

# Augustine's Explicit References to Variant Readings of the New Testament Text: A Case Study

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes a sample of passages where Augustine explicitly refers to different Latin versions of the New Testament text; it intends to expand Amy Donaldson's list of patristic references to New Testament variants. It also takes into consideration the evidence available to us today (manuscripts and quotations of Latin church fathers). In doing so, it offers insights into Augustine's way of dealing with variants and also provides a comparison between the material available to Augustine and the data extant today.

Even though his attitude is usually characterized by an acceptance of the different versions rather than by their critical evaluation, Augustine sometimes assesses different versions according to specific criteria, which could—on a very basic level—be summarized as principles of a (text-)critical attitude. Additionally, it can be stated that in almost all instances presented in this paper, the textual variation mentioned by Augustine is also displayed somehow in the material available to us today.

## 1. Introduction

When one looks at the title I have chosen for this article, the titles of two other articles of the famous biblical scholar Bruce M. Metzger probably come into the reader's mind: "St Jerome's Explicit References to Variant Readings in Manuscripts of the New Testament"<sup>1</sup> and "Explicit References in the Works of Origen to Variant Readings in New Testament Manuscripts."<sup>2</sup> As Amy M. Donaldson has already presented a number of Augustine's explicit references to New Testament readings in a chapter of her Ph.D. thesis entitled "Explicit References to New Testament Variant Readings among Greek and Latin Church Fathers,"<sup>3</sup> I am only going to address references that she did not mention in order to expand the list she presented in the appendix of her thesis.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bruce M. Metzger, "St Jerome's Explicit References to Variant Readings in Manuscripts of the New Testament," in *Text and Interpretation: Studies in the New Testament Presented to Matthew Black* (ed. E. Best and R.M. Wilson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 179–90.

<sup>2</sup> Bruce M. Metzger, "Explicit References in the Works of Origen to Variant Readings in New Testament Manuscripts," in *Biblical and Patristic Studies in Memory of Robert Pierce Casey* (ed. J.N. Birdsall and R.W. Thomson; Freiburg: Herder, 1963), 78–95.

<sup>3</sup> Amy M. Donaldson, "Explicit References to New Testament Variant Readings among Greek and Latin Church Fathers" (PhD diss., The Graduate School of the University of Notre Dame, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Donaldson, "References," 583.

In her introductory chapter of volume 2 of her dissertation,<sup>5</sup> Donaldson emphasizes that her main focus lies on Latin variants that bear witness to a variation within the Greek tradition, as they are of particular interest to New Testament textual criticism. Therefore, translation variants (i.e., different but adequate renderings of one and the same underlying Greek expression) are normally neglected. As this kind of variation, however, is of importance to our knowledge of the Old Latin tradition,<sup>6</sup> I have not excluded instances like these from my present study, even though the focus lies on variants that are most likely to result from different Greek source texts.<sup>7</sup>

If we examine Augustine's explicit references to variant readings of the biblical text in general, we have to admit that the majority by far point to different readings of the Old Testament text. They are primarily found in his commentaries on the Psalms (*Enarrationes in Psalmos*) and his *Quaestiones* and *Locutiones in Heptateuchum*, where he explains difficult passages in the first seven books of the Bible and linguistic peculiarities of the Latin text that have arisen through translation from the Hebrew or Greek text respectively. But with regard to the New Testament, some of Augustine's letters, his commentaries on the Lord's Sermon on the Mount (*De sermone Domini in monte*) and on the Gospel of John (*In Evangelium Johannis tractatus*), and his treatise on the harmony of the Gospels (*De consensu evangelistarum*), as well as some of his works that originated from disputes with heretics (see, for example, *Contra secundam Juliani responsionem imperfectum opus*), play an important role.

First and foremost, Augustine refers to variant readings of the *Latin* biblical text, that is, to different translations of the Greek source text. There are, however, also some instances where he points to a variation within the Greek tradition of the Old or New Testament respectively. Let us now consider the importance of explicit references to variant biblical readings. The research undertaken by the Vetus Latina Institute in Beuron, Germany, and its affiliated institutions has already shown that Augustine does not always quote a certain biblical passage in the same way throughout his works.<sup>8</sup> This can, of course, be due to citing from memory, but it can also result from the use of different biblical manuscripts and translations. Therefore, passages where he explicitly refers to codices and their versions by wordings such as *in codice alio inveni* or *codicem, quem inspicere potui* strongly suggest that he is not quoting from memory, but resorting to a biblical codex in front of him. The same conclusion can probably be drawn from passages where Augustine mentions different Latin versions by referring to their translators, as can be seen, for example, in the phrasing *sic enim expressius interpretati sunt quidam nostri*. Explicit references like these are of great importance to our knowledge of the Latin tradition and, in cases where they also indicate a variation within the Greek tradition, to textual criticism of the Greek (Old and New Testament) text as well.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 337.

<sup>6</sup> An introduction to the Latin versions of the NT is offered by Philip Burton, "The Latin Versions of the New Testament," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research. Essays on the Status Quaestionis* (ed. B.D. Ehrman and M.W. Holmes; NTTSD 42. 2nd ed. Leiden: Brill, 2013), 167–200.

<sup>7</sup> An up-to-date overview of the role of Latin patristic evidence for NT textual criticism is provided by Hugh Houghton, "The Use of the Latin Fathers for New Testament Textual Criticism," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, 375–405. See also Bruce M. Metzger, "Patristic Evidence and the Textual Criticism of the New Testament," *NTS* 18 (1972): 379–400.

<sup>8</sup> For Augustine's citations of the Gospel of John, for example, see Hugh Houghton, *Augustine's Text of John: Patristic Citations and Latin Gospel Manuscripts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>9</sup> The importance of explicit references to NT textual criticism is emphasized by Metzger, "Jerome," 179: "Of still greater importance is the occasional comment made by a father, drawing attention to the existence of variant readings in contemporary copies of the New Testament. Such references enable the modern scholar not only to assess the critical acumen of the patristic writer in

In my Ph.D. thesis,<sup>10</sup> I analyzed several hundreds of passages of this kind to shed light on the question of Augustine's attitude towards and use of the varying readings he explicitly mentions. The instances where he addresses different versions of biblical verses can be divided into several categories. Occasionally, he compares different Latin renderings and evaluates them by resorting to the Greek text as a reference point. This procedure sometimes leads to a preference or even a rejection of one reading, but more often to the acceptance of both or all of them respectively. At times, he also assesses variants according to principles of textual criticism (such as the consideration of the number or age of manuscripts supporting a certain reading).<sup>11</sup> There are also passages where he offers his own translation of a Greek term either to illustrate the structure of the Greek text or to add a specific semantic nuance that the existing Latin versions in his opinion have not rendered adequately.

