Was Martha of Bethany Added to the Fourth Gospel in the Second Century?

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This study examines the text transmission of the figure of Martha of Bethany throughout the Fourth Gospel in over one hundred of our oldest extant Greek and Vetus Latina witnesses. The starting point for this study is instability around Martha in our most ancient witness of John 11–12, Papyrus 66. By looking at P[66]'s idiosyncrasies and then comparing them to the Fourth Gospel's greater manuscript transmission, I hope to demonstrate that Martha's presence shows significant textual instability throughout the Lazarus episode, and thus that this Lukan figure may not have been present in a predecessor text form of the Fourth Gospel that circulated in the second century. In order to gain the greatest amount of data on the Fourth Gospel's text transmission, I rely on several sources.[1] Occasionally these sources

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[1] These include the following: the International Greek New Testament Project [IGNTP] (University of Birmingham), "IGNTP Transcripts: A Transcription of John in P66," Electronic Editions of the Gospel according to John in Greek, Latin, Syriac and Coptic, 17 December 2009, http://www.iohannes.com/XML/transcriptions/greek/04_P66.xml; the United Bible Societies, "An Electronic Edition of the Gospel according to John in the Byzantine Tradition: The Byzantine Edition of John; Transcriptions" (ed. Roderic L. Mullen with Simon Crisp and David C. Parker; 2nd ed.), Electronic Editions of the Gospel according to John in Greek, Latin, Syriac and Coptic, rev. July 2014, http://www.iohannes.com/byzantine/XML/transcriptions; Vetus Latina Iohannes: The Verbum Project, "The Old Latin Manuscripts of John's Gospel" (ed. P. H. Burton et al.),

conflict in their rendering of a variant; I have tried to make note of these discrepancies and look at photographs of witnesses whenever possible. Although this study is primarily focused on Greek and Vetus Latina witnesses, an occasional noteworthy variant (e.g., from a Syriac or Vulgate witness) may be mentioned when relevant to the subject at hand. The work of many established redaction critics, who have already hypothesized that Martha was not present in an earlier form of this Gospel story, will also be addressed.

Electronic Editions of the Gospel according to John in Greek, Latin, Syriac and Coptic, September 2007, rev. April 2015, http://www.iohannes.com/vetuslatina/edition/index.html; Ulrich B. Schmid, W. J. Elliott, and David C. Parker, *The Majuscules* (vol. 2 of *The New Testament in Greek IV: The Gospel according to St. John*; NTTS 37; Leiden: Brill, 2007); Reuben Swanson, *New Testament Greek Manuscripts: Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines against Codex Vaticanus* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995); and the University of Münster, Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung [INTF], "Matthew Inscriptio, κατα μαθθαιον," New Testament Transcripts Prototype, http://nttranscripts.uni-muenster.de/AnaServer?NTtranscripts+0+start.anv.

Editions by Tischendorf, von Soden, Wettstein, and Wordsworth and White have also been consulted; see *Novum Testamentum graece* (ed. Constantinus Tischendorf; Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1862); *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt auf Grund ihrer Textgeschichte* (ed. Hermann Freiherr von Soden; 2 vols.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1911–1913); *Novum Testamentum Graecum* (ed. Jacobus Wettstein; Graz: Akademische Druck, 1962); and *Nouum Testamentum Domini Nostri Iesu Christi Latine. Secundum Editionem Sancti Hieronymi* (ed. John Wordsworth and Henry Julian White; Oxford: Clarendon, 1889–1954).

