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THE TEXT OF THE MATTHEAN DIVORCE PASSAGES: A COMMENT ON THE APPEAL TO HARMONIZATION IN TEXTUAL DECISIONS

MICHAEL W. HOLMES

Bethel College, St. Paul, MN 55112

Harmonization to parallel passages or traditions (oral as well as written) is well known as a cause of textual variation in biblical texts and is frequently cited as an "explanation" of the origin of certain variant readings. This is particularly true, for obvious reasons, with regard to the Synoptic Gospels, where this phenomenon occurs quite often.¹

A careful analysis, however, of various discussions or explanations of harmonistic variants, whether in articles, commentaries, or the UBS's *Textual Commentary*, strongly suggests the conclusion that the investigation of allegedly harmonistic variants generally has been carried out in too isolated or atomistic a manner. The most commonly observed procedure or pattern involves the evaluation of harmonizing variants in a particular passage (or even phrase) in light of an already established or critical text of the parallel passages. The same procedure is followed with regard to parallels: only variants involving the immediate passage are usually considered, and only in light of an established text of the parallels, variants generally being ignored.

There are two problems with such a procedure—one logical and the other methodological. The logical problem is the obvious danger of circular reasoning; this requires no further comment. The methodological problem involves how the set of parallel texts is handled: the textual tradition too frequently is atomized into its smallest constituent parts, and the variants of each part are dealt with in isolation from the variants affecting the other parts.² Thus, decisions are based on partial evidence, and arguments or

¹ In the influential United Bible Societies' *Textual Commentary* (Bruce M. Metzger, ed., *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [London and New York: United Bible Societies, 1971]), for example, harmonization or the influence of parallel passages is mentioned in the discussion of thirteen of the first twenty variants in the Gospel of Mark.

² H. Baltensweiler's treatment of Mark 10:12 (in *Die Ehe im Neuen Testament* [Zurich/Stuttgart: Zwingli, 1967] 66) is a particularly telling illustration of this "atomistic" tendency. He separates the variation between $\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta$ and $\gamma\upsilon\upsilon\eta$ from the rest of the verse, decides that $\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta$ is original, and then prefixes it to three different forms of the rest of the verse. He thereby creates two "phantom" forms of the verse that do not exist in any known manuscript. He apparently does

reasons are offered that appear convincing in isolation but look quite different in light of the rest of the tradition. The results of such a methodologically flawed approach, it may be argued, are erroneous judgments regarding the original text of the passage(s) in question.

A preferable approach would evaluate the entire set of parallels and all their variants simultaneously as a unit or cluster, rather than individually and in isolation. To be sure, this is not a particularly revolutionary proposal, and it is certainly not without precedent, at least in terms of scattered examples. But it does touch on an important point, one that runs against an observable tendency within the discipline to break everything down into its smallest constituent parts. This tendency obscures matters at least as often as it clarifies them. The forest is sometimes more obvious if one looks at the trees as a group rather than individually.

Let me now attempt to illustrate this point—that we should look at all the evidence, including in this instance parallel passages, in as comprehensive a manner as possible—by turning to a discussion of two sets of parallel texts, first Matt 26:73 and Mark 14:70, and then, as the major example, the Matthean divorce passages.

I. Matthew 26:73 and Mark 14:70

Matt 26:73:

. . . οἱ ἐστῶτες εἶπον τῷ Πέτρῳ· ἀληθῶς καὶ σὺ ἐξ αὐτῶν εἶ, καὶ γὰρ ἡ λαλιά σου δῆλόν σε ποιεῖ. ⁷⁴ τότε ἤρξατο . . .

καὶ συ] *omit* D Θ *f*¹ *pc* (it) *sys* *sams*
 γαρ] *add* Γαλιλαῖος εἰ καὶ C* Σ *pc* *syh***
 δηλον σε ποιεῖ] ομοιάζει D it *sys*

Mark 14:70:

. . . οἱ παρεστῶτες ἔλεγον τῷ Πέτρῳ· ἀληθῶς ἐξ αὐτῶν εἶ, καὶ γὰρ Γαλιλαῖος εἶ, καὶ ἡ λαλιά σου ὁμοιάζει. ⁷¹ ὁ δὲ ἤρξατο . . .

text A Θ *f*¹³ 28 (33) 892.1006.1071. 1506 *m* q *syph* *bopt*] *omit* καὶ ἡ

not realize—or at least give the reader any clue—that *αυτη* virtually never occurs in a manuscript that does not also read *απολυσασα*. In fact, the two words should be treated as a single unit of variation, since they virtually always occur together. (Only two exceptions, in which *απολυσασα* is found with *γυνη*, are known to me. They involve singular readings in 1424 [see the apparatus for Mark 10:12 below] and 179 [see n. 16 below], but these are quite problematic on other grounds and are scarcely credible witnesses on this point.)