Nevertheless, the lion's share of passages consists of instances where Augustine quotes differing Latin renderings without referring to the Greek text. These typically involve one of the following approaches: on some occasions Augustine uses the diverging versions for a broader exegesis by interpreting the variant readings differently or with regard to a common underlying concept; at other times he explains the meaning of one translation with the help of the other; alternatively, he lets both readings stand without further comment.

In this article, I am going to present examples of some of the categories I have just mentioned. The focus will be on passages that display a (text-)critical attitude towards variant readings; the order of my presentation of Augustine's comments on biblical variants follows the order of the biblical books. I will also compare the textual evidence provided by Augustine with the material extant today by taking into account Latin manuscript evidence as well as quotations made by other Latin church fathers insofar as they can be accessed through the Vetus Latina Database (= VLD).<sup>12</sup> The Vulgate text according to the Stuttgart edition (*Editio Quinta*) is also used as a standard point of reference. Where Augustine refers to variation within the Greek tradition, NA<sup>28</sup> has been consulted.<sup>13</sup>

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choosing among readings, but also to determine more precisely the emergence and currency of one or another alternative reading." Amy M. Donaldson ("Explicit References to New Testament Textual Variants by the Church Fathers: Their Value and Limitations," in *Biblical Quotations in Patristic Texts* [ed. L. Mellerin and H.A.G. Houghton; vol. 2 of *Papers Presented at the Sixteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies Held in Oxford 2011*, ed. M. Vinzent; Leuven: Peeters, 2013], 87–97), however, discusses the limitations of these kinds of references.

<sup>10</sup> Rebekka S. Schirner, *Inspice diligenter codices: Philologische Studien zu Augustins Umgang mit Bibelhandschriften und -übersetzungen* (MSt 49; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015).

<sup>11</sup> See also Rebekka Schirner, "Donkeys or Shoulders? Augustine as a Textual Critic of the Old and New Testaments," in *Early Readers, Scholars and Editors of the New Testament* (ed. H.A.G. Houghton; TS 3.11; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2014), 45–66.

<sup>12</sup> Brepolis (by subscription). "Vetus Latina Database—online (2014), Bible versions of the Latin Fathers," <http://apps.brepolis.net/BrepolisPortal/default.aspx>. In this article, the Old Latin manuscripts are listed according to the numerical system of the Vetus Latina Institute. For this and general information on the Old Latin manuscripts, see Roger Gryson, ed., *Altlateinische Handschriften/Manuscrits vieux latins, Répertoire descriptif, Première partie: Mss 1–275 d'après un manuscrit inachevé de Hermann Josef Frede†* (VL 1/2.1; Freiburg: Herder, 1999), as well as Roger Gryson, ed., *Altlateinische Handschriften/Manuscrits vieux latins, Répertoire descriptif, Deuxième partie: Mss 300–485 (Manuscrits du psautier)* (VL 1/2.2; Freiburg: Herder, 2004). It has to be noted, however, that even if a manuscript has a VL number, it is not necessarily Old Latin throughout but may be a mixed text (or a predominantly Vulgate text).

<sup>13</sup> UBS<sup>5</sup> is only mentioned in instances where its apparatus offers more comprehensive evidence than NA<sup>28</sup>. In order to avoid redundancy, Latin witnesses presented in the apparatus of NA<sup>28</sup> or UBS<sup>5</sup> are only listed if they are not included in the VLD.

## 2. Analyses

### 2.1. Matthew

At first, I would like to present a passage where Augustine prefers one of two Latin versions because of its Greek source text. It is found in his commentary on the Lord's Sermon on the Mount (*De sermone Domini in monte*), where he quotes Matt 5:39 as follows: *Sed si quis te percusserit in dexteram maxillam tuam, praebe illi et alteram*. He poses a question about the significance of *dext(e)ram maxillam* in this context, subsequently adding that this wording is found in the Greek copies, which *per se* are to be trusted more.<sup>14</sup> He explains this comment by pointing to a variation within the Latin tradition of this verse: according to Augustine, many Latin copies omit the adjective *dextram*.<sup>15</sup> But since the version containing the adjective is corroborated by the Greek text, Augustine dwells on the specific meaning of this reading in the following exegesis. If we take a look at the data extant today, the text of the Vulgate and the editorial Greek text of NA<sup>28</sup> read the adjective in question, but the apparatus of NA<sup>28</sup> also includes a little evidence for the omission of the adjective.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the VLD<sup>17</sup> lists some witnesses—manuscripts<sup>18</sup> as well as church fathers<sup>19</sup>—which omit the adjective, whereas the majority of evidence presented in the database supports the adjective *dext(e)ram*.<sup>20</sup> The Latin manuscript evidence extant today thus exhibits a proportion which is contrary to the one documented by Augustine.

In another instance, Augustine mentions a variation within the manuscript tradition in general without specifying the language of the respective codices. After quoting Matt 6:10 in his discussion of the Lord's Prayer (*Fiat voluntas tua in coelo et in terra*), he immediately addresses the existence of a longer version, which introduces the expression *in coelo et in terra* using the comparative conjunction *sicut*. Augustine continues that this reading is not only the version that is supported by the majority of manuscripts, but also by tradition as it is the one that is commonly used when praying.<sup>21</sup> In his following exegesis of this verse, he adopts this longer (majority) reading.<sup>22</sup> The editorial text of NA<sup>28</sup> includes a comparative conjunction, but the apparatus records a variation with regard to its use.<sup>23</sup> There is, however, no mention of any

<sup>14</sup> Augustine, *Serm. Dom.* 1.19.56 (CCL 35: 63): *Sed si quis te percusserit in dexteram maxillam tuam, praebe illi et alteram*; 1.19.58 (CCL 35: 66): *Quaeri autem potest, quid sibi uelit dextra maxilla. Sic enim in exemplaribus Graecis, quibus maior fides habenda est, inuenitur*. Within the Latin quotations, “u” and “v” is used according to the respective editions; work titles are quoted according to the SBL Handbook of Style.

<sup>15</sup> Augustine, *Serm. Dom.* 1.19.58 (CCL 35: 66): *Nam multa Latina maxillam tantum habent, non etiam dextram*.