Papyrus 66: An Important Witness to Late Second-Century Scribal Variants in John

Papyrus Bodmer II (P[66]), discovered in 1952 near Dishna, Egypt, and held at the Bodmer Library in Cologny, Switzerland, is a codex containing only the Gospel of John and is arguably the oldest extant witness of John 11–12. It is generally dated to approximately 200 CE (P[75] and P[45] are roughly contemporaneous).[2] The scribe of this manuscript was notoriously unpredictable, with about 450 corrections having been made to the Gospel in total.[3] Although the majority of the corrections throughout P[66] are due to scribal error, P[66] also reflects dozens of alternate readings of the text attested in important early witnesses such as א, W, Θ, 579, and several church fathers.[4] It appears that the scribe corrected the Gospel text against another exemplar.[5]

John 11 in P[66] contains an intriguing set of variations around the names "Mary" and

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[2] See James R. Royse, *Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri* (Leiden: Brill, 2008) 399–400, 416; see also Pasquale Orsini and Willy Clarysse, "Early New Testament Manuscripts and Their Dates: A Critique of Theological Palaeography," *ETL* 88 (2012) 443–74, at 470. A later dating for P[66] has also recently been argued in Brent Nongbri, "The Limits of Palaeographic Dating of Literary Papyri: Some Observations on the Date and Provenance of P. Bodmer II (P[66])," *Museum Helviticum* 71 (2014) 1–35.

[3] Peter M. Head, "Scribal Behaviour in P. Bodmer II (P[66])," in *Textual Variation: Theological and Social Tendencies?* (ed. H. A. G. Houghton and David C. Parker; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2008) 55–74, at 59–60.

[4] Royse, *Scribal Habits*, 401, 405.

[5] Head, "Scribal Behaviour in P. Bodmer II," 60.

"Martha." To date, only a handful of comments have been made on these important discrepancies in P[66]. Why is this? Is it simply because the scribe of P[66] is known to have been sloppy? This cannot be the case, as P[66*] provides many noteworthy and oft-discussed readings (e.g., ο προφητης, "*the* prophet," in John 7:52; προ πεντε ημερων, "*Five* days before," in John 12:1; εν τω νομω γεγραμμενος, "written in *the* law," in John 15:25). I believe it is more likely that due to the great number of corrections in this manuscript, text critics have perhaps been so focused on cataloguing each individual correction that they have not noticed the themed cluster of variants at the opening of John 11.[6]

Due to sustained uncertainty around Martha's presentation in P[66], I believe text critics should no longer overlook these variants in John 11. Thus, in this study P[66]'s verses containing Martha will be examined on a case-by-case basis, while the greater context of the corrections, including the broader text transmission of the verses in over one hundred Greek and Vetus Latina manuscripts, will be kept in mind. The International Greek New Testament Project's transcription of P[66] will be used to report the readings of this manuscript. My goal is to demonstrate that the initial circulating version of the Gospel of John may not have included Martha, and thus that P[66] may provide a window into a late scribal interpolation that is now part of our received Gospel text. Using readings found in P[66] and other ancient witnesses, I will then make a tentative attempt to reconstruct the opening verses of John 11 without Martha.

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[6] Gordon Fee, James R. Royse, and Marie-Émile Boismard are the only text critics of whom I am aware who have made substantive comments about the changes in John 11. I address their comments in the discussion of John 11:3 below.

John 11:1—An Introduction to Lazarus's Sister(s)? Or to Mary's Sister?

The story of the raising of Lazarus of Bethany as we know it includes two sisters named Mary and Martha. However, according to the IGNTP, P[66*]'s text of this verse appears as follows:

ην δε τις ασθενων λαζαρος απο βηθανιας

εκ της κωμης μαριας και μαριας της αδελφης αυτου.[7]

I am particularly interested in the words της κωμης μαριας και μαριας της αδελφης αυτου ("the village of Mary and of Mary his sister") in this reading. Although the words της κωμης μαριας και μαριας likely reflect some sort of scribal error, and the scribe of P[66] does make occasional dittographic errors of entire words, at this point it will suffice to note that Martha is not present in the initial reading.[8] With Martha absent, the words αδελφης αυτου, "his sister," naturally identify Mary as the sister of Lazarus.

