EDITIO CRITICA MAIOR
AN INTRODUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

Peter M. Head

Summary


1. Introduction

Although for some purposes the editions of the Greek NT currently available (i.e. NA27 and UBS4) are adequate, textual scholars wanting more extensive collections of variant readings with manuscript support have had to look back to the major works of Tischendorf (published in 1869) and von Soden (published in 1913).1 In 1981 Kurt and Barbara Aland wrote of these two editions:

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They are indispensable for specialized studies on the transmission of particular texts and passages because (unfortunately) they still represent the most detailed collection of variants (von Soden) and the most accurate presentation of the evidence for them (Tischendorf) available today.\(^2\)

As successive directors of the Institute for NT Text Research in Münster, first Kurt and then Barbara Aland had been pursuing the production of ‘die grosse kritische Ausgabe’ or Editio Critica Maior which would make up for this unfortunate contemporary lack.\(^3\) After many years of work, reflected not least in the extensive material collected in the Text und Textwert volumes,\(^4\) the publication of the text, critical apparatus, and supplementary material for the Catholic Epistles has now been completed, beginning with James (1997), then the letters of Peter (2000), 1 John (2003), and finally 2 and 3 John and Jude (2005).\(^5\) These eight fascicles not only provide us with the most


\(^5\) Bibliographical details have been given in the Summary. Addenda and Corrigenda to these volumes are available from the Institute website (www.uni-muenster.de/NTTextforschung/ECMAddCorr.pdf; other online resources are also available at www.uni-muenster.de/NTTextforschung).
extensive treatment of the textual tradition of these epistles yet compiled, they also anticipate the production and publication, over the next several decades, of the rest of the NT; they thus offer ‘the reader an indication of the purpose and character of the edition as a whole’.6

In this edition the editors, made up of former and current senior staff at the Munster Institute, intend to provide ‘the full range of resources necessary for scholarly research in establishing the text and reconstructing the history of the NT text during its first thousand years’.7 But it is not only textual scholars who will be interested in the new edition, since it also incorporates a new published text with many differences from the text of NA27 which will become the main text line in future editions of the Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece. This new edition ought to be noticed by all NT scholars. In what follows I shall explain the layout and main features of this new edition, introduce the method that has come to be central to the whole project, and outline some of the future plans. Some fundamentally important features of this edition have not yet been published which will constrain this review somewhat. The introduction to James stated:

An additional volume offers supplementary studies to support the textual decisions. It contains descriptions of the New Testament manuscripts, with definitions of their textual character in the light of the total evidence, and an arrangement of the manuscripts and manuscript groups by their role in the development of the text. This promotes greater clarity in the definition of external criteria for decisions on variant readings, guarantees a more thorough perspective on the textual scene, and stimulates further research. A textual commentary discusses all passages where difficulties are found in the textual tradition.8

Without the additional material supporting the textual decisions made in the ECM (and especially a textual commentary) we are able to observe changes made from pre-existing editions, but we are not in a position to understand completely the reasons why particular readings have been chosen. Sometimes this can be discerned from new evidence or other discussions; and some general tendencies can be discerned from the differences between ECM and NA27; but lacking the rationales behind the decisions means we shall not in this review engage in detailed discussion of the variants themselves.

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6 James ‘Preface’, XI.
7 James ‘Introduction’, p. 11*.
8 James ‘Introduction’, p. 11*. 
2. The Edition

We have already noted the extensive aim of this edition, but in this section we shall outline the actual practice in terms of presentation and format and such like. Essentially the edition consists, as all critical editions do, of two main features: the basic text, which is here called ‘the primary line text’ (I shall abbreviate this as PLT), and a critical apparatus to the primary line text which expresses the situation in the manuscripts and other witnesses to the text. The primary line text is basically the earliest form of the text ascertainable by current methods as determined by the editors. In later instalments this comes to be called the initial text, in German the Ausgangstext, sometimes abbreviated to the A-text (or, in the context of the apparatus, the a-text). This text was decided on by the editors using both traditional and newly developed methods (to which we shall turn in a few moments), and offers, in the course of the Catholic Epistles, a new edition of the Greek text (which differs from the NA27 text in twenty-five places). In order to offer an exposition of the main features of the new edition it will be worthwhile to consider a single page and work through the contents. The very first page serves as a good example.

First, to get an idea of the scope of the ECM we should note that this text from James 1:1-2a has only a single variant noted in NA27 (the addition of πατρος in 429 614 630 pc after θεου – incidentally not noted in UBS4). By contrast here we have information about eight points of variation with twenty different readings (and on this page variants are relatively sparse, most pages of the ECM only have one text line).

The upper text provides the primary line text (#1) and an overview of the variants (#2). The variants are tagged to the text using a simple numbering system where each word is assigned an even number and each space between words is an odd number.

Taking the first variant at number point 6 (#3), related to the word και, the variant overview shows that πατρος is added in two places, either before or after και. In the variant overview section the PLT is designated as a so that the list of variants always begins from b in the overview, but from a in the main apparatus (where the evidence will be given). The editors do not provide a rationale for assigning variants to the available letter sequence, here the b variant seems more significant than the c variant, but it is not a general rule that variants with a later
letter-label are less significant. The apparatus provides the evidence (#4). The evidence is displayed in the same order as we are used to from the NA editions, but using somewhat different abbreviations from NA27 (no letters for uncials, only 01 for Sinaiticus, 02 for Alexandrinus, 03 for Vaticanus etc.); Byz has a particular reference to manuscripts of the Byzantine text. The versional evidence is also presented differently, with the capital bold letter for the language group (in this case L for Latin [F and V stand for textual types within the Old Latin], K for Coptic (Sahidic and Bohairic), and S for Syriac (Peshitta and Harklensis) – these three languages are treated as the main versional witnesses.