<sup>16</sup> D sy<sup>s.c.</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Here, and throughout the following examples, only entries in the VLD that are deemed to be “genuine” citations have been considered; paraphrases or mere allusions have been left aside.

<sup>18</sup> 1, 5. The manuscripts that support the addition of the adjective are: 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 27, 30, 32, 51.

<sup>19</sup> For example: Ambrose, *Exp. Luc.* 7.59 and *Ob. Val.* 6; Jerome, *Epist.* 121.5.9 and *Ruf.* 3.7.

<sup>20</sup> A variation regarding the case of the adjective (*dexteram* vs. *dextera*) is also documented; but this is not relevant to our current discussion.

<sup>21</sup> Augustine, *Persev.* 6 (PL 45: 997): *Tertia petitio est, Fiat voluntas tua in coelo et in terra; vel, quod in plerisque codicibus legitur, magisque ab orantibus frequentatur, sicut in coelo et in terra*.

<sup>22</sup> Augustine, *Persev.* 6 (PL 45: 998): *sed ut fiat in terra sicut in coelo: ut terra scilicet imitetur coelum, id est, ut homo angelum, vel infidelis fidelem; ... nondum ergo sicut in coelo in eis fit voluntas Dei*.

<sup>23</sup> Omission of the word *sicut* as presented in the apparatus of NA<sup>28</sup>: D\* bo<sup>mss</sup>.

variation in the Vulgate. Furthermore, the vast majority of manuscript<sup>24</sup> as well as of patristic evidence<sup>25</sup> presented in the VLD corroborates precisely the version that is described as the majority version by Augustine.

In another section of his commentary on the Lord's Sermon on the Mount, Augustine accepts two almost synonymous Latin versions by tracing them back to the same Greek word. Commenting on Matt 6:13, Augustine cites this verse as follows: *Et ne nos inferas in temptationem*. He then states that some copies contain the wording *inducas* instead of *inferas*, which in his opinion makes no difference since both versions can be properly derived from the Greek predicate εἰσενέγκης.<sup>26</sup> He subsequently also clarifies the meaning of the phrase “and lead us not into temptation” by quoting a third version that is used in the context of Christian prayer (*Ne nos patiaris induci in temptationem*).<sup>27</sup>

It is precisely this third version which is further commented on in Augustine's work *De dono perseverantiae*. In this writing, he discusses, amongst other things, the effect of praying—especially of the Lord's Prayer—on the perseverance of the one who prays. In this context, Augustine cites Matt 6:13 in a particular way in order to illustrate that it is not God who leads human beings into temptation, but their own sinful will. Thus, the phrase “do not lead us into temptation” has to be understood in the sense of “do not permit us to be led into temptation.”<sup>28</sup> This is, as Augustine points out, clearly expressed in the version that is not only used when praying but is also quoted by the church father Cyprian and that can also be found in quite a few manuscripts, that is, *Ne patiaris nos induci in tentationem*.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, despite his preference for this clearer rendering, Augustine excludes it by noting that it is not corroborated by the Greek manuscript evidence.<sup>30</sup> The rendering *inducas*, which is introduced as the minority reading by Augustine, is found in the Vulgate today and supported by a vast majority of witnesses included in the VLD.<sup>31</sup> The reading *inferas* is listed by only three other patristic witnesses<sup>32</sup> and is

<sup>24</sup> *Sicut*: 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 27, 30, 32. Omission of the conjunction *sicut*: 1, 3, 4, 6.

<sup>25</sup> The conjunction *sicut* is omitted, for example, by Cyprian, *Dom. or.* 7 and 14; Hilary of Poitiers, *Tractatus super Psalmos* 134.22; and Tertullian, *Or.* 4.1.

<sup>26</sup> Augustine, *Serm. Dom.* 2.9.30 (CCL 35: 119): *Sexta petitio est: Et ne nos inferas in temptationem. Nonnulli codices habent inducas, quod tantundem ualere arbitror; nam ex uno Graeco quod dictum est εἰσενέγκης utrumque translatum est.*

<sup>27</sup> Augustine, *Serm. Dom.* 2.9.30 (CCL 35: 119): *Multi autem in precando ita dicunt: Ne nos patiaris induci in temptationem, exponentes uidelicet, quomodo dictum sit inducas.*

<sup>28</sup> Augustine, *Persev.* 12 (PL 45: 1000): *Sed ideo petimus ne inferamur in tentationem, ut hoc non fiat. Et si exaudimur, utique non fit; quia Deus non permittit ut fiat ... postremo, ne multa commemorem, cum vobis plura fortassis occurrant, non frustra dicitur, Ne nos inferas in tentationem. Nam quisquis in tentationem suae inferatur, profecto nec in tentationem suae malae voluntatis inferatur: et qui in tentationem suae malae voluntatis non inferatur, in nullam prorsus inferatur.*

<sup>29</sup> Augustine, *Persev.* 12 (PL 45: 1000): *Quod itaque dicimus Deo, Ne nos inferas in tentationem; quid dicimus, nisi, Ne nos inferri sinas? Unde sic orant nonnulli, et legitur in codicibus pluribus, et hoc sic posuit beatissimus Cyprianus: Ne patiaris nos induci in tentationem. In evangelio tamen graeco nusquam inveni, nisi, Ne nos inferas in tentationem.*

<sup>30</sup> Augustine's assessment is in accordance with the evidence displayed in NA<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> Manuscript evidence: 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 27, 32. The patristic evidence includes, for example: Jerome, *Jov.* 2.3 and Tertullian, *Fug.* 2.5.