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[7] "There was a certain sick man, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and of Mary his sister" (see http://www.iohannes.com/XML/transcriptions/greek/04_P66.xml). All IGNTP citations of P[66] in this paper come from this site. The IGNTP and the INTF state that the initial reading was αυτου (see http://nttranscripts.uni-muenster.de/AnaServer?NTtranscripts+0+start.anv). Swanson states that P[66]'s initial reading was αυτης, although he does not mention the clear initial reading of μαριας και μαριας. See Swanson, *New Testament Greek Manuscripts: John*, 151.

[8] Due to the και ("and") it is clear that a second woman is present here, but the scribe shows hesitation on the name. Royse cites dittographies in the manuscript at 1:27b, 12:26a, and 14:3 (*Scribal Habits*, 441).

The correction of P[66] in 11:1 does include Martha. Changes are in bold:

ην δε τις ασθενων λαζαρος απο βηθανιας

εκ της κωμης μαριας και μαρ**θ**ας της αδελφης αυτ**ης**.[9]

Erroll Rhodes has suggested that της κωμης μαριας και μαριας in 11:1 is dittography, mistakenly written instead of της κωμης μαριας και μαρθας, with P[66c] returning to correct it somewhat later. James R. Royse believes the mistake was an accidental backward leap to the letters μαρ and was corrected almost immediately.[10]
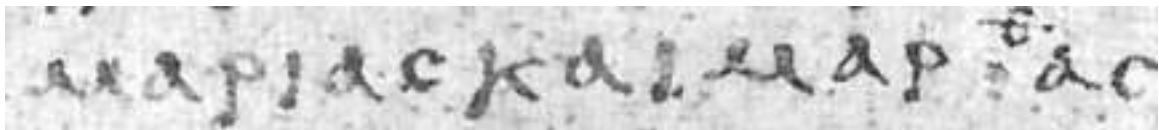
Rhodes and Royse give simple explanations for this change, if it is taken out of context. However, I believe this correction must also be examined with the surrounding reading of P[66*], because immediately afterward the masculine αδελφης αυτου, "his sister," is corrected to the feminine αδελφης αυτης, "her sister"; furthermore in 11:3 one woman's name will be changed to αι αδελφαι, "the sisters." We will return to 11:3 shortly.

Using P[66] as a (decidedly unclear) starting point, we will now examine John 11:1 over the course of the Fourth Gospel's broader manuscript transmission. In fact, several other of

[9] "There was a certain sick man, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and of **Martha her sister**."

[10] Royse, *Scribal Habits*, 430, 430n.

[11] "Papyri: P66," Early Bible, http://www.earlybible.com/manuscripts/p66-Joh-70.html. Thanks to Peter Head for sending me this link; all images of P[66] in this paper come from this website. Permission has been granted from the Bodmer Library to reproduce the image.

our most important witnesses do not name Martha in their initial reading. Most notably, Codex Alexandrinus (A) makes an extraordinarily similar change to that of P[66]. According to Swanson and the INTF, A[*] transcribes:

ην δε τις ασθενων λαζαρος απο βηθανιας

εκ της κωμης μαριας της αδελφης αυτου.[12]

A[c] corrects to:

ην δε τις ασθενων λαζαρος απο βηθανιας

εκ της **κωμης μαριας και** μαρθας της αδελφης αυτου.[13]
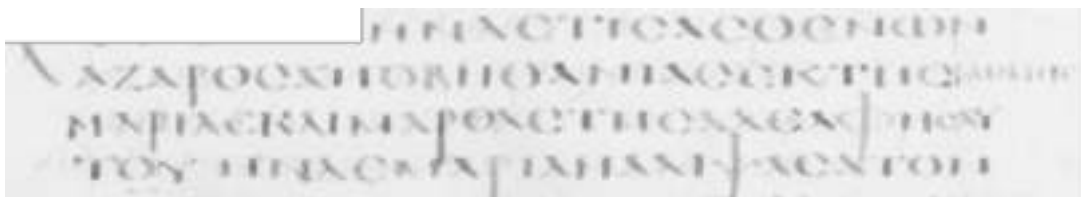
[14]

In the corrected text, the word κωμης is squeezed into the right-hand margin; smaller script is then used for μαριας και to compensate for the extra letters. The left-hand vertical line of the

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[12] "There was a certain sick man, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary his sister" (http://nttranscripts.uni-muenster.de/AnaServer?NTtranscripts+0+start.anv). All variants from the INTF come from this website.