So the lower apparatus provides the detailed evidence of the witnesses which support the three readings, as well as a list of manuscripts which are cited elsewhere in James (#5), but which are not extant at this particular point (noted by the dash and the witnesses beginning with P20, P23, P54, 04 etc.).

One can immediately see the gain when compared with NA27: the complete list of witnesses supporting the text reading (this is not routinely done, a complete list of witnesses is given when fifteen or more Greek manuscripts differ from the a-text line; in other places these are not listed [as we shall see]); a complete list of witnesses supporting the addition of πατρος after θεου – filling out the pc of NA27; and an additional variant. If we recall that this is the only variant presented in NA27 then we will realise that all the other variants on this page are additional to NA27 – that is the point of the ECM: to provide a much more comprehensive accounting of the textual data relating to the Greek NT for the whole of the first millennium.

The next variant, at number points 8-12 (#6), is laid out similarly, except for the fact that the main apparatus (#7) does not give all the evidence for the a-text (since fewer than fifteen Greek manuscripts differ from the a-text). In such cases, as here, for reasons of space, we

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9 For the Catholic Epistles these were determined by the complete collation of manuscripts across 98 text passages. (see ‘Introduction’, James, 12*)
10 Even so it is worth noting that the ECM offers an apparatus derived from a careful selection of the more important witnesses from all the available manuscripts. For example, in Jude, T. Wassermann used around 140 manuscripts, whereas Wassermann’s recent study involved a complete transcription of 560 manuscripts of Jude. (T. Wasserman, The Epistle of Jude: Its Text and Transmission [CBNT 43; Lund: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2006]).
11 While generally this policy decision works well, since most of the variants with fewer than fifteen witnesses opposing the main text are less significant, occasionally it
are not given the full collection of Greek manuscript witnesses, only any clarifications needed to understand the force of these witnesses, i.e. P74V; as well as a full citation of all the relevant patristic evidence and versional evidence as usual.\textsuperscript{12}

The versional evidence in this variant includes some ‘other versions’, cited ‘only when they seem relevant to variants in the Greek text’ (Introduction, 15*), here specifically the Armenian (A) and the Ethiopic (Ä), elsewhere including the Georgian (G), and the Old Church Slavonic (Sl).

The patristic evidence is presented in abbreviated form (#8): ‘Cyr. Did. PsOec. ThdtAnc’. But the supplementary volume includes all the information one needs in order to track down the reference in a cited edition of each church father. For example, the reference at James 1:1 is to ‘Cyril, Glaph, PG 69, 353 A 14 (8-12a)’ (‘Index of Quotations and references for James’, Supplement B20); this can be further tracked down in the ‘List of patristic abbreviations for the Catholic Letters’, Supplement B16), where the works of the fifth-century Cyril of Alexandria are listed and the editions used are given (Supplement, B16 – Glaphyra in Pentateuchum). The citation can be checked and verified, or the context investigated, as required (which I have done for this particular case, the relevant sentence is: Ἰάκωβος γοῦν ὁ μάκαρις ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς ἐπιστέλλει λέγων· Ἰάκωβος Θεοῦ καὶ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δούλος). Here as well we find ‘Did’. (Didymus of Alexandria) cited in support of both the a-text and the b-text reading. Again, using the information in the Supplement it is does not work. There are some occasions when either there is a dotted variant reading, suggesting an alternative reading of some significance, or a change to the main text when compared with NA27 where the choice between variants is obviously difficult and where it would be convenient to have all the evidence laid out (to save from having to reconstruct the witnesses from the negative apparatus minus the lacunose witnesses), but because fewer than fifteen witnesses support the alternative text we do not get a full collection of evidence in the apparatus. Examples where this occurs are: 1 Pet. 1:9, 16/5, 22; 5:5/24; 2 Pet. 3:16/10-12 (cf. also 1 John 5:18/36 where ECM differs from NA27 without a full display of the evidence). There are of course places where the A-text is supported by fewer than fifteen witnesses (e.g. Jas 2.3, 19; 3:8; 4:14/15; 1 Pet. 1:16/12-14), on these occasions the witnesses for the other readings are given in full.

\textsuperscript{12} P74V suggests that P74 appears to support the a-text line, but the appearance of P74 next to the dash in the apparatus suggests that it is not fully extant or legible. The Supplement contains a complete list of lacunae in the Greek manuscripts including P74 (Supplement, B 11), as is often the case with such matters, a look at a photograph of P74 clarifies that the first line of Jas 1:1 is attested by lower traces only, while the second line begins XY ΔΟΥΛΟΣ – the traces certainly seem to fit the a-text.
relatively simple to find both references, check the context, and compare the two. This is a great resource for delving further into citations and discussions of various NT passages in patristic writers, as well as a transparent tool for checking and verifying the information provided here.

The next item in the apparatus is not listed in the abbreviated apparatus because it does not involve a variant to the a-text, but an error (#9). So at number point 14, the word δουλος, we are referred to 1241f. Here there is an issue for native English readers who are accustomed to taking a single ‘f’ after a number as indicating that the following number is also included (i.e. generally 1241f would signify 1241-1242). Throughout this edition ‘f’ stands for Fehler, or ‘error’, and signifies some error in the witness. Again the Supplementary volume contains a ‘List of errors (Liste der Fehler) in the Greek manuscripts’ (Supplement B12-14) which reveals that 1241 at this point reads δου.