<sup>32</sup> These are: JO-N 23 (probably a student of Augustine's whose writings had wrongly been attributed to a certain Johannes Mediocris of Naples, hence the abbreviation JO-N); Prosper of Aquitaine, *De gratia dei et libero arbitrio contra collatorem* 15.3; and Pseudo-Augustine, *Sermo* 71.8. Moreover, Sedulius Scottus quotes the textual annotations Augustine made in his *De sermone Domini in monte* in his own commentary on Matt 6:13.

especially encountered in Augustine's own citations.<sup>33</sup> The evidence available to us today thus shows a distribution of readings that is contrary to the one suggested by Augustine. Moreover, the version featuring a passive infinitive (*Ne patiaris nos induci* or the same words in a different order) is attested in only one extant manuscript,<sup>34</sup> whereas Augustine declares that "quite a few copies" contain this reading. It is also quoted by a few church fathers such as Ambrose (*Sacr.* 5.18, 5.29, and 6.24) and Cyprian (*Dom. or.* 7 and 25).<sup>35</sup>

A variation between the Latin and the Greek tradition of the New Testament is addressed by Augustine in his work *De sermone Domini in monte*. Here he is engaged with the interpretation of Matt 7:12, in which the so-called Golden Rule is established, quoting the verse as follows: *Omnia ergo quaecumque uultis ut faciant uobis homines bona, ita et uos facite illis*. Afterwards, he comments on the Greek manuscript tradition, where there is no counterpart for the Latin adjective *bona*. He explains this variation by reconstructing the motivation of the Latin translators who, in his opinion, added the adjective to illuminate the sense of this verse.<sup>36</sup> Interestingly, as a consequence, Augustine even suggests that—in opposition to the regular and logical procedure—the Greek codices that lack the adjective *bona* should be emended. But he mitigates this proposal soon afterwards by explaining how the meaning of this verse is unambiguous even without the adjective.<sup>37</sup> If we take a look at the evidence extant today, the Greek text of NA<sup>28</sup> indeed omits the adjective (and so does the Vulgate). The manuscript and patristic evidence presented by the VLD supports both versions, but whereas the manuscript evidence displays a slight preference in favour of the addition of the adjective,<sup>38</sup> the patristic witnesses exhibit a strong preference for the omission.<sup>39</sup>

One situation which stands out from the ones presented so far is found in Augustine's *Retractationes*. In this work, written at the end of his life, Augustine proposes corrections and modifications to his own writings. It is therefore not astonishing that there are quite a few instances where he not only comments on ideas or statements presented in his works, but also on the biblical quotations he made there. In these cases, he usually refers to the Greek text or to better Latin manuscripts he has come across after the completion of a certain writing in order to correct his earlier citation. Given the text quoted originally and the correction made later on, we can thus speak of variant readings of the biblical text. In the passage that is relevant for the current study, Augustine refers to Matt 20:17 as cited in his work *Quaestiones evangeliorum*. In this writing, he says apologetically, he was deceived by a faulty manuscript and thus cited this verse with the false numeral *duobus* instead of *duodecim*.<sup>40</sup> There is, however, no Greek

<sup>33</sup> See, for example, *Enchir.* 115, *Epistula* 130.21, and *Tract. Ev. Jo.* 73.4.10.

<sup>34</sup> 30.

<sup>35</sup> Structurally similar to this version are the readings found in 1: *et ne passus fueris induci nos*; 6: *et ne passus nos fueris induci*; and in a quotation of Pseudo-Fulgentius, *Sermo* 70 and *Quodvultdeus, Tractatus* 1.2: *ne nos passus fueris induci*.

<sup>36</sup> Augustine, *Serm. Dom.* 2.22.74 (CCL 35: 172): *Omnia ergo quaecumque uultis ut faciant uobis homines bona, ita et uos facite illis; haec est enim lex et prophetae. In exemplaribus Graecis sic inuenimus: Omnia ergo quaecumque uultis ut faciant uobis homines, ita et uos facite illis. Sed ad manifestationem sententiae puto a Latinis additum bona.*

<sup>37</sup> Augustine, *Serm. Dom.* 2.22.74 (CCL 35: 172): *Cum hoc ergo moueret, ut arbitror, additum est ad manifestationem rei unum uerbum, ut posteaquam dictum est: Omnia ergo quaecumque uultis ut faciant uobis homines, adderetur bona. Quod si deest exemplaribus Graecis, etiam illa emendanda sunt. Sed quis hoc audeat? Intellegendum est ergo plenam esse sententiam et omnino perfectam, etiamsi hoc uerbum non addatur.*

<sup>38</sup> The adjective *bona* is omitted in: 9, 10, 11, 13, 27, 56; included in: 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 12, 15, 30, 32.

<sup>39</sup> The adjective is included, for example, in Augustine, *Trin.* 8.10 and Cyprian, *Dom. or.* 28.

<sup>40</sup> Augustine, *Retract.* 2.12 (CCL 57: 99): *Sunt quaedam expositiones quorundam locorum ex euange-*

evidence in the apparatus of NA<sup>28</sup> that corresponds to the erroneous reading that is corrected by Augustine. Moreover, the Vulgate as well as the manuscript<sup>41</sup> and patristic evidence collected in the VLD only support the version Augustine offers as correction.

## 2.2. Mark

In his work *De consensu evangelistarum*, Augustine seems to offer his own (literal) translation of the Greek text as a variant reading for Mark 16:12. Discussing the order of events that surround the appearance of Jesus to his disciples after his death, he quotes Mark 16:12 where Jesus's encounter with two of his disciples is mentioned. In this verse, it is said that Jesus appeared to them while they were on their way *in uillam* (to a country-house, village).<sup>42</sup> Augustine explains that the noun *uilla* could be used here in the sense of the word *castellum* (fortress, shelter), which is normally employed to refer to *Bethlem*.<sup>43</sup> In order to illustrate further the meaning of the noun *uilla* in this context, he then asserts that the text of the Greek manuscripts instead supports the Latin translation *ager*, which, as he further explains, is usually used not only to refer to fortresses (*castella*), but also to towns (*municipia*) and settlements (*coloniae*) on the outskirts of a larger city.<sup>44</sup> The Greek text of NA<sup>28</sup> reads εἰς ἀγρόν; the translation offered by Augustine can thus be seen as a very literal rendering of the Greek noun. This Latin version is not documented elsewhere for this verse: in the Vulgate, the word *villa* is found, which is also the version supported by the manuscript witnesses<sup>45</sup> and by the patristic evidence included in the VLD.

## 2.3. Luke

In his writing *In Evangelium Johannis tractatus*, Augustine points to a Latin variation that has a counterpart within the Greek manuscript tradition. In 118.1–3, he compares the evangelists' different accounts of the distribution of Jesus's clothing after his death. Within this context, he hints at a difference between two citations found in Matthew (*Diuiserunt, sortem mittentes*, Matt 27:35) and Luke (*Diuidentes miserunt sortes*, Luke 23:34) respectively, which he views as insignificant: on the one hand, the use of the plural form *sortes* in Luke could be due to a mode of expression also used in other passages of Scripture; on the other hand, some copies of Luke's text have precisely the singular reading *sortem* that is also found in Matthew's account.<sup>46</sup> In this example, Augustine thus mentions the variant reading for Luke 23:34 in

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*lio secundum Matheum et aliae similiter secundum Lucam; in unum librum illae in alterum istae redactae sunt. Titulus operis huius est Quaestiones euangeliorum ... In primo ergo libro in eo quod positum est dominum seorsum duobus discipulis suam retulisse passionem, mendositas codicis nos fefellit; nam duodecim scriptum est non duobus.*

<sup>41</sup> 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 27, 30.