[13] "There was a certain sick man, Lazarus of Bethany, the **village of Mary and of Martha** his sister." The IGNTP only notes the omission of the word κωμης for A[*], but due to the smaller letters at the beginning of the line and the *ι* underneath the *θ*, I believe Swanson and the INTF more accurately represent A[*]'s reading here.

[14] Thanks to the British Library for giving permission to reproduce this image. © The British Library Board, Royal 1D VIII, f48v.

μ in μαριας is further to the left of the subsequent margin lines, suggesting that A^c repurposed the *κ* of A*'s κωμης; the *θ* in μαρθας is now visibly off-center, revealing the word μαριας hiding underneath.

[15]

Like P^{66*}, A's scribe transcribed αδελφης αυτου in this verse, yet in A the masculine pronoun stands uncorrected. Minuscule 32 also transcribes αδελφης αυτου. Minuscule 157 stands uncorrected in omitting και μαρθας ("and Martha"), thus nonsensically applying a feminine pronoun to Lazarus! Vetus Latina witness 9A simply omits Martha's name and is uncorrected. It is striking that four important witnesses (P^{66}, A, 157, and VL 9A) do not include Martha's name in their original text of 11:1. These readings reflect several traditional textual families: Alexandrian (P^{66}), Byzantine (A), Caesarean (157), and Western (VL 9A). Meanwhile, none of the eighty-eight Greek or twenty Vetus Latina witnesses surveyed for this verse ever omit Mary's or Lazarus's names.

The Vetus Latina readings show an even more striking pattern in this verse: eight (40%) of the twenty Vetus Latina witnesses surveyed describe the two women as *Lazarus's* sisters in either their initial or corrected reading. Both *aur*^{c} and VL 11A^c actually correct the singular (feminine) identification "her sister" in favor of the plural (masculine) identification "his sisters." Two Syriac witnesses (the Peshitta and the Sinaitic Syriac) uniquely introduce

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[15] Reproduced with permission.

the Bethany siblings by identifying Lazarus as "the brother of Mary and Martha."[16] What I would like to highlight is the wide variation in meaning in these variants—whether the verse's wording introduces us to one sister of Lazarus, two sisters of Lazarus, or one sister of Mary.

Thus the surveyed transmission of 11:1 reflects nine different renderings, which differ significantly on whether Martha is named, how many sisters appear, and whose sister(s) they are:

[a] μαριας και μαριας της αδελφης αυτου   P[66*]

["of Mary and of Mary his sister"]

[b] μαριας και μαρθας της αδελφης αυτης   P[66c] K[c] rell.

mariae et marthae sororis eius   *aur*[*] VL 11A[*] rell.

["of Mary and of Martha her sister"]

[c] μαριας της αδελφης αυτου   A[*]

["of Mary his sister"]

[d] μαριας και μαρθας της αδελφης αυτου   A[c], 32

["of Mary and of Martha his sister"]

[e] μαριας και μαρθας της αδελφης   K[*]

["of Mary and of Martha the sister"]

[f] μαριας της αδελφης αυτης   157

["of Mary her sister"]

[g] mariae et marte sorores eius   *e*

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[16] See Nestle-Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece* (27th ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993) 285. NA[28] omits the reference.

marie et marthae sorores eius   VL 11A^c

mariae et marthe sororibus eius   VL 48

mariae et marthae sororum eius   *l aur*^c *g*² *gat* VL 47

["of Mary and of Martha his sisters"]

[h]   mariae et sororis eius   VL 9A

["of Mary and her sister"]

[i]   αδελφος Μαριας και Μαρθας   sy^{s.(p)}

["the brother of Mary and Martha"]

Analysis

I would like to explore the possibility that some of these discrepancies are due to conflate

readings that reflect a scribal dilemma. If a scribe was familiar with two text forms, one with

Mary identified as the sister of Lazarus but without Martha present (as in reading **[c]** above),

and the other with Martha present as the sister of Mary (as in reading **[b]** above), this would

have created confusion for the scribe in what to copy. Various solutions to this dilemma

might explain our strange variants in the number of women, whether Martha was actually

named, and whether a masculine or feminine pronoun was used when describing the sister(s).

