

Karl Jaroš. *Das Neue Testament nach den ältesten griechischen Handschriften: Die handschriftliche Überlieferung des Neuen Testaments vor Codex Sinaiticus und Codex Vaticanus*. Ruppolding and Mainz: Franz Philipp Rutzen/Vienna and Würzburg: Echter, 2006. Pp. 5,136 (PDF format). ISBN: 978-3-429-02805-3; 978-3-938646-09-0. €65.55, CD-ROM.

1. This CD-ROM consists of a single PDF file which is 5,163 pages long (331.1 MB). One immediately looks for a contents page, but there is none (none that I could find at any rate). I hoped then to negotiate it by the running titles. But there are none. I then found that the papyri are arranged by putative date not by number, which means that unless you work through the introduction or run a search for the number you will take a long time to find any single transcription.
2. For each papyrus there are an introduction, images of varying types and quality, a diplomatic transcription in upper case letters, a diplomatic transcription in upper case letters with missing text restored and chapter and verse numbers, a transcription with the text accented and the difference between missing and present text shown by the use of black and red font colours, and finally a version of the reconstruction in German, also in black and red, as an attempt to show what letters of the Greek are present.
3. A few points may be made on the work:
 1. Sometimes (e.g., P⁴, etc.) the missing text amounts to 30 lines, all restored in imaginary line lengths. Of course this is totally hypothetical, and such claims are misleading to anyone who is not an expert.
 2. As far as I could ascertain, the use of grey-coloured font to indicate uncertain letters is used where there is any significant amount of ink missing, even when the identification of the letter is absolutely certain. This does not conform to standard papyrological practice.
 3. The Qumran fragments 7Q4 and 7Q5 are presented as New Testament manuscripts (and the transcriptions include restored New Testament text).
 4. The datings are sometimes tendentious. Notably, the fragments P⁴ + P⁶⁴ + P⁶⁷ are placed first as the oldest fragments, with the justification that 'eine Datierung des P⁴, P⁶⁴ und P⁶⁷ gegen Ende des 1. Jhs. oder sogar noch etwas früher sollte daher nicht ausgeschlossen werden' (p. 59).
4. It is clear that a lot of work has gone into this edition. Unfortunately, the virtual impossibility of using it (even with a fast processor I found that moving around it was very slow and frustrating) means that one would take too long to study it adequately for review. Perhaps the publisher can be encouraged to divide it up into a separate pdf file for each papyrus which, with one for the introduction, would make it possible to use the edition. It will then be possible to decide whether these transcriptions are reliable and make a contribution to research.

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