<sup>42</sup> Augustine, *Cons.* 3.15.71 (CSEL 43: 371): *Marcus autem breuiter ita perstringit: post haec autem, inquit, duobus ex eis ambulatibus ostensus est in alia effigie euntibus in uillam.*

<sup>43</sup> Augustine, *Cons.* 3.15.71 (CSEL 43: 371): *castellum quippe illud non absurde accipimus etiam uillam potuisse appellari, quod nunc iam appellatur ipsa Bethlem.* For the noun *castellum* as epithet for Bethlehem, see, for example, John 7:42 (Vulgate): *Nonne scriptura dicit quia ex semine David et Bethleem castello.*

<sup>44</sup> Augustine, *Cons.* 3.15.71 (CSEL 43: 371): *et in codicibus quidem Graecis magis agrum inuenimus quam uillam; agri autem nomine non castella tantum, uerum etiam municipia et coloniae solent uocari extra ciuitatem, quae caput et quasi mater est ceterarum, unde metropolis appellatur.*

<sup>45</sup> These are: 3, 6, 8, 11, 13, 15, 16, 27, 30. While there is no variation with regard to the use of the nouns *villa* or *ager*, a variation can, however, be found with respect to the case of the word *villa* (accusative vs. ablative case).

<sup>46</sup> Augustine, *Tract. Ev. Jo.* 118.3 (CCL 36: 655): *Quid autem interest utrum dicatur: Diuidentes mise-*

order to harmonize the differing versions found in Matthew and Luke. The expression *nonnulli codices* suggests that his alternative version is also the minority reading; this proportion of evidence also seems to be represented by the material extant today: the Greek text of NA<sup>28</sup> corroborates the plural reading *sortes*, but the apparatus lists a number of witnesses for the singular version *sortem*.<sup>47</sup> The editorial text of the Vulgate, however, refers to the plural form. Beyond that, the manuscript evidence recorded in the VLD exhibits a strong preference for the plural reading.<sup>48</sup>

#### 2.4. John

Another passage where Augustine mentions a variation that is also present in the Greek evidence extant today is found in his work *De Genesi ad litteram*.<sup>49</sup> Commenting on the creation accounts in Genesis, Augustine also uses John 1:1–4 as reference point.<sup>50</sup> After presenting an interpretation of these verses, he mentions a variant for John 1:3–4, which he then cites as follows: *quod factum est, in illo uita erat* instead of the previously cited version *uita est* (featuring the present tense). According to Augustine, the variant reading *uita erat* is contained in the better copies. He also points to the parallelism with John 1:1 that would result from the use of the past tense.<sup>51</sup> In spite of his reference to better copies that corroborate one of the versions in question, Augustine emphasizes at the end of this discussion that the adoption of either version does not change the underlying sense of the verse.<sup>52</sup> The text of NA<sup>28</sup> (and UBS<sup>5</sup> as well) reads precisely the Greek equivalent of the version that is classified by Augustine as that of the better copies (ζωή ἦν); the apparatus, however, lists some witnesses for the present tense (ἔστιν).<sup>53</sup> The editorial text of the Vulgate also supports the past tense. The patristic evidence and the majority of manuscripts<sup>54</sup> included in the VLD, however, show a strong preference in favour of the version using the present tense.<sup>55</sup>

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*runt sortes, quod ait Lucas: an: Diuiserunt, sortem mittentes, quod ait Matthaeus, nisi quod Lucas dicendo sortes, pluralem pro singulari numero posuit; quae locutio scripturis sanctis insolita non est, quamuis nonnulli codices sortem reperiantur habere, non sortes?*

<sup>47</sup> Ψ<sup>75</sup> ⋈ B C D K L Q W Γ Δ ο 70 f<sup>3</sup> 565. 579. 700. 892. 1241. 1424. 2542. l 844 ℳ vg<sup>mss</sup> sy<sup>p.hmg</sup>.

<sup>48</sup> *Sortes*: 2, 3, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 30, 51; *Sortem*: 5, 6, 27. The patristic evidence for this verse, however, almost entirely either refers to Luke 23:34a only or to incomplete versions of 23:34b. The exceptions (besides the passage in question here) are Augustine, *Cons.* 3.39; Beda Venerabilis, *In Lucae evangelium expositio* 6 (witnesses for *sortes*); and Petrus Chrysologus, *Sermones* 37.2 (witness for *sortem*).

<sup>49</sup> This writing originated from his dispute with the Manichaeans and deals with a literal interpretation of the book of Genesis.

<sup>50</sup> Augustine, *Gen. litt.* 5.13 (CSEL 28.1: 156).

<sup>51</sup> Augustine, *Gen. litt.* 5.14 (CSEL 28.1: 157–8): *Nec praetermittendum est, quod emendatiores codices habent: quod factum est, in illo uita erat, ut sic intellegatur: uita erat, quomodo in principio erat uerbum, et uerbum erat apud deum, et deus erat uerbum.*

<sup>52</sup> Augustine, *Gen. litt.* 5.15 (CSEL 28.1: 158): *Sed etiam si hoc legamus et intellegamus: quod factum est, in illo uita est, manet ista sententia.*

<sup>53</sup> NA<sup>28</sup>: ⋈ D vg<sup>mss</sup> sa?; Ptol<sup>lr</sup> Ir<sup>lat</sup> Cl<sup>pt</sup> Or<sup>mss</sup>. The list of witnesses for the present tense presented in UBS<sup>5</sup> is more comprehensive: ⋈ D it<sup>b</sup> vg<sup>mss</sup> syr<sup>c</sup> cop<sup>sa</sup> eth Diatessaron<sup>syr</sup> Ptolemy<sup>acc.</sup> to Irenaeus Valentinians<sup>acc.</sup> to Irenaeus Irenaeus<sup>lat</sup> Naassenes and Perateni<sup>acc.</sup> to Hippolytus Clement mss<sup>acc.</sup> to Origen Origen<sup>lat 1/2</sup>.

<sup>54</sup> *Est*: 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15, 30, 56; *Erat*: 27, 34.