Thus I posit that the combination of readings **[c]** + **[b]** gave rise to scribal conflate readings

[a], **[d]**, **[f]**, **[g]**, and **[h]**:

[c] μαριας της αδελφης αυτου (A[*])   +   **[b]** μαριας και μαρθας της αδελφης αυτης (P^{66c} etc.)

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[a]   **μαριας και μαριας της αδελφης αυτου**   (P^{66*})

[d]   **μαριας και μαρθας της αδελφης αυτου**   (A^c, 32)

[f]   **μαριας της αδελφης αυτης**   (157)

| [g] | mariae et marthae sororum eius | (*l aur*^c *g*² *gat* VL 47) |
| [h] | mariae et sororis eius | (VL 9A) |

If a predecessor text form of this Gospel circulated without Martha, perhaps reading **[c]**, A's initial reading ην δε τις ασθενων λαζαρος απο βηθανιας εκ της κωμης μαριας της αδελφης αυτου ("There was a certain sick man, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary his sister") retains it. In that case, P^{66*}'s nonsense reading της κωμης μαριας και μαριας may actually indicate the scribe's familiarity with a version of the verse where Martha was not present.
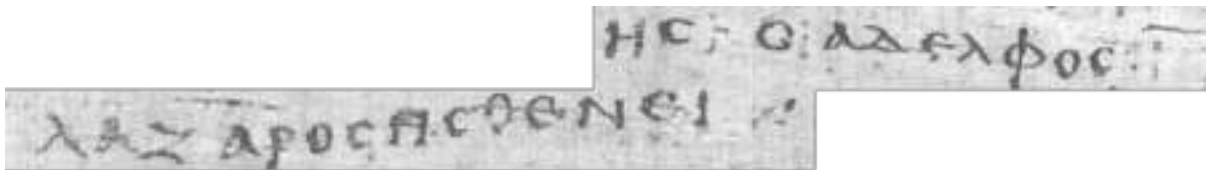
John 11:2b—Mary's Brother "*Was Also* Lazarus"?

John 11:2b has some very curious corrections in Papyrus 66. According to the IGNTP, the first reading was:

ης και αδελφος η‾ λαζαρος ασθενων.[17]

But the scribe then made several changes:

ης **ο** αδελφος **[omission]** λαζαρος **ησθενει**.[18]

[19]

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[17] "whose brother was also Lazarus being sick."

[18] "of whom the brother Lazarus was sick."

[19] Reproduced with permission.

Gordon Fee states that "it looks as if the $\eta\nu$ ['was'] has been scraped out, thus making it a part of P[66*]. If so, then P[66*] apparently started to read, 'whose brother was also Lazarus.' But when the scribe ran into grammatical difficulties in coming to $\eta\sigma\theta\epsilon\nu\epsilon\iota$, he deleted the $\eta\nu$, and perhaps at the same time changed the $\kappa\alpha\iota$ to o."[20]

Perhaps the addition of another sister to the story can shed light on this strange scribal behavior. I suggest that since a second woman has been included in 11:1 (described in P[66*] as $\alpha\delta\epsilon\lambda\varphi\eta\varsigma$ $\alpha\upsilon\tau\sigma\upsilon$, "his sister"), the scribe now felt it necessary to explain that Mary *also was* Lazarus's sister.[21] But encountering grammatical difficulties with this idea, perhaps the scribe decided on an alternate approach by going back and changing the $\alpha\upsilon\tau\sigma\upsilon$ of 11:1 to $\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\varsigma$. Because this pronoun was changed, the second woman in 11:1 is now instead described as *Mary's* sister, so the scribe could return to the version of 11:2 with Mary described as *Lazarus's* sister. This solution successfully ensured that all three Bethany siblings were related.