The third major variant unit, on number points 26-28 (τη διασπορα), illustrates some more features of the edition (#10). The a-text witnesses are not listed except for points of interest (here again, errors in the Greek manuscripts: 456f1 reads τη διασπορα, while both 1718 and 2674 share an error, f2, which reads ταις διασπορα (Supplement B12)—which may be helpful to know about when considering the origin of the c-text. The question mark in place of a letter refers here (as always) to a versitional reading which does not support any of the Greek readings. Again the Supplement provides more information (text, translation and sometimes discussion) of all this witness (here a somewhat paraphrastic rendering). The double arrow (↔) followed by ‘a/b’ indicates that the cited witnesses might support either the a-text or the b-text reading (but not the c-text reading). For the versions this generally means that the Greek text underlying the version is not able to be determined (often impossible for the presence or absence of definite articles), and for Greek witnesses the Supplement provides details (in this case it is not certain whether or not P74 has room for the article—again a photograph is necessary to check this).

It is immediately apparent that the decades of work and thought which have gone into this edition have resulted in an exceedingly clear and orderly presentation of the data. Explanations of complications and further resources on the witnesses are available in the Supplement. Not
only will this edition improve on the great editions of Tischendorf and von Soden by incorporating the latest research on the witnesses, but it will improve on the techniques of display so that non-specialists will find they are able to find their way around and understand the layout fairly quickly.

Another feature of this edition, unfortunately not found on the first page, is the use of a pair of bold dots to signal ‘alternative readings’ which ‘are variant readings which the editors considered as of equal value’ [to the primary line text]. Thus the bold dots are an indication of editorial uncertainty and mark out particular variant readings as important. I have not come across any discussion of the way in which the primary line text was chosen in these passages of uncertainty. I suppose one might think that the reading given in the main text is regarded as, however marginally, superior to the one which is relegated to the apparatus, but this is not, so far as I can tell, ever discussed. The PLT reading must be regarded as somewhat superior to the supposedly equal variant given in the apparatus since some of the changes from NA27 text are marked in such a way. The first example of this is at James 2:3:44-48, where the PLT is η καθου εκεί (marked with double dots); and the second reading in the apparatus, also marked with bold dots is the NA27 (= NA26) text reading: εκεί η καθου. Since this reading is flagged up in the introduction as one of two instances in which the ECM text for James differs from the NA27 and UBS4 text, and that ‘apart from these [two occasions] there was no need to alter the text’, it follows that the ECM reading at James 2:3 must be regarded as an improvement, a necessary alteration, and not simply as a-text of absolutely straightforwardly equal plausibility as the dotted text. This much is basically admitted in the preliminary notes to the second instalment which adds the following statement:

A bold dot (●) is again found frequently in the primary line and in the overview of variants. Its use was not governed by any absolute or precise definition. Sometimes it signals alternative readings which were considered of equal value. Sometimes the reasons for the reading in the primary line were regarded as superior, but not sufficiently to rule out with complete confidence the claims of the indicated alternative reading. In any event the dot indicates a passage which calls for special critical consideration. Further research may well lead to a new solution for it or

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13 *James*, 11*.

14 *James*, 11*.
confirm the present decision. In many instances, however, the resources of textual criticism may appear to have been exhausted.\textsuperscript{15}

In the fourth instalment we are told that this is a better explanation for the significance of the bold dots than the one originally offered in the first instalment.\textsuperscript{16} The following is also added:

‘Perhaps their most important function is to indicate where critical discussion has not proved conclusive, even if in many instances the editors prefer the reading in the primary line.’\textsuperscript{17}

It appears that we must reckon with a degree of flexibility in the reasons for deploying bold dots in the PLT, and therefore with some uncertainty as to what they signify on any particular occasion in the ECM. Unfortunately we are not able to distinguish those variant readings which the editors actually do regard as ‘of equal value’ with the PLT, from other variant readings which the editors regard as of rather less value than the PLT, although not to be disregarded, and subject to ongoing discussion and research. I would suggest, given the fact that improvements claimed over the NA27 in the PLT are sometimes linked with the NA27 reading marked by a bold dot, and given the fact that the editors must in each case have made a decision to print one reading as the main text and another in the apparatus (recall the phrase cited above: ‘further research may well lead to a new solution … or confirm the present decision’), it is reasonable, indeed inevitable, that we will regard the PLT as superior in general (in the editors’ opinion) to the dotted text in the apparatus. I suppose the promised textual commentary may serve to highlight the passages which were regarded as genuinely equivalent.

Having said this there are some surprises in the deployment of the bold dots.\textsuperscript{18} For example there are occasions when the ECM prints a different text from NA27 but the NA27 reading is not offered as a dotted example. The following texts fall into this category, and it could be argued that most of them warrant some indication of doubt.\textsuperscript{19} In James 1:22/14-16 the ECM text is ακροαται μονον (returning to

\textsuperscript{15} Peter, 24*.

\textsuperscript{16} 2 & 3 John, Jude, 37* note 2 cf. James, 11* as cited above.

\textsuperscript{17} Peter, 24*.

\textsuperscript{18} In an appendix I have compiled a list of all the dotted passages and all the differences between ECM and NA27.