<sup>55</sup> Witnesses for the version in the past tense are, for example, Augustine, *Epistula* 140.6 and *Serm.* 261.6; Beda Venerabilis, *Homeliarum Evangelii* 1,8; and Jerome, *Comm. Habac.* 2. For an extensive demonstration of the evidence for this verse see P.H. Burton et al., eds., *Evangelium secundum Iohannem, Fascicle 1, Jo. 1,1–4,48* (VL 19; Freiburg: Herder, 2011), 54–55.



### 2.5. 1 Corinthians

A passage where Augustine explicitly deals with a variation within the Greek and Latin tradition respectively is found in his treatise *Contra epistolam Parmeniani*. In this work, he criticizes the Donatist church by using a letter of the Donatist bishop Parmenianus against Tyconius. In the context of the passage in question, Augustine discusses several sayings of the apostle Paul, some of which are cited by Parmenianus and deal with the correction of individuals who have committed wrongdoing. Among these is, for example, 1 Cor 5:5–6. These verses address the arrogant and self-complacent attitude of some people towards a man who has committed an immoral deed by sleeping with his father's wife. The apostle condemns this attitude, as well as the behaviour. Augustine initially quotes Paul's moral judgement (1 Cor 5:6) including the negative particle *non*: *non bona gloriatio uestra*. But afterwards he also cites this verse without the negative particle, explaining this mode of expression as an ironic one.<sup>56</sup> Augustine asserts that precisely this latter version (*bona gloriatio uestra*) is contained in some manuscripts, especially Latin ones. It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that Augustine also knows of Greek copies that omit the negative particle and that there is thus a variation not only within the Latin, but also within the Greek manuscript tradition. According to his phrasing, the version omitting the negative particle is the (Greek and Latin) minority reading. Nevertheless, Augustine states that both versions express the same meaning because of the ironical colouring of the one without the negative particle.<sup>57</sup> In the editorial text of NA<sup>28</sup>, the negative particle is included. But the apparatus records a textual problem here and lists two Latin patristic witnesses—Ambrosiaster<sup>58</sup> and Lucifer of Cagliari<sup>59</sup>—for the version omitting the negative particle. This information is also displayed in the VLD.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, the text of the Vulgate also reads the negative particle in this verse. Therefore, the version that is characterized as the majority reading by Augustine is exactly the version that is also supported by the material extant today.

A reference to a Latin variant reading that is introduced in a rather peculiar way is encountered in Augustine's early writing *Ars sancti Augustini pro fratrum mediocritate breuiata*, whose authenticity is contested.<sup>61</sup> In this section, Augustine explains the three grades of comparison: the positive, comparative, and superlative grade respectively. He demonstrates that the comparative usually governs the ablative case, but sometimes also governs the genitive case, illustrating the difference by giving an example. If one makes a statement concerning three bishops using the genitive case such as in *quis illorum prior est*, one wants to know which one of the

<sup>56</sup> Augustine, *Parm.* 3.2.5 (CSEL 51: 104): *cum dixisset apostolus: tradere huiusmodi Satanae in interitum carnis, ut spiritus saluus sit in die domini Iesu, etiam atque etiam commendans humilitate lugentium hoc debere fieri, non superbia saeuientium, continuo subicit: non bona gloriatio uestra uel per exprobrationem pronuntiationis: bona gloriatio uestra.*

<sup>57</sup> Augustine, *Parm.* 3.2.5 (CSEL 51: 104–5): *sic enim nonnulli et maxime Latini codices habent, cum eadem in utroque sententia teneatur. non enim metuendum est, ne quis intellegat laudando eum dixisse: bona gloriatio uestra, cum et superius dixerit: inflati estis et non potius luctum habuistis et hic continuo subiungat: nescitis quia modicum fermenti totam massam corrumpit, quod ad ipsam inanis gloriatiois corruptionem congruentius referri potest.*

<sup>58</sup> *Commentarius in epistulas Paulinas ad 1 Cor 5.6.*

<sup>59</sup> *De non conueniendo cum haereticis 11.*

<sup>60</sup> The manuscripts included in the VLD for this verse (65, 75, 76, 77, 78) have the negative particle. It is also included in VL 89 (see Hermann J. Frede, *Ein neuer Paulustext und Kommentar. Band II: Die Texte* [Freiburg: Herder, 1974], 114)..

<sup>61</sup> This work, together with the writing *Regulae*, is usually listed under the name *De grammatica*, as their subject matter is similar to Augustine's lost work *De grammatica*. In the *Ars breuiata*, he expounds rules of Latin rhetoric and grammar by sometimes referring to either pagan or biblical literary examples.

three is the most important one. If one, however, phrases the same sentence with the ablative case instead of the genitive case (that is: *quis illis prior est*), one asks about another, fourth person, who is more important than the three bishops. In order to clarify this distinction further, Augustine alludes to 1 Cor 13:13 where the apostle Paul after mentioning *fides*, *spes*, and *caritas* draws the conclusion *maior autem horum caritas* to show that love is the greatest one of the three entities mentioned before. But if Paul had used the ablative case here instead of the genitive case, Augustine continues, and thus had said *maior autem his caritas*, he would have spoken of another *caritas* that would be greater than the three other entities.<sup>62</sup> After presenting the wording *maior autem his caritas* as a mere hypothetical one, Augustine subsequently adds that some less capable people, who have not understood the difference between the genitive and the ablative case in the context of the use of a comparative, indeed altered a considerable number of manuscripts.<sup>63</sup> According to him, they replaced the genitive pronoun *horum* with the ablative pronoun *his* in order to correct their copies. The alternative reading described by Augustine in this passage is thus a well-intentioned modification of the text, leading to a version that is deemed incorrect by the church father. The underlying Greek text (NA<sup>28</sup>) of the verse in question, μείζων δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγάπη, displays the same structure as the Latin translation preferred by Augustine (*horum*). Augustine does not, however, mention that the Greek text itself is ambiguous regarding the syntactic function of the genitive case (which can, depending on its context, be rendered by ablative or by genitive case in Latin). The reading rejected by Augustine (*his*), is the one which is also found in the editorial text of the Stuttgart Vulgate, but there is a reference in the apparatus to the *Editio Clementina* that has the version *horum*. While the manuscripts included in the VLD exhibit an equal distribution of both renderings,<sup>64</sup> the patristic evidence, except for Augustine's own quotations, shows a preference for the reading *his*.