λαλια σου ομοιαζει \aleph B C D L Ψ 0276 f^1 205.565.700.1342.2542 *pc*
 lat (sys) sa bo^{pt} Eus; *omit* και γαρ Γαλιλαιος . . . ομοιαζει W 2427
pc a

ομοιαζει] δηλοι N Σ ; δηλον σε ποιει 579; δηλον σε ομοιαζει 33

[Luke 22:59: . . . λέγων· ἐπ’ ἀληθείας και οὔτος μετ’ αὐτοῦ ἦν, και γὰρ
 Γαλιλαῖος ἐστιν; no significant and/or relevant variants]

[Diatessaron (Arabic):³ Luke 22:59 + και η λαλια σου ομοιαζει]

Both H. Greeven and K. Aland in their respective synopses, together with NA²⁶ and UBSGNT³, print for the text of Mark 14:70 the reading of \aleph B *et al.*, which lacks the phrase και η λαλια σου ομοιαζει.⁴ In so doing they are almost certainly in error, as the following discussion will attempt to demonstrate.

With regard to the Marcan variants, in their respective synopses Greeven and Aland both explicitly attribute the longer reading of the Majority text (and others) to the influence of the Matthean parallel. The UBSGNT³ does not even list this variant; nor is it discussed in the *Textual Commentary*, and so it is not possible to ascertain the editorial committee's line of thought in this instance. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that the committee headed by Aland reasoned along similar lines in choosing to follow the Alexandrian reading. Most of the commentators who mention this variant likewise reject the longer Marcan reading on the basis of the Matthean parallel.⁵

As for the Matthean variants, both Aland and NA²⁶ attribute the omission of και ου to the influence of the parallel text, but say nothing about the origin of the two other variants.⁶ Greeven labels the first two as harmonistic, but unfortunately does not give the third variant.⁷ The commentaries essentially pass over them in silence.

Note carefully the conclusion to which the synopses (as well as the commentaries, if and when they notice any variants) lead with regard to the rejected readings. It is being claimed that the rejected Matthean variants are due to the influence of Mark, and that the rejected Marcan variants are due to the influence of Matthew. In this respect this example is quite typical of

³ A.-S. Marmardji, *Diatessaron de Tatién* (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1935) 467.

⁴ A. Huck, *Synopsis of the First Three Gospels* (13th ed., fundamentally revised by Heinrich Greeven; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1981) 254; Kurt Aland, ed., *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum* (13th ed.; Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1985) 467–68.

⁵ See, e.g., J. Gnllka (*Das Evangelium nach Markus* [EKK 2/2; Zurich: Benziger; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1979] 2, 293); cf. C. S. Mann (*Mark* [AB 27; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1986] 631–32). R. Pesch does notice the major Matthean variant, but nonetheless finds the Matthean parallel decisive against the originality of the longer Marcan variant (*Das Markusevangelium* [HTKNT 2/2; Freiburg/Basel/Vienna: Herder, 1977] 2, 447).

⁶ *Synopsis Quattuor*, 467.

⁷ *Synopsis*, 254. This is somewhat surprising in view of his stated aim to include all harmonistic variants in his apparatus (*Synopsis*, vi).

much current discussion and use of harmonization as an “explanation” of what are viewed as secondary readings.

At this point, however, it is necessary to back up and look at things a bit more closely. If the longer Majority reading in Mark were the result of harmonization to Matthew, one would expect it to read *και η λαλια σου δηλον σε ποιει*, which is the generally accepted text of Matthew. But it does not; it reads *ομοιαζει*, a variant found only in D it sy^s, which is, in the opinion of Aland and Greeven, a secondary reading.

Consider what is being implied here regarding the interaction between these two texts. By choosing to follow the shorter, Alexandrian text in Mark, one is more or less forced to postulate—in light of (1) the impressive uniformity of the Marcan MSS reading the longer text in question,⁸ and since (2) *ομοιαζει* apparently is the reading of the Diatessaron⁹—that at a very early stage in the transmission process a narrowly attested Matthean variant has influenced a very broad stream of Marcan witnesses. Although this is certainly theoretically possible, realistically it is very improbable, especially in light of the observation that a Bezan reading in Matthew earlier in the same verse—the omission of *και συ*—gives evidence of having been harmonized to Mark 14:70. If one also views this as a harmonistic variant, as both Greeven and Aland do, then one is forced to multiply the levels of interaction between the various forms of Matthew and Mark beyond any reasonable probability.

A reconstruction of the interaction between the Matthean and Marcan parallels along the lines implied by Greeven and Aland would have to look something like this: (1) the original text of Matthew, *δηλον σε ποιει*, (2) is modified to *ομοιαζει*, which (3) influenced the text of Mark early enough to affect uniformly a broad stream of Marcan manuscripts, and (4) in turn was affected by the Marcan text (*omit και συ*). While this chain of events is possible, it is difficult to find it either very plausible or persuasive.