\textsuperscript{19} There is also an essentially orthographical change from NA27 at 1 Pet. 2:25/12 (ECM has ολλα, NA27 has ολλας) which is not bracketed by bold dots.
NA25 text), while the undotted variant (followed by NA27) is μονον ακροαται. This decision remains doubtful. In 2 Peter 2:11/24-26 the ECM text is παρα κυριο (returning to the NA25 text), whereas NA27 has παρα κυριου. Here the external evidence does favour the ECM text, with NA26 and 27 perhaps overly impressed by the witness of P72. In 2 Peter 3:6/2-4 the ECM text is δι νω (with relatively poor manuscript support), while the text represented in NA27 is δι ου – difficult perhaps but with overwhelming manuscript support. I would have expected bold dots at this point. At 1 John 5:10/24 the ECM text is αυτω (returning to the NA25 text), while NA27 reads εαυτω. Conversely at 1 John 5:18/36 the ECM text is εαυτον, while NA27 had αυτον. At both these points both readings are well attested and arguments could be made for both readings. I would have expected a bold dot. In two other places of notorious difficulty (Jude 5 and 2 Pet. 3:10 – which we shall turn to below) where the ECM text differs from NA27, I would also have expected bold dots.

It is striking that in these two places (Jude 5; 2 Pet. 3:10), reflecting probably the two most difficult textual problems in the Catholic Epistles, the ECM offers us a-text based on extremely limited textual evidence, without any indication of doubt, even though the use of bold dots is flagged as a feature of this new edition. This suggests, alongside the other changes from NA27 that are not marked as doubtful, that we should reckon not only with a lack of clarity among the editors on the use and meaning of the bold dots (shown by the changes in definition and explanation over the course of the publication of the fascicles), but even more importantly, that the bold dots mark only the doubts of the editorial team reflecting the same method and approach.20 It certainly does not mark out places where other textual scholars, perhaps following a different method or approach, would legitimately follow another text. This means that the indications of doubt are not a global measure of the extent to which the reconstruction of the text of the NT may be considered doubtful.21

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20 Just to take the example of 1 Pet., there are sixty-one words enclosed within bold dots, out of 1,661 words in total; so 3.7% of the words are considered doubtful by the editors. It is notable that this is a relatively maximal figure since several of these are word order variations, where it is not so much which words are in the text but the order in which they should be given. In addition, sometimes whole phrases are dotted even though the doubt concerns only a single word of that phrase.

21 A further oddity is that the ‘Notes on the Reconstruction of the Text’ to 1 John states that ‘more use has been made of a bold dot to indicate a possible alternative
3. Method

At least two fundamental developments in relation to the ECM have taken place within the period of publication. These two developments are related, fundamental to the Editio Critica Maior, and important for understanding future plans within NT textual criticism. First, this relates to the method by which the external witnesses were evaluated prior to the determination of the published text, the A-text (AusgangsTEXT), the text which stands at the outset of the transmission history. Specifically the edition has come to use a distinctive new method, the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method, which has been progressively developed over the last decade or so while work on the ECM was moving forward. We shall introduce this method briefly in a moment, now I simply want to note that it has been progressively applied. The James instalment, published in 1997, states only that ‘the text is established on the basis of all the evidence presented’ (11*), and does not mention any new method at all.22 The Peter instalment, published in 2000, utilises a new method, without giving it such a clear title, based on ‘coherent groupings of genealogical significance among the witnesses’ (p. 23*). The 1 John instalment (2003) then explicitly appeals to ‘the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method’ (‘Preface’, 29*). In the final instalment (2 and 3 John, Jude, 2005) this method is used and even abbreviated to CBGM (e.g. 37*-38*).

Secondly, this relates to the behind-the-scenes mechanisms for storing and manipulating the raw material, the transcriptions of manuscripts which form the ultimate data on which the edition is based. The 1 John instalment (2003) is the first to mention the ‘conversion of manually recorded manuscript collations to completely computerized transcriptions’. These transcriptions ‘were checked for discrepancies with the aid of the Collate program’ (‘Preface’, XVI). Wachtel and Parker explain that it was only after the launch of the first reading’ (1 John, 30*); but by comparison with James and 1 and 2 Peter there are fewer bold dots used in the edition of 1 John.

22 Proof that this method was not originally applied to James is provided in the Peter instalment:

The text of the Letter of James was critically examined once more in the light of the new findings of external criteria. The earlier textual decisions were mainly confirmed, although sometimes weakened. Yet the new findings did not support a variant reading over the primary line text except in one instance (2:4/2-4), where the d reading (και ου διεκριθητε) should be preferred to the a reading (ου διεκριθητε). [p. 24* note 4]
instalment, and at the same SBL meeting in San Francisco, November 1997, that they became acquainted with Peter Robinson’s work on The Canterbury Tales ‘a truly amazing electronic edition in which the user could interact with transcriptions and critical apparatus and images of the manuscripts, along with commentary and interpretative data’. The use of the Collate software for the entering and analysing and presenting of the textual data must have been initiated then at some intervening point.

It is obvious from these two points that ECM project has actually been a project in transition. Initiated using traditional data-handling techniques (i.e. manually recorded manuscript collations) it has become a much more technologically equipped project, with a special commitment to the Collate software and the comparison of complete transcriptions (with promised access to images). From a method perspective as well it was initiated using traditional text-critical method and argument, but has now added an innovative new method (CBGM) to the traditional text-critical and philological arsenal.