The next example, found in the third book of Augustine's work *De doctrina christiana*, shows that he sometimes (explicitly or implicitly) refers to the Greek text in order to clarify an obscure or ambiguous Latin expression. In this instance, he also points to the version of a Latin translator who tried to avoid a certain kind of ambiguity by paraphrasing the biblical verse in question. In *Doctr. chr.* 3.IV 8, Augustine quotes 1 Cor 15:31 (*Cotidie morior, per uestram gloriam, fratres, quam habeo in Christo Iesu*) and claims afterwards that a certain translator added the word *iuro* (*Cotidie morior, per uestram iuro gloriam*) in order to illustrate that this verse should be understood as an oath formula. That this is the case, Augustine states, can clearly be seen by resorting to the underlying Greek text.<sup>65</sup> At the beginning of this passage, however, he already criticized this mode of liberal translation.<sup>66</sup> This more perspicuous version is neither documented by the evidence included in the VLD<sup>67</sup> nor by the Vulgate.

<sup>62</sup> Augustine, *Ars breuiata* 2.5 (Weber 1861: 9): *unde etiam Paulus apostolus cum diceret manet autem fides spes caritas tria haec, quod caritas inter tria iam numerata est, dixit maior autem horum caritas, nam si diceret maior autem his caritas, aliam caritatem quasi quartum aliquid inducere uideretur, quod tribus dinumeratis id est fidei et spei et caritati praeponeret.*

<sup>63</sup> Augustine, *Ars breuiata* 2.5 (Weber 1861: 9): *cuius rationis minus capaces quidam in aliquantis codicibus emendauerunt maior autem his est caritas.*

<sup>64</sup> *Horum*: 75, 76; *his*: 77, 78. VL 89 also supports the reading *horum* (see Frede, *Neuer Paulustext*, 155).

<sup>65</sup> Augustine, *Doctr. chr.* 3.IV 8 (CCL 32: 82): *Cotidie morior, per uestram gloriam, fratres, quam habeo in Christo Iesu. Ait enim quidam interpretes: Cotidie morior, per uestram iuro gloriam, quia in Graeco uox iurantis manifesta est sine ambiguo sono.* The Greek text in question here (according to NA<sup>28</sup>) is indeed an oath formula: νῆ τὴν ὑμετέραν καύχησιν.

<sup>66</sup> Augustine, *Doctr. chr.* 3.IV 8 (CCL 32: 82): *Sed iam hoc periculosius permittitur. Ita factum est in illa ad Corinthios, cum ait apostolus: Cotidie.*

<sup>67</sup> The manuscripts listed in the VLD for this verse are: 51, 64, 65, 75, 76, 77. VL 89 does not corroborate this version either (see Frede, *Neuer Paulustext*, 167).

In his *Contra secundam Juliani responsionem imperfectum opus*, Augustine addresses a Latin variant that he corroborates by referring to the Greek tradition in general. This text-critical comment is not part of a larger argument and can be viewed as a marginal note. In this final book of his unfinished work against Julian, Augustine discusses the moral state of the first human beings before their fall (especially with regard to their concupiscence). In this context, he quotes 1 Cor 15:56–7 in order to emphasize the importance of God’s grace to those who struggle against their sinful nature (which came upon them through original sin). With respect to his citation of 1 Cor 15:57 (*Gratias, inquit, deo qui dedit nobis victoriam*), he notes that other manuscripts have the reading *qui dat nobis*, which features the present tense instead of the past tense. This version, Augustine states, is also the version of the Greek codices.<sup>68</sup> The introduction of the second reading *qui dat nobis* by the conjunction *vel*, however, suggests that Augustine regards both versions as equally correct, even though he only traces one of them back to the Greek text. Later on, Augustine cites this verse again twice,<sup>69</sup> using only the present tense. NA<sup>28</sup> corroborates this version without citing any variation,<sup>70</sup> the Vulgate reads *dedit*, and the evidence offered by the VLD (except for Augustine’s own citations of this verse, which show a slight preference for the reading *qui dat nobis*)<sup>71</sup> also supports the past tense version.<sup>72</sup>

## 2.6. Ephesians

An interesting example is found in Augustine’s work against Julian (*Contra Julianum*):<sup>73</sup> in this passage, he assumes that a reading, which is quoted in his opponent’s work, is a deliberate alteration of the biblical text. In the context of the relevant quotation, Augustine discusses the questions of the extent to which newborn children are burdened with sin and what kind of role baptism plays in salvation. In order to corroborate his conviction that the newborn child has already been affected by original sin through the act of procreation itself, he cites verses from the Pauline epistles. Ephesians 2:3 is of special importance here—a verse which Augustine quotes as follows: *Fuimus enim et nos aliquando natura filii irae, sicut et caeteri*. This verse can be viewed as evidence for original sin, as it depicts human beings as “children of wrath” by nature. But afterwards, Augustine points to the interpretation of this verse by Julian, who wanted to read the Latin noun *natura* (by nature) in the sense of the adverb *prorsus* (completely).<sup>74</sup> This reading, or rather interpretation, however, is not accepted by Augustine, who refers to

<sup>68</sup> Augustine, *C. Jul. op. imp.* 6.41 (CSEL 85.2: 460): *Continuo subiciens ubi spes debeat esse certantibus: Gratias, inquit, deo qui dedit nobis victoriam vel, sicut alii codices habent, quod et Graeci habent: Qui dat nobis victoriam per dominum nostrum Iesum Christum.*

<sup>69</sup> Augustine, *C. Jul. op. imp.* 6.41 (CSEL 85.2: 461–2).

<sup>70</sup> τῷ διδόντι; this version is indeed the Greek counterpart to the Latin variant reading *qui dat*. The critical apparatus of CSEL 85.2, however, points to the reading δόντι in  $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$ , but neither NA<sup>28</sup> nor UBS<sup>5</sup> include this reading in their apparatus. According to Reuben J. Swanson, ed., *New Testament Greek Manuscripts: Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines against Codex Vaticanus. 1 Corinthians* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House; Pasadena, Calif.: William Carey International University Press, 2003), 271, there are several witnesses supporting the variant δόντι: 440 424 1270 1611 945  $\mathfrak{P}^{46}$  D\* D<sup>1,2</sup> 049 056 6 226\* 323 618 910 1352 1424 1505 1738 1854.

<sup>71</sup> See, for example, Augustine, *Civ.* 22.23, *Tract. Ev. Jo.* 103.3.35, and *Serm.* 298.5.