John 11:3—How Many Women Sent the Message to Jesus? Whose Sister(s) Were They?

The most striking manuscript evidence calling for further study of the figure of Martha is P[66]'s text of John 11:3. The change from P[66*] to P[66c] demonstrates an undisputable change of

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[20] Gordon Fee, "Corrections of Papyrus Bodmer II and the Nestle Greek Testament," *JBL* 84, (1965) 66–72, at 69. See also Marie-Émile Boismard, "Papyrus Bodmer II. Supplément de Jean" *RB* 70 (1962) 120–33, at 124–25.

[21] Codex Bezae includes $\kappa\alpha\iota$ ("also") here but has no verb and retains the article o ("the"). P[45] adds $\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta$ η ("it was *this* Mary . . .") to 11:2a.

meaning and cannot be explained by the habits of P[66]'s scribe; the correction clearly splits one woman into two. According to the IGNTP, P[66*] transcribes the following:

απεστιλεν ουν μαρ[1]α προς αυτον λεγουσα.[22]

P[66c] adds a sister to this verse. The corrected letters are in bold:

απεστιλ**αν** ουν **αι αδελφαι** προς αυτον λεγουσ**αι**.[23]
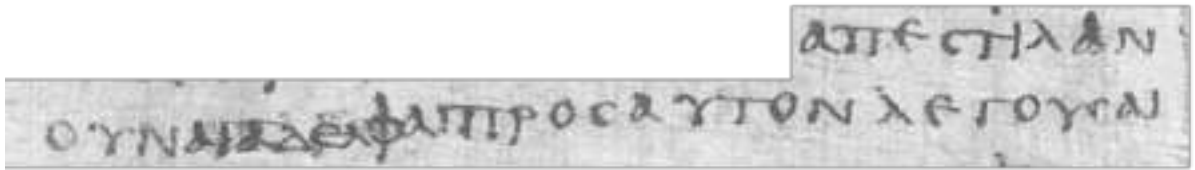
[24]

Not all text critics are agreed on which name is hiding under αι αδελφαι. As reflected above, the IGNTP is undecided on whether the second-to-last letter of the woman's name was an *ι* or a *θ*.[25] Nestle-Aland 26, Nestle-Aland 27, Comfort and Barrett, Fee, Royse, and Elliott and Parker state that the name crossed out is μαρια. But Nestle-Aland 28, Boismard, Swanson,

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[22] "Therefore Mar[?]a sent to him saying . . ." The verb απεστιλεν and the participle λεγουσα are both singular.

[23] "Therefore **the sisters sent** to him **saying** . . ." The forms απεστιλαν and λεγουσαι are now plural.

[24] Reproduced with permission.

[25] The second *α* in αδελφαι may be the last letter of the woman's name from the initial reading, with an *ι* squeezed in before the word προς.

and the INTF state that the name crossed out in 11:3 is μαρθα.[26] The IGNTP is clearest that either name could have been transcribed here; however, since Martha's name is absent from several crucial initial readings of 11:1 (including P[66*]), I agree with the majority and suggest it is more likely that the scribe of P[66*] wrote μαρια in 11:3.

Fee has also taken particular notice of this odd correction. He believes "the original reading of the verb was the singular $\alpha\pi\varepsilon\sigma\tau\varepsilon\iota\lambda\varepsilon\nu$ and that the original subject was $\mu\alpha\rho\iota\alpha$" and that the change from μαρια to αι αδελφαι is "one of the most interesting readings of P[66]."[27] Royse agrees with Fee that the initial reading was μαρια and calls the change "a striking shift."[28] Boismard also states that the change is "one of the most interesting variants of the papyrus" but originally believed that the name crossed out was μαρθα, suggesting a textual tradition where "the role of Mary was blotted out even more than it is now."[29] However, Boismard later revised his view to state that P[66*] named *Mary* here.[30] The singular-to-plural change from λεγουσα to λεγουσαι in 11:3 is cited by all but Swanson; the ι is the last letter of

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[26] Philip W. Comfort and David P. Barrett, *The Text of the Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001) 430; W. J. Elliott and David C. Parker, *The Papyri* (vol. 1 of *The New Testament in Greek IV: The Gospel according to St. John*; Leiden: Brill, 1995) 280; Boismard, "Papyrus Bodmer II," 125.