A much neater alternative is offered by Eberhard Nestle, who argues that the Bezan form of Matthew 26:73 represents the original text of Matthew. The Marcan MSS are now easily explained: the **NB** text of 14:70 is original, and the Majority text is the result of harmonization to Matthew. As for the Matthean variants, he concludes that the **NB** reading in Matthew, *δηλον σε ποιει*, “is the voice of the διορθωτής.”¹⁰

⁸ Compare this to the obvious diversity among the few Marcan MSS (N Σ 579 33) which have been harmonized to the **NB** text of Matthew.

⁹ At least in its Arabic form (see n. 3 above). This passage is not preserved among the Syriac fragments of Ephrem’s commentary on the Diatessaron (L. Leloir, *Saint Ephrem: Commentaire de l’Evangile concordant text syriaque (Manuscrit Chester Beatty 709); édité et traduit* [Chester Beatty Monograph 8; Dublin: Hodges Figgis, 1963]). The Armenian version was unavailable to me (L. Leloir, *Saint Ephrem: Commentaire de l’Evangile concordant, version arménienne* (CSCO 137; Louvain: Durbecq, 1953; Latin translation, CSCO 145; Louvain: Durbecq, 1954)).

¹⁰ E. Nestle, *Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the Greek New Testament* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1901) 259.

Nestle does not mention (what on his view would be the *addition* of) *και ου*; but in light of the very similar manuscript support (especially D it sy^s) for it as for the other variant (*ομοιάζει*), it is unreasonable not to view this reading also as having come into existence at the same time as the other. That is, in view of the similar external attestation, the two variants ought to be dealt with as a unit.¹¹ To do so, however, raises two problems with Nestle's proposal.

First, the changes that Nestle attributes to the διορθωτής are, as both Donald Senior and Robert Gundry have shown, very characteristic of the author of the first Gospel.¹² It is hard to avoid the temptation to wield Occam's razor at this point: why postulate a later διορθωτής who changed the text in ways exactly congruent with the author's style and approach when the author himself is available?

The second point involves the external evidence supporting *δηλον σε ποιει*. This reading has impressive support from all strands of the manuscript tradition which is difficult to ignore in this instance. Although the "Western" text alone does on occasion preserve the original reading, in this case it is difficult to think it has done so, especially since the Bezan reading looks so suspiciously like a harmonization to the Byzantine text of Mark, and it is well known that one of the leading characteristics of Bezae is a strong predilection to harmonize. For these reasons Nestle's proposal is unconvincing.

The simplest and most satisfactory way to account for *all* the variants in *both* passages is to accept as original the *NB* text in Matthew 26:73 and the Byzantine reading in Mark 14:70.¹³ On this analysis, all the Matthean variants are easily and fully explained as harmonizations to Mark.

As for the variants in Mark, note with respect to the major variation unit¹⁴ that although so far only two variants have been discussed, there are actually three: the long Byzantine form, the shorter Alexandrian/"Western" form, and the short form found in *W pc a*. I suggest that both shorter forms are the result of haplography due to homoioteleuton¹⁵ arising from the three-fold repetition of *ει: εἰ . . . εἰ . . . ὁμοιάζει* (in continuous capitals, as in the

¹¹ Cf. the similar situation in Matt 5:11, on which see M. W. Holmes, "The Text of Matthew 5:11," *NTS* 32 (1986) 283–86.

¹² D. P. Senior, *The Passion Narrative According to Matthew* (BETL 39; Louvain: Leuven University Press, 1975) 205; R. H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) 550.

¹³ As does C. E. B. Cranfield (*The Gospel According to Saint Mark* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959] 447), who follows a similar but much briefer line of reasoning. V. Taylor brackets the phrase (*The Gospel According to St. Mark* [2d ed.; London: Macmillan, 1966] 575).

¹⁴ For the minor variations in N Σ 33 579, see n. 8 above.

¹⁵ Pesch's objection—namely, that there is no explanation for the shorter text (*Das Markus-evangelium* 2. 447)—overlooks this probability.

earlier manuscripts: -ΩNEI . . . -ΟΣΕΙ . . . -ΑΖΕΙ).¹⁶ In this variation unit, it turns out, harmonization is not a factor.¹⁷

In short, by looking at the entire tradition simultaneously and as a whole, one comes to a different and, it may be suggested, more convincing and probable evaluation of the data which, if accepted, would require a change in the text of Mark 14:70 in the next editions of our “standard texts.”