<sup>72</sup> The manuscript witnesses recorded in the VLD for this verse are: 65, 75, 76, 77, 78. VL 89 also documents the past tense reading (see Frede, *Neuer Paulustext*, 172).

<sup>73</sup> This writing is part of the controversy between Augustine and Julian of Eclanum, a follower of Pelagianism, on the topic of original sin.

<sup>74</sup> Augustine, *C. Jul.* 6.33 (PL 44: 841): *et illud alterum, Fuimus enim et nos aliquando natura filii irae, sicut et caeteri. ... Quod autem dicis, «Ubi ait Apostolus, natura filii irae, posse intelligi, Prorsus filii irae:» nonne hinc admoneri debuisti, antiquam contra vos defendi catholicam fidem.*

the manuscript evidence in order to refute it. According to him, the version *natura* is found in almost all codices, unless Julian himself has begun to correct, or rather to falsify, Latin copies.<sup>75</sup> Hence the church father draws attention to manuscript evidence here—that is, the majority of Latin codices—to repudiate the quotation made by Julian. In addition to this, Augustine, in his later unfinished work against Julian, again addresses his opponent's peculiar way of quoting this verse, but this time he speaks of a wrongful translation made by Julian.<sup>76</sup> In this context, he insinuates once more that his adversary could be correcting manuscripts according to his preferred version. When we consult the VLD or the already published *Vetus Latina* edition of this book respectively,<sup>77</sup> only Augustine's version *natura* (which is also the text of the Vulgate) and the semantically corresponding forms *naturaliter* or *naturales* are documented for this verse. These Latin terms also correspond to the Greek noun φύσει that is found without any variation in NA<sup>28</sup>. Interestingly, the church father Jerome asserts in his commentary on Eph 2:3 that some people translated the Greek noun φύσει with the Latin adverb *prorsus* or its synonym *omnino*, but he seems to express some kind of doubt about this interpretation or rather translation.<sup>78</sup>

### 3. Summary and Conclusion

Let us now come to a brief conclusion. Passages like the ones presented in this article not only show that Augustine sometimes indeed refers to variant readings of the biblical text, but they also bear witness to the various ways he comments on these differing versions. Even though his attitude towards varying readings is usually characterized by an acceptance of the different versions rather than by a critical evaluation, it could, however, be seen that Augustine at times indeed assesses different versions according to specific criteria, which could—on a very basic level—be summarized as principles of a (text-)critical attitude:<sup>79</sup> in *Persev.* 6, Augustine favours the majority reading. In *Serm. Dom.* 1.19.58, the recourse to the Greek source text leads to the preference of a Latin translation; in *Persev.* 12, he rejects the more perspicuous version as it is not corroborated by the Greek manuscript evidence; in *Serm. Dom.* 2.9.30, he uses the Greek text to verify different Latin renderings. In *Cons.* 3.15.71, Augustine seems to offer his own literal translation of a Greek noun; in *Doctr. chr.* 3.IV 8, he refers to the Greek text and an alternative Latin version in order to illustrate an ambiguous Latin rendering.

In other instances, however, he is eager to accept the different readings, although he offers evidence that actually corroborates one of his versions: in *Tract. Ev. Jo.* 118.3, he uses the minority reading in order to harmonize the accounts of Matthew and Luke; in *Parm.* 3.2.5, he states that the (Greek and Latin) majority reading, which includes the negative particle *non*, has the same meaning as the minority version, which omits the negative particle. In *Gen. litt.* 5.14–5, Augustine refers to the better quality of certain manuscripts, but he states that the adoption

<sup>75</sup> Augustine, *C. Jul.* 6.33 (PL 44: 841): *quia non fere invenitur latinus codex, si non a vobis nunc incipiat emendari, vel potius in mendum mutari, ubi non natura sit scriptum?*

<sup>76</sup> Augustine, *C. Jul. op. imp.* 2.228 (CSEL 85.1: 343–4): *Non sunt Manicheorum libri, ubi legitur: Fui-mus enim et nos natura filii irae sicut et ceteri, quod vos novo more, sed impudentissimo ore interpretamini ex Graeco, ut apostolus dixisse videatur non natura, sed prorsus, hoc est: fuimus prorsus filii irae; et forte hoc emendare audebitis in codicibus vestris.*

<sup>77</sup> Hermann J. Frede, ed., *Epistula ad Ephesios* (VL 24/1; Freiburg: Herder, 1962–1964), 57–58.

<sup>78</sup> Jerome, *Comm. Eph.* 2.3 (PL 26: 468AB): *Quidam pro eo, quod nunc exposuimus: Et eramus natura filii irae, pro natura, prorsus, sive omnino quia verbum φύσει, ambiguum est, transtulerunt. Quod etsi sic sonet, juxta ea quae diximus, exponendum est.*

<sup>79</sup> For a more comprehensive assessment of Augustine's attitude towards different biblical translations, see Schirner, *Inspice*, esp. 605–10 and Schirner, "Donkeys," 66.

of either version does not change the meaning of the verse; in his *Ars breviata* 2.5, he rejects one of two Latin versions because of his own interpretation of the verse in question, without mentioning that the Greek text allows for both renderings. In *C. Jul. op. imp.* 6.41, he accepts two different Latin versions, even though he corroborates only one of them by referring to the Greek text. Moreover, in *Serm. Dom.* 2.22.74 Augustine seems to prefer a Latin rendering that is not supported by his Greek text.

The fact that Augustine shows this kind of awareness concerning textual variation within the Latin (and in a limited way also within the Greek) biblical tradition renders him an even more important witness for the history of the Latin biblical text. Regarding the evidence available to us today (manuscripts as well as quotations of Latin church fathers), it can be stated that in almost all instances presented in this article,<sup>80</sup> the textual variation mentioned by Augustine is also displayed somehow in the material extant today. It can be noted, however, that the evidence (for or against a certain version) that is available to us today sometimes shows a proportion that is contrary to the one documented by Augustine.<sup>81</sup> Metzger's research on Jerome's explicit references to variant readings yielded similar results; he therefore concluded his article with the following appeal to modern scholars: "For this reason, if for no other, modern textual scholars must not fail to give careful attention to explicit comments in the fathers as to variant readings current in contemporary manuscripts."<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> The exceptions are: *Cons.* 3.15.71, *Doctr. chr.* 3.IV 8, and *Retract.* 2.12.

<sup>81</sup> *Serm. Dom.* 1.19.58 and 2.9.30; *Persev.* 12.

<sup>82</sup> Metzger, "Jerome," 188.