

Alison Welsby, *A Textual Study of Family 1 in the Gospel of John*, Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Textforschung 45, Berlin-Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2014. Pp. xi + 229. ISBN 978-3-11-033209-4. Hardcover, €119,95/\$168.-.

- [1] Usually minuscule manuscripts hold a weak position: in textual criticism they are *buried* somewhere in the manuscript lists according to their numbers and after two other previous categories of manuscripts, they are regarded as being rather young, and they are generally evaluated as minor witnesses to the text of the New Testament. Proof of this statement is, for instance, the 28th edition of the so-called Nestle-Aland (NA28): while the number of papyri again increased from the previous editions, the number of majuscules listed there was reduced to 181 (from 240 in NA27) and even less than half of the 219 minuscules from NA27 are listed in NA28 (107).¹ In the recent second edition of the standard work *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research. Essays on the Status Quaestionis* (ed. Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes; NTTSD 42; Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2nd ed. 2013) Eldon J. Epp (“Textual Clusters: Their Past and Future in New Testament Textual Criticism,” 519-577, here 542) is the only author who briefly refers to the minuscule manuscript family 1.
- [2] Hence, it is to be welcomed that only one year after Didier Lafleur’s study of family 13 (*La Famille 13 dans l’évangile de Marc* [NTTSD 41; Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2013]) another monograph about a family of minuscules has been published: it is Alison Sarah Welsby’s dissertation under the auspices of David C. Parker (examiners James Keith Elliott and Hugh Houghton) focussing on family 1 in the Gospel of John. The book closely follows her dissertation from 2011 available on the Internet in form of a PDF-file.²
- [3] It comes as no surprise that Welsby’s dissertation is based on Kirsopp Lake’s pioneering and seminal work *Codex I of the Gospels and Its Allies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1902) which itself laid the foundation for the minuscule family 1 with Non-Majority readings on the basis of 1 118 131 205abs 205 and 209. Of course, Welsby builds on Amy S. Anderson’s updating monograph published ten years ago (*The Textual Tradition of the Gospels: Family 1 in Matthew* (NTTS 32; Leiden; Brill, 2004)), in which Anderson concentrates on the Gospel of Matthew and the extant minuscules of family 1 (1 205 209 1582 22 118 131 872 1192 1210 1278 2193 2542) with focus on codex 1, which gave the family its name, and, above all, codex 1582 (written in 948, Vatopediu Monastery, Athos), which Anderson and now Welsby regard “as a base text for the collation” (5) of the minuscules of family 1.
- [4] Welsby uses *Collate 2.1*, a piece of software developed by Peter Robinson (see his *Canterbury Tales Project*)³ for collating, analysing, and publishing texts preserved in various witnesses and a tool for forming a critical apparatus for the *Editio Critica Maior* of the Institute for Critical Textual Research at Munster. The seventeen manuscripts in John she utilizes (1 22 118 131 205abs 205 209 565 872 884 1192 1210 1278 1582 2193 2372 2713) are transcribed from microfilms. Some of them were examined physically (118 205abs 205 209 565 1278), and full transcriptions are available on the Internet,⁴ while the relevant

1 Cf. J.K. Elliott, Review of Trobisch, David: Die 28. Auflage des Nestle-Aland, *Theologische Revue* 110.1 (2014) 29-30.

2 Cf. etheses.bham.ac.uk/3338/1/Welsby12PhD.pdf (last access 2/4/2014).

3 Cf. www.digitalmedievalist.org/wiki/index.php/CTP_%28Canterbury_Tales_Project%29 (last access 2/4/2014).

4 Cf. www.iohannes.com/family1/transcriptions.htm (last access 2/4/2014).

readings are included in the handy and easily manageable book. The readings Welsby provides are rated according to (1) their attestation in the Greek textual tradition of the Gospel of John and (2) agreement with the Majority Text reading, for which she uses the edition by Zane Hodges and Arthur Farstad (*The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text* [New York: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982]). All in all Welsby's aim is to analyse the collations of the relevant minuscule manuscripts of John and to reconstruct the text of family 1 from its extant manuscripts.

- [5] Following her introduction in part two of her book Welsby clusters the minuscules of family 1 in four groups. First is the core group of codices 1, 565, 884, 1582, and 2193, among which 1582 and 1 are independent of each other and may share an intermediate exemplar (36-39), while 565, 884, and 2193 share a common ancestor of which they are independent witnesses (29-36). Second is the Venice group, containing 205abs, 205, and 209 kept at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice. In addition, the group includes 118 (Bodleian Library, Oxford) and 2713 (Holy Monastery of St. Stephen, Meteora). Codex 205abs seems to be independent whereas 205 is a copy of 205abs. All manuscripts of the Venice group form a specific subgroup of family 1 with exclusive readings (64-68). Third, codices 22, 1192, 1210, 1278, and 2372 share an intermediate ancestor and 1278 and 2372 are sibling manuscripts. Fourth, Welsby studies codices 131 (with 121 singular readings), 872, and 2193 as miscellaneous manuscripts.

Welsby provides concise descriptions of every codex, writes about script, dating, provenance, illuminations/decorations, and correctors and later hands. She also supplies information on how and where she produced her transcriptions. It is exactly these sorts of information that makes the book a gem: readers get acquainted with the minuscules and get to know more about this often neglected category of manuscripts than is usually in the case for lists and research work (if anything at all is to be found there).

- [6] By taking her previously constructed family stemmata for every subgroup Welsby can synthesize a complete stemma of family 1 in John including all the minuscules and potential intermediary texts (from A to H). Consequently, her conclusions only cover two full pages.

- [7] Part two of Welsby's book consists of the reconstruction of the text of family 1 in John. In her introductory notes she identifies majority text readings, supplies her theory for reconstruction and apparatus, rates the readings, exemplifies the peculiarity of the Pericope Adulterae (146-148), and provides a list of symbols and abbreviations used in the reconstructed text (149-152). Then Welsby presents her reconstruction of John in family 1 with Greek text and subsequent apparatus for every chapter (from one to twenty-one) and a specific appendix for the Pericope Adulterae (John 7:53-8:11) with a comprehensive critical apparatus at the end.

- [8] Two further appendixes deal with (a) the full family 1 collation, giving critical and explanatory notes about the complete collation of all the relevant minuscules to be found on the Internet (211-214)⁵ and (b) an overview of the lists of selected readings (215-216; only titles of the lists are given in the book) also available in full on the Internet.⁶

- [9] Alison Sarah Welsby certainly provides an impressive study of family 1, a group

5 Cf. note 4.

6 Cf. www.iohannes.com/family1/appendices.htm (last access 9/4/2014).

of minuscules that is too often neglected or misrepresented in text-critical studies or exegetical works. Her small book demonstrates that textual criticism is not a discipline for long-winded sentences and tiring or redundant explanations. Without beating about the bush she presents her method, data, and results. Whenever she draws conclusions from the transcriptions, readings, and collations, these are sound and concise.

But her work is also proof of another – sometimes problematic – feature of textual criticism: most of the actual work done by a textual critic is the accumulation and selection of data and/or the preparation of a database from which then results are derived. Welsby overcomes this problem of unpublished data or databases by supplying most of her collations and listings on the Internet.

[10] Of course, this is not a study that will find a large readership. Welsby presents a rather technical and specialised book that focuses on manuscripts sometimes only known to experts in the fields of textual criticism. Nonetheless, this is a significant and very welcome contribution in the study of the fascinating minuscule group family 1 and it is to be hoped that further studies are about to appear for this manuscript group (and others) and its text in other writings of the New Testament.

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