II. The Matthean Divorce Passages

Matt 5:32:

ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἴπᾱς ὁ ἀπολύων τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ παρεκτός λόγου πορνείας ποιεῖ αὐτὴν ἴμοιχευθῆναι, ἴκαὶ ὅς ἐάν ἀπολελυμένην γαμήσῃ, μοιχᾶται.¹

°D 1506 it | ἴος αν απολυση D E (0250) 28. 346. 579. 1006. 1010 (1506) pm it sys.c? sams bo | ἴμοιχασθαι L Δ Π 28. 157. 565. 579. 700. 1006. 1342. 1424. 1506 m | ἴκαὶ ο απολ. γαμησας μ. B pc sa? | - D pc a b k; Or? | txt N(*) L W (Θ) 0250 f^{1.13} (565. 700) 1006 (1342. 1506) m lat? sa? mae bo

The preceding apparatus presents the manuscript and versional evidence in the style of the admirably compact and efficient Nestle-Aland format. To fully appreciate, however, the information contained therein, it is often helpful to reorganize and reformat the evidence. Arranged somewhat differently, the key variants and the evidence supporting them look like this:

- (a) πας ο απολυων . . . και ος εαν απολελυμενην γαμηση μοιχεται
 (b) πας ο απολυων . . . και ο απολελυμενην γαμησας μοιχεται
 (c) ος αν απολυση . . . και ος εαν απολελυμενην γαμηση μοιχεται
 (d) ος αν απολυση . . . — — — — — — —

- (a) N K (L) W Δ (Θ) Π f^{1.13} 33. 157. (565) (700) 892. 1342 sa? mae; NA²⁶
 Greeven
 (b) B pc sa?
 (c) E 0250. 28. 346. 579. 1006. 1010 (1506) sams bo
 (d) D pc it

¹⁶ It would be even easier for an accidental omission such as this to occur if the exemplar being copied was written in short sense lines (as is Codex Bezae) or in narrow columns, as are N and B; in fact, in both of them the second εἰ in Mark 14:70 is almost directly under the first, the amount of offset being the space of one letter or less.

¹⁷ It may also be noted that this analysis accounts very nicely for the reading found in the *Diatessaron*, a point that would seem to clinch the matter.

Matt 19:9:

λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι ὃς ἂν ἀπολύσῃ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ ἢ ἐπὶ πορνείᾳ καὶ
γαμήσῃ ἄλλην μοιχᾶται.¹ ἢ καὶ ὁ ἀπολελυμένην γαμήσῃ μοιχᾶται.²

°B D Z 1424 *pc it* | 1-6 (I-3 N) ποιεὶ αὐτὴν μοιχευθῆναι C* N *pc* | παρεκτος
λογοῦ πορνείας ποιεὶ αὐτὴν μοιχευθῆναι B 0233 *f*¹ *ff*¹ *bo* | παρεκτος λογοῦ
πορνείας 4-7 D *f*¹³ 33 *pc it (syc)* *sa mae* | *txt* **Ⲛ** C³ K L (W) Δ Θ Π 078.
28. 69. 157. 209. 565. 700. 892. 1006. 1010. 1071. 1241 (1342) 1424. 1506
m | *vg sys.p.h* | ὦσαυτως καὶ ὁ γαμῶν ἀπολελ. μοιχᾶται **p**²⁵ *mae* | - **Ⲛ** C³
D L 69. 209* 1241 *pc it sys.c* *sa bo^{ms}* | 1-3 γαμῶν 5 C* W Δ Θ Π 078
f^{1,13} 33. 565. 1010. 1424 *al lat syp.h* *bo* | *txt* B K 0233. 28. 157. 700. 892.
1006. 1071. 1342. 1506 **m**

Again, it will be helpful to reorganize the information:

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----|----------|-------|----------|-----|--------|-------------------|-------------|
| (a) | μη | επι | πορνεία | και | γαμήση | ἀλλην | μοιχᾶται |
| (b) | μη | επι | πορνεία | και | γαμήση | ἀλλην ποιεὶ αὐτὴν | μοιχευθῆναι |
| (c) | παρεκτος | λογοῦ | πορνείας | | | ποιεὶ αὐτὴν | μοιχευθῆναι |
| (d) | παρεκτος | λογοῦ | πορνείας | και | γαμήση | ἀλλην | μοιχᾶται |

- (a) **Ⲛ** C³ K L (W) Δ Θ Π 078. 28. 69. 157. 209. 565. 700. 892. 1006. 1010.
1071. 1241 (1342) 1424. 1506 **m** | *vg sys.p.h*; NA²⁶ Greeven
(b) C* (N) *pc* (N lacks καὶ γαμήση ἀλλην)
(c) B 0233 *f*¹ *bo*
(d) D *f*¹³ 33 *pc it (syc)* *sa mae*

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---------|-------|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| (e) | — | | και ὁ ἀπολελυμένην | γαμήσας | μοιχᾶται. |
| (f) | — | | και ὁ ἀπολελυμένην | γαμῶν | μοιχᾶται. |
| (g) | ωσαυτως | και ὁ | γαμῶν ἀπολελυμένην | | μοιχᾶται. |
| (h) | — | — | — | — | — |

- (e) B K 0233. 28. 157. 700. 892. 1006. 1071. 1342. 1506 **m**; Greeven
(f) C* W Δ Θ Π 078 *f*^{1,13} 33. 565. 1010. 1424. *al lat syp.h* *bo*
(g) **p**²⁵ *mae*
(h) **Ⲛ** C³ D L 69. 209* 1241 *pc it sys.c* *sa*; NA²⁶

Mark 10:11–12:

καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· ὃς ἂν ἀπολύσῃ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ καὶ γαμήσῃ ἄλλην
μοιχᾶται ἐπ' αὐτήν· ¹²καὶ ἐὰν αὐτὴ ἀπολύσασα τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς γαμήσῃ ἄλλον
μοιχᾶται.

