatuses of Tischendorf, Horner, Von Soden, and Legg, could have prevented the rash conclusion which Schenke has drawn from the textual phenomena in this new Coptic text.

...

The preceding inquiry into the text of the Transfiguration narrative has not convinced me of the probability of Schenke's hypothesis, but a final judgment is only possible after a full-scale examination of the whole manuscript. Meanwhile, we can only be thankful for Schenke's publication which furnishes us with a new target for New Testament scholarship."

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#### Other literature:

- U.K. Plisch "Die Perikopen über Johannes den Täufer in der neuentdeckten mittelägyptischen Version des Mt-Evangeliums (Codex Schoyen)" *NovT* 43 (2001) 368-392
- Tjitze Baarda "The reading 'who wished to enter' in Coptic Tradition, Mt 23:13, Lk 11:52 and Thomas 39." *NTS* 52 (2006) 583-91
- Tjitze Baarda "Thereafter he shut the door, Mt 25:10c in the Schojen Codex - A short note" *NTS* 54 (2008) 275-81

### Noteworthy readings:

I went once through the text and noted the things I found noteworthy. THIS IS NOT COMPLETE! Please refer to Schenke's edition to draw your own conclusions!

There are many (from my point of view) minor singular readings (mostly not noted), which are difficult to evaluate for me, because I don't know Coptic. But there is nothing really thrilling. If a Greek text is given, it is the reconstruction by Schenke. The new MS is referred to as mae-2 here:

5:44 mae-2 supports the short text, against mae-1

6:8 mae-2 omits O PATHR HUMWN

6:13 mae-2 has the short form with mae-1

6:25 mae-2 omits H TI PIHTE

6:28 omits PWS AUXANOUSIN

6:33 mae-2 omits TOU QEOU

8:31-33 slightly different

9:2 adds hOS HN ETH DEKAOKTW EN TH ASTENEIA AUTOU  
after BEBLHMENON (compare Lk 13:11)

9:13 mae 2 omits EIS METANOIAN against mae-1

9:14 mae-2 omits POLLA

9:24 Schenke reconstructs: APOSTHTE APO TOU KORASIOU. OUK  
APEQANEN ALLA KAQEUDEI.

9:25 mae-2 omits OTE ... EISELQWN, singular reading?

9:35 mae-2: ... QERAPEUWN TAS NOSOUS AUTWN TAS EN AUTWN

10:27 adds EN TOIS TAMEIOIS (from Lk 12:3)

- 10:34-35 OUK HLQON BALEIN EIRHNHN ALLA MACAIRAN 35 HLQON GAR  
is here only: HLQON META MACAIRHS
- 10:37 omits 37b with B\*, D (h.t.)
- 10:42 reads with D, it et al.: OU MH APOLHTAI hO MISQOS AUTOU
- 11:1 omits DWDEKA with f1 !
- 11:8 mae-2: EN TW OIKW TWN BASILEWN EISIN
- 11:18 adds probably PROS hUMAS with L and Theta et al.
- 12:12 adds MALLON
- 12:30 (mae-1), mae-2:  
hO MH SUNHG MENOS WN MET' EMOU ESKORPISMENOS ESTIN  
"who is not gathered with me, is scattered".
- 12:47 mae-2 omits verse
- 13:13 mae-2 omits all from OTI ... SUNIOUSIN
- 13:33 omit: ALLHN PARABOLHN ELALHSEN AUTOIS
- 13:51 LEGEI AUTOIS hO IHSOUS with Byz
- 13:55 IWSHF
- 14:9 mae-2 ends the verse with EKELEUSEN
- 14:18+19a omitted by mae-2
- 14:24 mae-2 has: STADIOUS POLLOUS ... against Byz
- 14:30 omits ISCURON
- 15:6 mae-2 omits complete 15:6a: OU ... AUTOU
- 15:14 mae has TUFLOI EISIN only. It omits hODHGOI [TUFLWN].
- 16:2-3 mae-2 omits

- 16:4 adds TOU PROFHTOU with Byz
- 16:12 PERI THS ZUMHS with D et al.
- 16:20 IHSOUS hO CRISTOS with Byz
- 17:1 mae-2? for ANAGEI with D, f1, Or
- 17:8 AUTON MONON; mae-2 omits Jesus
- 17:14 mae-2 adds here:  
TOTE HLQON PROS AUTON hOI MAQHTAI AUTOU  
compare 17:19a!
- 17:21 mae-2 omits verse.
- 18:11 mae-2 omits verse.
- 18:15 mae-2 has EIS SE
- 18:29 has EIS TOUS PODAS AUTOU with Byz
- 19:3 mae-2 omits ANQRWPW and reads ..THN GUNAIKA \*\*SOU\*\*...
- 19:9 mae-2 seems to confirm something like the B, f1 or the D, f13 reading of 9b.
- 19:16 mae-2 has txt = omits AGAQE
- 19:20 mae-2 has EK NEOTHOTOS MOU with Byz
- 19:29 mae-2 has GUNAIKA with Byz
- 20:4 AMPELWNA MOU
- 20:7 ERGAZESQE EIS TON AMPELWNA MOU
- 20:16 mae-2 without POLLOI GAR ...
- 20:22-23 mae-2 has the short text

- 20:30 ELEHSON hHMAS, IHSOUS hUIOS DAUID mae-2
- 20:31 ELEHSON hHMAS, KURIE, ELEHSON hHMAS hUIOS DAUID mae-2
- 21:29-31 mae-2, geo(2A): The "fourth form" of the Two Sons parable  
 1. he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go.  
 2. he answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went.  
 3. They said, "The first."
- 21:44 omits verse!
- 22:15 mae-2 adds KAT' AUTOU with C-c, Delta, Theta, f1, bo
- 22:30 omits TOU QEOU
- 23:2-3 different wording, plural "chairs of Moses"
- 23:3 only POIHSATE with 01\*
- 23:4 omits KAI DUSBASTAKTA
- 23:5 adds TWN hIMATIWN AUTWN with Byz against mae-1
- 23:14 omits verse
- 23:19 omits MWROI KAI against Co
- 24:7 omits KAI LOIMOI against mae-1
- 24:36 omits OUDE hO UIOS with Byz
- 24:48 CRONIZEI hO KURIOS MOU PRIN H ELQEIN
- 26:42 TOUTO TO POTHERION PARELQEIN AP' EMOU with Byz
- 26:44 PALIN APHLQEN EK TRITOU, omits 2<sup>nd</sup> PALIN
- 26:51 mae-2 adds from Jo 18:10 "and the name of the servant was Malchus"
- 26:73 does not add PALIN, contra mae-1

27:17 APO TOUTWN

27:27 TOU DIKAIΟΥ TOUTOU with Byz

27:33 omits LEGOMENOS

27:34 OXOS

27:35 not the addition at the end, against mae-1

27:49 the piercing: mae-2 has the addition and it has with Gamma and some minuscules the order hAIMA KAI hUDWR, as in John.

28:2 APO THS QURAS TOU MNHMEIOY

28:19 has the full trinitarian formula