The Coherence-Based Genealogical Method is difficult to summarise briefly and I will not attempt a complete exposition and evaluation here. As a method it attempts, utilising the complete transcriptions of manuscript witnesses and the power of computer analysis, to deal with the large number of witnesses to the NT text, the problem that these witnesses are related in complex ways involving contamination and the coincidental emergence of identical readings (specifically for the Catholic Epistles the ECM used 164 Greek witnesses and found 3,046 places of textual variation). The CBGM

uses textual agreement between transcriptions of manuscripts as a whole to identify specific genealogical relationships (or coherencies) between the texts represented in these manuscripts and the assumed initial text. Beginning with the relatively certain parts of the initial text, using computer analysis, the ‘textual flow’ at each variant unit can be mapped and preliminary genealogical relationships can be developed. Although in the initial stages of development this was generally applied once the initial text had been decided on traditional text-critical grounds, in the most recent form of the method the CBGM contributes to every stage of the process:

‘Elements of the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method (CBGM) constantly come into play in the reconstruction of the text: local stemmata and analyses of coherence and textual flow have become indispensable tools for the assessment of variants.’

A striking example of the use of the CBGM is 1 Peter 4:16, where ECM reads εν τω μερει τουτω—‘glorify God in this case’ (NA27 summarises the support for this reading as P049 and the Majority text), over against εν τω ονοματι τουτω (which NA27 printed as the text, with the support of P72, 01, 02, 03 33 81 1739, numerous other manuscripts and all the early versions). It is notable that the earliest manuscript support for the ECM a-text is ninth-century (both P and 049), whereas the ECM b-text (the NA27 text) has supporting manuscript evidence datable to the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Centuries, alongside impressive early versional support in the Old Latin, Coptic and Syriac (among others). The decision of the ECM to print εν τω μερει τουτω rests on an assessment that this is the more difficult reading, and an assessment of the genealogical coherencies of the two readings—which seems to suggest that the b-text arose on multiple occasions from a close ancestor which read εν τω μερει τουτω. This would be an example where the CBGM allows the critic to recognise the Ausgangstext in one late strand of the manuscript tradition. On the other hand it remains controversial because of the absence of this reading among any pre-ninth-century witness and because the workings of the CBGM, in terms of the analyses of the claimed genealogical coherencies, are not represented in this edition.

25 ‘Notes on the Reconstruction of the Text’, 2 & 3 John, Jude (2005), 37*.
26 For a discussion of this passage see Mink, ‘Problems of a Highly Contaminated Tradition’, 43-45; and ‘The Coherence-Based Genealogical Method (CBGM) Introductory Presentation’, 205-228.
In general, as regards this edition in its current state there remains the problem that the working of the CBGM and the thinking of the editors are hidden from the readers. We can see the results in terms of changes introduced in comparison with the NA27. There are twenty-five changes when compared with the NA27 (these are listed and marked with asterisks in the appendix). It is not easy to discern any general tendency among these variants (sometimes the new readings follow Vaticanus, at other points they follow the Majority text), unless it is that the CBGM emboldens editors to go against the bulk of the manuscript evidence at significant moments. Many of these alterations are not particularly significant and involve a different choice in a balanced complex textual situation—eight of them involve the omission of words already marked in NA27 as relatively uncertain by the use of single square brackets (several of these involve a return to the NA25 text). Two others are word order variations, and five or six involve spelling variations (of different levels of significance). Two particularly difficult passages are of interest: Jude 5 and 2 Peter 3:10.

Jude 5/12-20 contains a notoriously difficult textual problem (ECM lists thirty-one different readings for this phrase). The ECM text is \( \nu\mu\alpha\varsigma \sigma\pi\alpha\varepsilon \pi\alpha\nu\tau\alpha \omicron \iota \eta\sigma\omicron\omicron\varsigma \) (following the single manuscript B 03) with the final word bracketed by bold dots (where it is parallel with the alternative reading [ο] \( \kappa\upsilon\rho\omicron\omicron\varsigma \) at the point—this proposed alternative text \( \nu\mu\alpha\varsigma \sigma\pi\alpha\varepsilon \pi\alpha\nu\tau\alpha \omicron \iota \) [ο] \( \kappa\upsilon\rho\omicron\omicron\varsigma \) is not found in any manuscripts). For this phrase the NA27 text offered [\( \nu\mu\alpha\varsigma \) \( \pi\alpha\nu\tau\alpha \omicron \iota \) [ο] \( \kappa\upsilon\rho\omicron\omicron\varsigma \) \( \sigma\pi\alpha\varepsilon \), a reading which as a whole is not found in any manuscript. Here, it would appear, the editors have also taken the reading that ‘Jesus saved a people from the land of Egypt’ as the more difficult reading which was variously adapted (using either \( \kappa\upsilon\rho\omicron\omicron\varsigma \), or \( \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma \) especially). Probably some information about the genealogical coherence of the witnesses may also have informed the editorial decision, although readers of the edition have no access to this information. In this case the bold dots focus on the most significant of the textual decisions, although considering the difficulty represented by the whole phrase, and the possibility of constructing an argument moving in the opposite direction, bold dots probably ought to bracket the whole variant unit.

Perhaps the most striking of the ECM editorial decision is at 2 Peter 3:10/48-50, where the ECM text, \( \omicron\upsilon\chi \ \epsilon\upsilon\rho\varepsilon\omicron\theta\omicron\sigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota \), is not found in a single Greek witness, this is really a Greek text conjectured on the
basis of some versional evidence. The textual decision is complicated and difficult; but perhaps one of the most surprising decisions is that this does not warrant a bold dot signalling uncertainty, especially considering that NA27 reads ευρεθησεται (with 01, 03, 018, 424c, 1739, 1881 and other witnesses). This is likely to be a point where many critics will suggest that it would be better to follow a reading attested in the Greek manuscript tradition than to follow a conjecture, however neatly the genealogical coherence can be mapped.