Verse 11:

ος αν απολυση] εαν απολ. ανηρ Θ 565 (a)(sys); εαν ανηρ απολ. (W 1) f¹³
 28 (205. 209) pc
 γαμηση αλλην] αλλην γαμηση D it
 επ' αυτην] omit (W) Θ (1) 28. 565 (205) pc (sys)

Verse 12:

(a)	εαν αυτη απολυσασα	τον ανδρα	αυτης	γαμηση	αλλον
(b)	εαν αυτη απολυσασα	τον ανδρα	αυτης	γαμηθη	αλλω
(c)	εαν απολυσασα γυνη	τον ανδρα		γαμηθη	αλλω
(d)	εαν γυνη απολυση	τον ανδρα	αυτης και	γαμηθη	αλλω
(e)	εαν γυνη απολυση	τον ανδρα	αυτης και	γαμηση	αλλον
(f)	εαν απολυση γυνη	τον ανδρα	αυτης και	γαμηση	αλλον
(g)	γυνη εαν εξελθη	απο ανδρος		και αλλον	γαμηση

(a) \aleph B (C) L (Δ Ψ) 892 (1342) 2427 pc co; NA²⁶

(b) 579¹⁸

(c) 1424

(d) A 118. 157. 1006. 1071. 1506 m f l vg syp.h

(e) Greeven¹⁹

(f) (W 1. 205. 209 pc sys)

(g) (D) Θ f¹³ (28 + του) 543. 565. 700 it [D εαν γυνη and + του]

¹¹ος αν . . . ¹²μοιχαται] εαν απολυση γυνη τον ανδρα αυτης και γαμηση
 αλλον μοιχαται' και εαν ανηρ απολυση την γυναικα μοιχαται W (1.
 205. 209 pc sys)

¹⁸ An examination of the microfilm of this manuscript reveals that both Greeven (*Synopsis*, 177) and S. C. E. Legg (*Novum Testamentum Graece: Evangelium secundum Marcum* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1935]) correctly report that 579 reads απολυσασα . . . γαμηθη αλλω. Aland's *Synopsis*¹³ (p. 335) records it as απολυση . . . και γαμηση] γαμηθη. 579 does agree with the second variant; this apparently resulted in its being erroneously recorded as though it supported both.

¹⁹ At first glance, there seems to be in Greeven's apparatus considerable support for his text. But to the extent that it has been possible to decipher the apparatus and its various group indicators and symbols, it appears that the apparatus actually includes only one manuscript that allegedly supports the text he prints for Mark 10:12, ms 179, a member of the von Soden group. But even this is misleading, inasmuch as 179 (as determined by an examination of the microfilm) actually reads, quite ungrammatically, και εαν γυνη απολυσασα τον ανδρα αυτης και γαμηση αλλον μοιχαται.

Luke 16:18:

Πᾶς ὁ ἀπολύων τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ καὶ γαμῶν ἑτέραν μοιχεύει, καὶ ὁ ἀπο-
λελυμένην ἀπὸ ἀνδρὸς γαμῶν μοιχεύει.

τ πᾶς Ⲙ A W Θ Ψ f^{1.13} 892. 1006. 1342. 1506 m syp.^h | txt p⁷⁵ B D L 69.
788. 983. 2542 pc lat sy^s co; Marcion | °p⁷⁵ pc | □D 28 pc sy^{s,p} bo^{ms}

Three of these four sayings present an extraordinarily complex situation. Only the text of Luke 16:18 is relatively firm. Moreover, and rather surprisingly, it apparently has had very little if any impact on the text of the other passages—or they on it, for that matter. For the present discussion it may be set aside.

The variants in the Marcan passage are extremely complex and interesting, but also largely peripheral to a discussion of harmonistic variants. This judgment is based on three observations: (1) the contents of v. 12 are unique to Mark; (2) it does not appear to have affected any of the other three passages; and (3) the variants in vv. 11–12, with the possible exception of the omission of ἐπ’ αὐτήν in a few witnesses, do not reflect any apparent harmonizing tendencies. This last point is quite remarkable; I find it amazing that the “Matthean exception,” for example, is not known to occur in any Marcan manuscript.

We may conclude, therefore, that the question of the original text of Mark 10:11–12 is an intra-Markan affair whose resolution²⁰ is independent of the resolution of the variants in the two Matthean passages. To these we may now turn for another example of the need to (1) work comprehensively rather than atomistically, and (2) consider the appeal to harmonization more rigorously than is customary.