[27] Fee, "Corrections of Papyrus Bodmer II," 69–70.

[28] Royse, *Scribal Habits*, 454n.

[29] "Le rôle de Marie était encore plus effacé qu'il ne l'est maintenant. C'est peut-être une des variantes les plus intéressantes du papyrus" (Boismard, "Papyrus Bodmer II," 128).

[30] Marie-Émile Boismard and Arnaud Lamouille, *La vie des Évangiles. Initiation à la critique des textes* (Paris: Cerf, 1980) 83.

the line and the furthest out into the margin. Although the woman's name can only be conjectured here, P[66] 11:3 is indeed an actual reading where one named woman has been split into two unnamed women; thus this reading is crucial to our examination of Martha's overall presence in the Fourth Gospel.

At this point in the study it is worthwhile to call attention to the work of several established redaction critics who have already hypothesized that Martha was not present in a more ancient version of this Gospel. In her monograph *Martha from the Margins*, Allie Ernst provides a helpful survey of the source-critical scholarship to date on the subject of Martha in the Fourth Gospel. She names Eugene Stockton, Marie-Émile Boismard and Arnaud Lamouille, Gérard Rochais, and Jacob Kremer as those who believe Martha's presence to be part of a later stratum of textual development.[31] Furthermore, in his landmark work, *A Marginal Jew*, John P. Meier states, "The Lucan story of Martha and Mary has no Lazarus,

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[31] Allie M. Ernst, *Martha from the Margins: The Authority of Martha in Early Christian Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2007) 44–45, citing Eugene Stockton, "The Fourth Gospel and the Woman," in *Essays in Faith and Culture* (ed. Neil Brown; Sydney: Catholic Institute of Sydney, 1979) 132–44; Marie-Émile Boismard and Arnaud Lamouille, *L'Évangile de Jean* (vol. 3 of *Synopse des quatres Évangiles en français*; Paris: Cerf, 1977) 277–94; Gérard Rochais, *Les récits de résurrection des morts dans le Nouveau Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); and Jacob Kremer, *Lazarus, die Geschichte einer Auferstehung. Text, Wirkungsgeschicte und Botschaft von Joh 11:1–46* (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1985) 84.

and apparently the early Johannine form of the Lazarus story had no Martha."[32] Rudolf

Schnackenburg notes, "It is striking that in v. 1 Mary is mentioned first, but that Martha

subsequently takes the leading role. . . . It is [the evangelist] who has brought Martha into

prominence."[33] Robert Tomson Fortna's *The Fourth Gospel and Its Predecessor* posits that

the Fourth Evangelist "has rewritten [verse 1] to bring Lazarus to the fore—and possibly to

introduce Martha into the story for the first time (then altering 'she' in v. 3 to **the sisters**). . . .

In the Lazarus story of the source, Mary was the principal and possibly the only interlocutor

with Jesus."[34] Thus Fortna theorizes that the "evangelist" did something strikingly similar to

what the scribe has done in P^{66} 11:3. Urban C. von Wahlde acknowledges that a case has

been made for Martha's absence but concludes "there was some rudimentary mention of both

sisters in the earliest version."[35] Boismard and Lamouille were aware of P^{66*}'s, A^{*}'s, and

157's manuscript variants around Martha in 11:1 and 11:3, and in *La vie des Évangiles* they

conclude, "According to these witnesses, verses 1 and 3, like verse 45, speak only of Mary;

Martha is not even mentioned. . . . [The text] would have been significantly modified at a

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[32] John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (New York: Doubleday, 1994) 831.