Further engagement on the strengths and weaknesses of the CBGM and its deployment at these and other points is much to be desired in the coming years. It is worth noting that it is only now that the entire textual tradition of the Catholic Epistles has been mapped that the CBGM can operate with the full range of evidence. This may well lead to further revisions of earlier decisions in the light of fuller evidence. Such an engagement would in any case need to reckon not only with the available information about the CBGM, but also with the promised textual commentary on the Catholic Epistles.

4. The Future

The whole scope of the ECM is for an edition of the Greek NT in (nominally) five volumes:

I. Gospels
II. Acts
III. Pauline Letters
IV. Catholic Letters
V. Revelation

The Catholic Letters have been published in the amount of space and pages one might expect for a single substantial volume (649 pages in total, consisting at the moment of eight separate fascicles); it is clear that the Gospels, although ostensibly a single volume, will require at least two physical volumes each (perhaps Mark may be able to be presented in a single volume); and probably something similar could be said for Acts; while Paul’s letters will certainly also need to be published in up to six volumes, with Revelation requiring perhaps two. In terms of space then one might think in terms of something close to twenty physical volumes, assuming that they are all to be produced in print volumes.27

27 In NA27 the Catholic Epistles take up 43 pages (out of 680 in total); at the same proportion the whole NT on this scale would take up 680/43 = 16 volumes (although
The production of these future volumes will be carried out as an international project incorporating both the Institut für neuentwicklungliche Textforschung (Münster) and the International Greek NT Project (effectively based at the Institute for Textual Scholarship and Electronic Editing in Birmingham, UK). The INTF is responsible for Acts (scheduled to be completed in 2013), then Mark (2018), Matthew (2024) and Luke (2030). The IGNTP is responsible for John (scheduled to be completed in 2013), the Pauline Epistles (2026) and Revelation (2030). Together the separate parts will make up the larger whole, the *Editio Critica Maior*. As the primary text line is revised for each of the parts of the NT, it is anticipated that the Nestle-Aland edition will be revised accordingly (NA28 should take account of proposed changes to the text of the Catholic Epistles in the *ECM*, then presumably NA29 might take account of changes to the text of John and Acts, and so on). This will change the character of the Nestle-Aland text somewhat. Currently the Nestle-Aland text is built on a principle of methodological compromise embodied in the majority decisions of a committee of people using somewhat different methods and approaches. As currently projected the *ECM* initial text will be produced using a single agreed method, and this will be progressively applied directly to the Nestle-Aland edition (exactly how long the print edition will retain this nomenclature is uncertain).

5. Conclusion

The appearance of the *Editio Critica Maior* for the Catholic Epistles is without doubt a major step forward in the study of the textual tradition of the Greek NT—an edition of the NT fit for the Twenty-first Century. In the history of NT textual research a major edition with a relatively comprehensive collection of variant readings has appeared about once every hundred years (Mill, 1707; Wettstein, 1751; Tischendorf, 1869; von Soden, 1913). Other editions have offered major methodological

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28 These assignments and dates were announced at the SBL Annual Meeting in San Diego (November 2007), see the report by Jan Krans (http://vuntblog.blogspot.com/2007/11/sbl-san-diego-iii-igntp.html).

innovations, while depending on others for the collection and display of the evidence, and appearing at similar intervals (Bengel, 1734; Lachmann, 1831; Westcott and Hort, 1881). The remarkable feature of the *ECM* is that it combines both the comprehensive collection and display of variant readings and a major methodological innovation. In terms of the display of the textual data for the Greek NT the *ECM* represents a brilliant achievement by the editorial team and we look forward to the future volumes with eager anticipation. It offers textual scholars, exegetes, and those interested in the history of the reception of the text, a model of unprecedented clarity and scholarly depth. In terms of the methodological innovation, the *ECM* represents the first major attempt to harness the opportunities provided by computer technology in processing the vast amounts of data necessary to track genealogical relationships between texts. One of the major agendas for NT textual criticism in the next decades is precisely to engage with the principles, structures, and outcomes of the Coherence-Based Genealogical Method which now stands at the heart of the *ECM*. This will require recognising and understanding both the strengths and the weaknesses of the CBGM, as well as the implications of these for the reconstruction of the NT text in the other portions of the NT. It will also require that users of the edition can follow the editorial decisions as regards the *Ausgangstext*, especially those that do not at first sight seem to follow from the presentation of the textual data, so the promised textual commentary remains an important part of the overall project. This will enable the myriad of editorial decisions to be better understood and doubtless challenged on occasion.
Appendix: dotted variants and changes to NA27

All dotted variants and differences to NA27 are listed here with primary line text noted first and dotted variant second. The NA27 text is also noted and changes to NA27 are marked with an asterisk *. Changes to NA27 which are not dotted are enclosed in square brackets. The references add the ECM word number to the normal Bible reference.