There are in Matt 5:32 four basic text-forms. Three of them—(b), (c), and (d), represented by B, 0250, and D, respectively—reflect varying degrees of harmonization to Matt 19:9.²¹ It is interesting to note, however, that the “exception clause,” παρεκτος λογου πορνειας, is without variation. The text found in Ⲙ W Θ 33 *et al.*, which is accepted by both NA²⁶ and Greeven, is almost certainly the original text here. We will return to the other variants in a moment.

²⁰ Aland (*Synopsis*¹³, 335), NA²⁶ and UBSGNT³ print as their text (a), which is adopted as well by Cranfield (*The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, 321–22) and Pesch (*Das Markusevangelium*, 2. 120). Taylor (*The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 419–21), W. L. Lane (*Commentary on the Gospel of Mark* [NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974] 352 n. 5), and D. Daube (*The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* [London: Athlone, 1956] 366–67) prefer the Bezan variant, (g).

²¹ In the case of (b), harmonization to the first clause of the verse is also an obvious possibility. In either instance, see further below on the text of Vaticanus.

In 19:9 one finds not only more forms of the text but a more difficult decision as to which is the original. The manuscript evidence attests to at least nine (and just possibly ten) different forms of this verse:

- (1) a + h \aleph C³ L 69. 209. 1241 *pc* *sys*; NA²⁶
- (2) a + e K 28. 157. 700. 892. 1006. 1071. 1342. 1506 *m* Greeven Orchard²²
- (3) a + f W Δ Θ Π 078. 565. 1010. 1424 *vg* *syp*.h
- (4) b + f C*
- (5) c + e B 0233
- (6) c + f *f*¹ bo
- (7) d + h D *it* *sy*^c sa
- (8) d + f *f*¹³ 33
- (9) d + g mae
- (10) ? + g \mathfrak{p} ²⁵ [[?] *probably* = b or d²³]

The patristic testimony is, according to H. Crouzel, virtually unanimous in support of c + e, the text-form found in Vaticanus, and he has argued that this was in fact the original form of this text.²⁴ Although the onesidedness of the patristic evidence is striking, it is, as J. Duplacy has rightly observed, an insufficient basis for either describing the history of the text or deciding on its original form.²⁵ For the latter, which is the present interest, the manuscript and versional²⁶ evidence is in this instance decisive, and to that we may now turn. In analyzing the evidence it appears that each half of the verse was liable to alteration independently of the other, and so each half will, as a matter of clarity and convenience, be examined separately.

In the first half of 19:9, variant (a) is to be preferred, since (b), (c), and (d) all betray distinctive traces of the influence of 5:32.²⁷ This is certainly the case with (c) and (d); if either of these were judged to be original, then the genesis of the alternative form of the "exception clause," $\mu\eta$ $\epsilon\pi\iota$ $\pi\omicron\rho\rho\nu\epsilon\iota\alpha$, is inexplicable. As for (b), it is possible, no doubt, to accept it as original and view (a) as the result of assimilation to Mark 10:11. If this were the case, one would reasonably expect to find some trace, at least, of either of the two distinctive elements of the Marcan form of this saying, namely, the absence

²² J. B. Orchard, ed., *A Synopsis of the Four Gospels in Greek Arranged according to the Two-Gospel Hypothesis* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983) 206.

²³ The fragment reads . . .] $\mu\omicron\iota\chi\epsilon\upsilon\theta\eta\nu\alpha\iota$ $\omega\sigma\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma$ $\kappa\alpha\iota$

²⁴ H. Crouzel, "Le texte patristique de Matthieu V.32 et XIX.9," *NTS* 19 (1971-72) 98-119.

²⁵ J. Duplacy, "Note sur les variantes et le texte original de *Matthieu* 19,9," in *Etudes de critique textuelle du Nouveau Testament* (pres. by J. Delobel; BETL 78; Louvain: Louvain University Press, 1987) 389, 394-95.

²⁶ For a detailed discussion of the often problematic versional evidence, see Duplacy, "Note," 390-406.

²⁷ So also Duplacy, "Note," 396, 405, 408.

of the “exception clause” and the presence of *ἐπ’ αὐτην*. There is, however, no trace of either of these features among the witnesses supporting (a), which therefore seems unlikely to be the result of assimilation to Mark 10:11.²⁸ In short, (a) best accounts for the existence of the other three readings and therefore may be judged to be original.

