

Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland

THE TEXT
OF
THE NEW TESTAMENT

An Introduction to the Critical Editions
and to the Theory and Practice of Modern
Textual Criticism

TRANSLATED BY ERROLL F. RHODES

WILLIAM B. EERDMANS

GRAND RAPIDS

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LEIDEN

E. J. BRILL

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PREFACE

This book is designed as a college text or home study manual for students using the "Standard text" of the Greek New Testament in any of its various editions (the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* in its twenty-sixth edition, the United Bible Societies' *Greek New Testament* in its third or a later edition, the *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum* in its thirteenth edition, or the Greek-English *Synopsis of the Four Gospels* in its fourth edition), enabling them to make full use of it and to form independent judgments on the text of the New Testament. Its model is the companion volume by Ernst Würthwein from the same publisher, *Der Text des Alten Testaments* (fourth ed., 1973; English translation by Erroll F. Rhodes, *The Text of the Old Testament* [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979]), but with the difference that here the reader's practical needs can receive more attention because a further volume is in preparation designed for the specialist and the advanced student (Kurt Aland, *Überlieferung und Text des Neuen Testaments: Handbuch der modernen Textkritik*), which will provide interested readers with all the information they can use, and more. The present book gives the basic information necessary for using the Greek New Testament and for forming an independent judgment on the many kinds of variant readings characteristic of the New Testament textual tradition. Matters primarily of antiquarian interest (e.g., the early printed editions of the New Testament, which have often been discussed in detail elsewhere) have generally been restricted here to their bare essentials, while more concern has been given (within the compass permitted by this book) to forming an overall perspective (cf. the numerous plates and charts), to practical experience in dealing with complex problems, and to developing sound independent judgment.

The basic outline and arrangement of this book (including the charts) was designed jointly by Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland. The sections dealing with practical examples were planned and developed primarily by Barbara Aland, the discussions of general principles were essentially the work of Kurt Aland, and the sections on the versions and the Church Fathers that of Barbara Aland. And yet the collaboration was so close that a clear demarcation is im-

possible—even the sections that each wrote independently were quite fully discussed first with each other.

This book is appearing later than originally announced. The manuscript was already complete and had even been reviewed for stylistic consistency (to make it as unified as possible) when Barbara Aland proposed the addition of a classification by textual character for all manuscripts of the fourth century and later (cf. pp. 105f.). At the time only the manuscripts prior to the third/fourth centuries had been identified as representing normal, free, or strict types of text (cf. pp. 59, 64). The proposal was only too apposite, but a full-scale collation project by the Institute for New Testament Textual Research was required to accomplish it. Classifying all the manuscripts from the fourth century and later into five categories by their textual character involved a review of most if not nearly all the manuscripts mentioned in this book. Although the collations already in the files of the Institute were extensive, they were still inadequate, and months were needed to supplement them. The complete collation of the papyri was accomplished by W. Grunewald, and of the uncials almost exclusively by K. Witte. Collating the minuscules for the test passages established by the Institute was done over the years by too many research assistants to acknowledge all of them individually; the results were coordinated by U. Hörster and K. Blumenkemper.

In this, as in so many other details, it was again proved that this book could never have been written apart from the Institute for New Testament Textual Research in Münster, Westphalia, or without the support of the Hermann Kunst Foundation for Promoting New Testament Textual Research together with the German Research Council (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*), which made possible the research that underlies the present book. Not only we and all the members of the Institute, but also all the readers of this book owe these institutions a profound debt of gratitude.

Besides the members of the Institute already named, we must also thank H. Bachmann for his work in preparing the charts and supplementary illustrations (both from the resources of the Institute) and for his cooperation in the final checking of the manuscript; G. Schmalzbauer and H. U. Rosenbaum for compiling the information in the lists of the Church Fathers (pp. 170ff., 211ff.); M. Welte for assuming the chief responsibility together with Mrs. B. Köster for a final review and correction of the manuscript, and especially for supplementing the usefulness of the book by contributing its index; and Mrs. E. Kuhr for patiently transforming a frequently rewritten and heavily corrected manuscript into printable typescript.

This book attempts to introduce readers (including beginners with no previous experience) step by step to the difficulties of the material, if they will read it straight through from the beginning. But readers wishing to begin immediately using a particular edition of the Greek New Testament, mastering its arrangement and structure first before proceeding to other matters, should begin with chapter V. Anything not immediately clear or requiring further explanation (e.g., the symbols for manuscripts, etc.) may be clarified easily by consulting

the detailed table of contents or the index for references to relevant passages in other chapters, each of which has been written as a fully self-contained unit, to the extent of occasional repetition.

In the present edition, besides acknowledging our indebtedness to the translator, Dr. Erroll F. Rhodes, who has earned our sincere gratitude, one further note should be added. Since the appearance of the German edition of this book, Arthur L. Farstad and Zane C. Hodges have published *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982). This return to the Textus Receptus of Erasmus and his successors, achieved with the support of several New Testament scholars, as well as the criticism of the modern scholarly text associated with it can be put to a practical test by means of the present book. In chapter VII, sections 3 and 4, the essential differences between the Textus Receptus and the modern scholarly text are examined carefully, providing the basis for readers to judge for themselves which of the two texts corresponds more nearly to the original wording of the New Testament.

Münster, Westphalia
March 28, 1983

KURT ALAND
BARBARA ALAND

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

Der Text des Neuen Testaments was written in 1979-1980 and published in 1982. Although the English translation was completed in March 1983, certain difficulties prevented its immediate publication. By mid-1985 when these difficulties were resolved, further advances at the Institute for New Testament Textual Research in Münster necessitated a considerable revision of the text, especially in the descriptive list of minuscule manuscripts in chapter 3. The present translation, then, represents a revision of the original German edition of 1982.

Other changes from the original German edition include some adaptation of bibliographical references for English readers. German illustrative examples cited in the original text have generally been retained and supplemented with English parallels. And of course the indexes have had to be compiled afresh.

It is a pleasure to express special gratitude to Eugene A. Nida and Harold P. Scanlin of the American Bible Society for their support and encouragement of this translation from the beginning; to Kurt Aland for generously reviewing the English translation and for providing extensive corrections and supplementary information in May 1985 to bring it up to date; to Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company for meticulous editorial oversight, and in particular for the improved legibility of charts 5 and 6 which identify the textual contents of New Testament papyri and uncial manuscripts; and finally to Harriet Rhodes for invaluable assistance in preparing accurate typescript.

ERROLL F. RHODES

September 29, 1986

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