James

James 1.20/12-14 (p. 16): οὐκ εργαζέται (NA27) / οὐ κατεργαζέται.
* [James 1.22/14-16 (p. 18)]: ακροάται μονον / μονον ακροάται (NA27)30
*James 2.3/44-48 (p. 27): η καθου εκει / εκει η καθου (NA27)
* [James 2.4/2-4]: PLT should be και ου διεκριθητε / ου διεκριθητε (NA27)31
James 2.19/8-14 (p. 41): εις εστιν ο θεος (NA27) / εις θεος εστιν
James 3.4/18-20 (p. 50): ανεμων σκληρων (NA27) / σκληρων ανεμων
James 3.8/8-14 (p. 55): ουδεις δαμασαι δυναται ανθρωπων (NA27) / ουδεις δυναται δαμασαι ανθρωπων
James 3.15/6-14 (p. 62): αυτη η σοφια ανωθεν κατερχομενη (NA27) / η σοφια αυτη ανωθεν κατερχομενη
James 4.12/6 (p. 75): ο (NA27) / omit32
James 4.14/8 (p. 77): το (NA27) / τα
James 4.14/15 (p. 78): ποια η ζωη (NA27) / ποια γαρ η ζωη
James 5.10/26-32 (p. 91): εν τω ονοματι κυριου (NA27) / τω ονοματι κυριου
James 5.18/14-16 (p. 99): υετον εδωκεν (NA27) / εδωκεν υετον

1 Peter

*1 Peter 1.6/18 (p. 108): λυπηθεντας / λυπηθεντες (NA27)
1 Peter 1.8/6 (p. 110): ιδοντες (NA27) / ειδοτες
1 Peter 1.9/4-12 (p. 110): το τελος της πιστεως υμων (NA27) / το τελος της πιστεως33
1 Peter 1.12/36 (p. 114): εν (before πνευματι) (NA27) / omit34
*[1 Peter] 1.16/5 (p. 117): omit / οτι (NA27)35
*1 Peter 1.16/12-14 (p. 117): εγω αγιος / εγω αγιος ειμι (NA27)36

30 This involves a return to the text of NA25.
31 This is found in the fascicle treating the letters of Peter (p. 24* n. 2) as a subsequent decision based on looking again at the data in light of the CBGM.
32 NA27 had the article in a single square bracket.
33 NA27 has υμων in a single square bracket.
34 NA27 has εν in a single square bracket.
35 NA27 has οτι in a single square bracket.
36 NA27 has ειμι in a single square bracket. ECM returns to the NA25 text.
1 Peter 1.18/24-28 (p. 119): ὑμων αναστροφης πατροπαραδοτου (NA27) / ὑμῶν πατροπαραδοτοῦ ἀναστροφῆς
1 Peter 1.22/28-30 (p. 122): καθαρὰς καρδιὰς (NA27) / καρδιὰς
1 Peter 2.5/12 (p. 127): οἰκοδομεισθε (NA27) / εποικοδομεισθε
1 Peter 2.5/32 (p. 128): τῶ (NA27) / omit
1 Peter 2.6/20-24 (p. 129): ακρογὼνιαν εκλεκτὸν εντίμον (NA27) / εκλεκτὸν ακρογὼνιαν εντίμον
1 Peter 2.11/14 (p. 134): απεχεσθαι (NA27) / απεχεσθε
1 Peter 2.16/24-30 (p. 138): ἀλλως θεου δουλοι (NA27) / ἀλλως θεου
1 Peter 2.20/35 (p. 142): PLT (/34-36) παρα θεω (NA27) / παρα τω θεω
1 Peter 2.25/12 (p. 146): αλλ / ἀλλα (NA27)
1 Peter 2.25/14 (p. 146): επεστραφητε (NA27) / επεστραφητε
1 Peter 3.1/4 (p. 146): αι (NA27) / omit
1 Peter 3.1/18-24 (p. 147): και ei τινες απειθουσιν (follows NA27) / ει καιτινες απειθουσιν
1 Peter 3.22/10 (p. 168): του (NA27); omit
1 Peter 4.5/10-14 (p. 174): ετοιμως εχοντι κριναι (NA27) / ετοιμως κρινοντι
1 Peter 4.11/66-76 (p. 179): εις τους αιωνας των αιωνων, αμην (NA27) / εις τους αιωνας, αμην
1 Peter 5.2/26-28 (p. 189): κατα πιειν (NA27) / κατα πιειν
1 Peter 5.8/24-26 (p. 194): τῃ εν κοσμῳ υμων αδελφοτητι / τῃ εν κοσμῳ υμων αδελφοτητι (NA27).43
1 Peter 5.11/13 (p. 198): αιωνας αμην (NA27) / αιωνας των αιωνων αμην
1 Peter 5.14/22 (p. 201): Χριστῳ (NA27) / χριστῳ ιησου

2 Peter
2 Peter 1.12/16-28 (p. 205): του θεου και ιησου του κυριου υμων (NA27) / του θεου και ιησου χριστου του κυριου υμων.
2 Peter 1.4/8-18 (p. 207): τιμια και μεγιστα ημιν επαγγελματα δεδωρηται (NA27) / τιμια ημιν και μεγιστα επαγγελματα δεδωρηται / μεγιστα και τιμια ημιν επαγγελματα δεδωρηται
2 Peter 1.4/36-48 (p. 208): της εν τω κοσμω εν επιθυμια φθορας (NA27) / της εν κοσμω εν επιθυμια φθορας
2 Peter 1.9/32 (p. 211): αμαρτιων (NA27) / αμαρτημων
2 Peter 1.21/12-14 (p. 221): προφητεια ποτε (NA27) / ποτε προφητεια
2 Peter 2.6/14-16 (p. 227): καταστροφη κατεκρινεν (NA27) / κατακρινεν.