The options in the second half of 19:9 may be reduced to a choice between (h) and (e), since both (f) and (g) appear to be variations of (e).²⁹ In favor of the short form, (h), which NA²⁶ and the UBSGNT³ read, the *Textual Commentary* gives the following:

Although it might be argued that homoeoteleuton (μοιχᾶται . . . μοιχᾶται) accounts for its [i.e., the long reading (e)] accidental omission from *ⲛ D L 1241 al*, the fact that *B C* f¹ al* read μοιχᾶται only once (at the conclusion of the combined clauses) makes it more probable that the text was expanded by copyists who accommodated the saying to the prevailing text of 5.32.³⁰

The committee is not alone in arguing that the longer text is a harmonization to 5:32; M.-J. Lagrange, T. Zahn, and a number of other commentators take a similar view.³¹

There are, however, a number of difficulties here. First, the phrase in question (variant [e]) does *not* match the “prevailing text of 5.32”; it reads ο . . . γαμησας rather than the expected ος εαν . . . γαμηση. Nor is Luke 16:18 the source; the complete absence of any trace of *απο ανδρος γαμων μοιχευει* is decisive.³² Second, the appeal to the reading of *B C* et al.*—variants (b) and (c) above, in which the first clause ends with μοιχευθηναι rather than μοιχεται—is baffling. This point would carry weight only if the reading of *B C** were thought to be original, but clearly it is not. Not only is this a minimally attested variant, but the committee itself prints a text of the first clause that ends in μοιχεται, and thus in a sense invalidates its own point. Furthermore, the really key factor facilitating homoioteleuton is not the repetition of the entire word but only of the last syllable, the αι, which is present in both μοιχεται and μοιχευθηναι.

²⁸ Similarly Duplacy, “Note,” 408.

²⁹ The change from the aorist participle γαμησας to the present γαμων probably is due to the influence of the present tense μοιχᾶται (so H. Greeven, “Ehe nach dem Neuen Testament,” *NTS* 15 [1968–69] 383 n. 3). The influence of Luke 16:18 is also a possible, but much less likely, cause of the variation.

³⁰ Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 48; see also Baltensweiler, *Die Ehe*, 67; G. D. Kilpatrick, *The Origins of the Gospel According to St. Matthew* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946) 103; and C. D. Osburn, “The Present Indicative in Matthew 19:9,” *ResQ* 24 (1981) 199–200.

³¹ M.-J. Lagrange, *L’Evangile selon Saint Matthieu* (7th ed.; Paris: Gabalda, 1948) 368; T. Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (4th ed.; Leipzig, 1922) 591; others include D. Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Greenwood, SC: Attic Press, 1972) 281; D. A. Carson, “Matthew,” *Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984) 8. 413; and R. T. France, *Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985) 281; somewhat differently, Gundry, *Matthew*, 381.

³² Cf. Greeven, “Ehe,” 383 n. 3.

Finally, there is still the matter of explaining the reading of Vaticanus, ο . . . γαμησας, at 5:32. The *Textual Commentary* suggests that the ο . . . γαμησας of Vaticanus was “substituted for the reading of the other uncials (ὅς ἐάν . . . γαμήσῃ) in order to make the construction parallel to the preceding participial clause (ὁ ἀπολύων).”³³ Remembering that the *Textual Commentary* also attributed the long form of 19:9b (which agrees with the wording of Vaticanus regarding this point) to accommodation to the prevailing text of 5:32 (which does *not* agree with the text of the long form regarding this point), one is forced to reconstruct the history of the text implicit in these explanations in one of two ways. Either (1) the text of Vaticanus (or its ancestor) was changed as the committee suggested, and the long form of 19:9b, which according to the committee was taken over from the unaltered form of 5:32, was *independently and coincidentally* altered in exactly the same way, or, if the similarity is not due to this unlikely coincidence, and there is, as the committee suggests, a link between the two passages, then (2) the text of 5:32 was at some point altered to produce the reading now found in Vaticanus, this altered reading of 5:32 became the basis for the interpolated (long) — and, among the extant witnesses, most widely attested — text of 19:9b, and this interpolated text of 19:9b — but not its twin in 5:32 — became the text of the Byzantine tradition. Although possible, neither scenario seems very probable or convincing.

A much more straightforward and compelling way to explain not only the rise of the other variants in 19:9b but also the reading of Vaticanus in 5:32 is to accept the Vaticanus/Byzantine reading, variant (e), as original in 19:9b. Then variants (f) and (g) are easily explained as alterations to (e), while (h), the short text preferred by NA²⁶, is probably due to homoioteleuton from μοιχαται to μοιχαται, a possibility which the *Textual Commentary* itself acknowledges.³⁴ Finally, harmonization to 19:9b would easily and satisfactorily account for the variant reading in Vaticanus at 5:32.³⁵

³³ Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 13-14.

³⁴ Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 48. In D, which is written in sense lines (and which reads a short text at both 5:32 and 19:9), μοιχευθῆναι ends the line at 5:32 and μοιχαται does likewise at 19:9; in \aleph , which is written in narrow columns, both μοιχευθῆναι and μοιχαται end lines at 5:32, and μοιχαται ends the line at 19:9 (where \aleph reads the short text). In both D and \aleph the last word of Mark 10:12, μοιχαται, falls at the end of a line. This illustrates nicely, on the basis of two different ways of laying out the text on a page, how easy it would be for haplography due to homoeoteleuton to occur when transcribing an early uncial manuscript.