*2 Peter 2.6/22 (p. 228): ασεβειν / ασεβεσιν (NA27).47
*2 Peter 2.11/26 (p. 231): κυριω / κυριου (NA27)48
2 Peter 2.13/32-34 (p. 233): απαταις αυτων (NA27) / αγαπαις αυτων
*2 Peter 2.15/2 (p. 235): καταλιποντες / καταλειποντες (NA27)
2 Peter 2.18/18 (p. 238): ασεβευς (NA27) / ασεβεις
2 Peter 2.18/22 (p. 238): ολιγως (NA27) / οντως
2 Peter 2.19/27 (p. 239): τουτω δεδουλωται (NA27) / τουτω και δεδουλωται
2 Peter 2.20/22-32 (p. 240): κυριου ημων και σωτηρος Ιησου Χριστου (NA27) / κυριου και σωτηρος Ιησου Χριστου
2 Peter 2.22/34 (p. 242): κυλισμων (NA27) / κυλισμα
2 Peter 3.3/20-22 (p. 245): εν εμπαιγμονη (NA27) / εμπαιγμονη
2 Peter 3.3/26-36 (p. 245): κατα τας ιδιας επιθυμιας αυτων (NA27) / κατα τας ιδιας αυτων επιθυμιας
*[2 Peter 3.6/2-4 (p. 247)]: δι ον / δι ων (NA27)
*[2 Peter 3.10/48-50 (p. 252)]: ουχ ευρεθησεται / ευρεθησεται (NA27)
*[2 Peter 3.16/10-12 (p. 257)]: τας επιστολαις / επιστολαις (NA27)
*[2 Peter 3.16/44 (p. 258)]: στρεβλουσιν / στρεβλωσουσιν (NA27)
2 Peter 3.18/2 (p. 259): αυξανετε (NA27) / αυξανουσι
*[2 Peter 3.18/45 (p. 260)]: nothing / adds αμην (NA27)51

1 John
1 John 1.4/16 (p. 267): ημων (NA27) / υμων
*1 John 1.7/3 (p. 269): nothing / adds δε (NA27)
1 John 1.8/24-30 (p. 271): ουκ εστιν εν ημιν (NA27) / εν ημιν ουκ εστιν
1 John 2.4/6 (p. 276): οτι (NA27) / omit
1 John 2.4/28 (p. 276): και (NA27) / omit
1 John 2.20/20 (p. 290): παντας (NA27) / παντα
1 John 2.29/14-16 (p. 299): οτι και (NA27) / οτι
1 John 3.13/2 (p. 311): και (NA27) / omit.52

46 NA27 has καταστροφη in a single square bracket.
47 NA27 printed: ασεβεσιν. ECM returns to NA25 text.
48 ECM returns to NA25 text.
49 NA27 has ημων in a single square bracket.
50 NA27 has εν in a single square bracket.
51 NA27 has αμην in a single square bracket. ECM returns to NA25 text.
52 NA27 has omit in a single square bracket.
1 John 3.19/26 (p. 317): πεισομεν (NA27) / πεισωμεν
1 John 3.23/16 (p. 322): πιστευσωμεν (NA27) / πιστευωμεν
1 John 5.5/4-6 (p. 347): δε εστιν (NA27) / εστιν
1 John 5.6/38-46 (p. 348): υδατι και εν τω αιματι (NA27) / υδατι και τω αιματι
*[1 John 5.10/22-24 (p. 352)]: εν αυτω / εν εαυτω (NA27)
1 John 5.11/18-24 (p. 354): εδωκεν ημιν ο θεος (NA27) / εδωκεν ο θεος ημιν
*[1 John 5.18/36 (p. 363)]: εαυτον / αυτον (NA27)
1 John 5.21/6 (p. 367): εαυτα (NA27) / εαυτους

2 John

2 John 2/10 (p. 371): μενουσαν (NA27) / ενοικουσαν
2 John 9/42-54 (p. 381): και τον πατερα και τον υιον εχει (NA27) / και τον υιον και τον πατερα εχει

3 John

3 John 3/4 (p. 388): γαρ (NA27) / omit
3 John 9/4 (p. 394): τι (NA27) / omit
3 John 10/60 (p. 396): εκ (NA27) / omit

Jude

Jude 5/4 (p. 409): δε (NA27) / ουν
*[Jude 5/12-20 (p. 410)]: μιας απαξ παντα οτι ιησους; NA27: [μιας] παντα οτι [ο] κυριος απαξ
Jude 16/14-16 (p. 424): επιθυμιας εαυτων (NA27) / επιθυμιας αυτων
Jude 17/12-16 (p. 425): ρηματων των προειρημενων (NA27) / ρηματων προειρημενων
*Jude 18.7 (p. 426): nothing / adds οτι (NA27)
*Jude 18.8-14 (p. 426): επε εσχατου αιωνος εσονται / επ εσχατου του αιωνος εσονται (NA27)
Jude 20/8-18 (p. 428): εποικοδομουντες εαυτους τη αγιωτητη υμων πιστει (NA27) / εποικοδομουντες εαυτους τη αγιωτητη υμων πιστει
Jude 21/10 (p. 429): τηρησατε (NA27) / τηρησωμεν
Jude 25/32-38 (p. 434): προ παντος του αιωνος (NA27) / προ παντος αιωνος

52 NA27 has και in a single square bracket.
53 NA27 has δε in a single square bracket.
54 NA27 has οτι in a single square bracket.
55 NA27 has του in a single square bracket.