³⁵ In Vaticanus (B), the text of 5:32 agrees, apart from the first three words (5:32 πας ο απολυων] ος εαν απολυση 19:9) *exactly* with the text of 19:9 in the same manuscript: . . . την γυναικα αυτου παρεκτος λογου πορνειας ποιει αυτην μοιχευθῆναι, και ο απολελυμενην γαμησας μοιχαται. It appears that the two passages have been harmonized to one another to a degree unmatched, as far as I have been able to determine to date, by any other manuscript of the NT (the text of Bezae, however, does come close: for 5:32 it reads ος αν απολυση την γυναικα αυτου παρεκτος λογου πορνειας ποιει αυτην μοιχευθῆναι, and for 19:9 it reads ος αν απολυση την γυναικα αυτου παρεκτος λογου πορνειας και γαμηση αλλην μοιχαται).

The Bezan readings also call for comment. The substitution of *ος αν απολυση* for *πας ο απολυων* in 5:32 and of *παρεκτος λογου πορνειας* for *μη επι πορνεια* in 19:9a clearly reflects deliberate cross-harmonization between the two passages, the result being that the first nine words of the sayings are now identical in each instance.³⁶ With regard to the major omission in each verse, what the *Textual Commentary* says about 5:32 applies equally well to 19:9b:

The omission . . . may be due to pedantic scribes who regarded them as superfluous, reasoning that if “everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress [when she remarries],” then it would go without saying that “whoever marries a divorced woman [also] commits adultery.”³⁷

Such an omission is a strong possibility, especially in light of other editorial omissions observable in Bezae.³⁸ Or, if the exemplar of the editor lacked the words *και . . . μοιχαται* in 19:9,³⁹ it may be that their excision in 5:32 reflects accommodation to a short text of 19:9. This suggestion gains credence in view of the already noticed extensive harmonization of 5:32 and 19:9 to each other in this manuscript.

By way of summary we may bring together the results of the preceding examination of 19:9a and 19:9b. When one analyzes the variants in both Matt 5:32 and 19:9—two passages which clearly had a reciprocal effect on one another—the pattern of harmonization between them looks considerably different than if each is considered in isolation. In light of this new pattern, one is led to conclude that the original text of 19:9 is almost certainly that represented by the combination a + e above, a combination which as a whole is found today almost exclusively among MSS of the Byzantine⁴⁰ and (to a much lesser degree) secondary Alexandrian traditions. In this instance Greeven has printed the correct text, and once again a change in the text would seem to be called for in the next editions of our “standard texts.”

III. Conclusion

To recapitulate, Mark 14:70 should read . . . *οι παρεστῶτες ἔλεγον τῷ Πέτρῳ· ἀληθῶς ἐξ αὐτῶν εἶ, καὶ γὰρ Γαλιλαῖος εἶ, καὶ ἡ λαλιά σου ὁμοιάζει,* and Matt 19:9 should read . . . *ὅτι ὃς ἂν ἀπολύσῃ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ μὴ ἐπὶ*

³⁶ It seems somewhat odd, therefore, that the concluding words in each sentence—*ποιει αὐτὴν μοιχευθῆναι* (5:32) and *καὶ γαμῆσῃ ἀλλήν μοιχαται* (19:9)—were not also harmonized.

³⁷ Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 14.

³⁸ See M. W. Holmes, “Early Editorial Activity and the Text of Codex Bezae in Matthew” (Ph.D. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1984) 115–31.

³⁹ Either because of accidental omission, as suggested above, or, if one follows the NA²⁶ text, because they were originally absent from Matthew.

⁴⁰ A fact which, in and of itself, is certainly no bar to the conclusion reached here, as G. Zuntz long ago pointed out in his 1946 Schweich lectures (*The Text of the Epistles* [London: The British Academy, 1953] 55–56, 150–151).

πορνεία καὶ γαμήσιον ἄλλην μοιχᾶται· καὶ ὁ ἀπολελυμένην γαμήσιον μοιχᾶται.
These conclusions will affect one's view of the author's meaning and method, of synoptic relationships, and of Matthean redactional activity. In Mark 14:70, for example, no longer is the reader of Mark left to speculate about how the bystanders were able to determine that Peter was one of Jesus' followers, for the text makes clear the basis of their identification: his accent was similar. Further, the author of Matthew will now be viewed as having merely redacted a phrase found in his source, rather than having added or created this bit of explanatory detail. Similar conclusions likewise follow for Matt 19:9.

Finally, these examples have demonstrated how atomization and isolation of the evidence can lead astray, particularly when dealing with harmonistic variants in parallel passages. A more comprehensive approach that takes into account simultaneously all the variants in all the parallels results in a more satisfactory and probable decision and explanation of both the text and the subsequent corruption of the passages examined.