[33] Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John* (vol. 2; trans. Cecily Hastings, Francis McDonagh, David Smith, and Richard Foley; New York: Crossroad, 1987) 320.

[34] Robert Tomson Fortna, *The Fourth Gospel and Its Predecessor* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988) 98, 101.

[35] Urban C. von Wahlde, *Commentary on the Gospel of John* (vol. 2 of *The Gospel and Letters of John*; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010) 515.

later stage in order to introduce the character of Martha and give her preeminence over her sister."[36]

Rudolf Bultmann has made special note of the sisters' duplicate quote at 11:21 and 11:32, and of the more developed Johannine theology of Martha's dialogue with Jesus.[37] In his analysis of John 11, Morton Smith agrees with Bultmann and states that a second sister was added here by the evangelist: "With Mary's arrival (verse 32) John returned to the story as it lay before him, that is, to the saying κυριε, ει ης ωδε κ.τ.λ. from which he had departed (verse 21) to introduce the intervening sermonette. . . . This indicates that the doubling of the sisters was John's work and not in his source."[38] In his classic survey of the Fourth Gospel, Raymond Brown considers Bultmann's conclusion that the original dialogue was with Mary only and asks an important question: "If Mary had the original role, why would an editor feel impelled to give a longer role to the less important Martha?" Brown suggests that in 11:28–33 Mary is merely repeating Martha's actions, and Mary's role thus could have been a

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[36] "Selon ces témoins, les vv. 1 et 3, comme le v. 45, ne parleraient que de Marie; Marthe n'y serait pas meme mentionnée. . . . Il aurait été fortement remanié à un stade ultérieur pour y introduire le personnage de Marthe et lui donner la prééminence sur sa soeur" (Boismard and Lamouille, *La vie des Évangiles*, 83–84).

[37] Rudolf Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1950) 309.

[38] Morton Smith, *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973) 154.

compositional "afterthought."[39] Brown's argument is reasonable; yet as noted above, Mary and Lazarus are introduced by name in every extant witness of 11:1, while Martha is not always present. Furthermore several patristic quotations will soon be introduced where it is clear that Martha's presence is questionable, not Mary's.

All of the above-mentioned critics knew of manuscript variants in P[66], yet only Boismard and Lamouille show awareness of this exact change in 11:3. It is extraordinary that so many respected voices have discussed the possibility that there was only one Bethany sister in a more primitive form of the Lazarus story, independently of P[66]'s manuscript evidence.

Yet P[66] is not the only manuscript to suggest the possibility of Martha's absence in 11:3. As in 11:1, the number of sisters in 11:3 fluctuates throughout the manuscript transmission of the Gospel. Although P[66*] is the only extant witness that actually transcribes the name of a single sister, several important witnesses reflect possible traces of only one Bethany sister's presence in the verse. Like P[66], Minuscule 579 uses the singular verb απεστηλεν in 11:3a when describing a plural feminine subject. Minuscule 579 will again transcribe an unexpected singular verb regarding the Bethany sisters in 12:2. Two Latin witnesses, g^1 and O, mention only one woman in their original reading: the Oxford Vulgate witness O retains the genitive singular "sororis eius" ("of his sister") while Vetus Latina g^1 corrects "sororis eius" to the nominative plural "sorores eius" ("his sisters"). The word

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[39] Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John I–XII* (AB 29; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966) 433.

"sororis" in both g^1 and O may well be a nonsense orthographic error;[40] however, two further Vetus Latina witnesses (*b* and *l*) omit the words "sorores eius," and two others (*ff²* and *μ*) omit verse 11:3 entirely in their initial reading.[41] This verse, already shown to be remarkably unstable in P[66], has been included only by a later hand in *ff²*. Furthermore, in *ff²* the singular pronoun "illi" ("to her") is corrected to "illis" ("to them") by the second hand in 11:4, so that Jesus now replies to two sisters instead of only one:
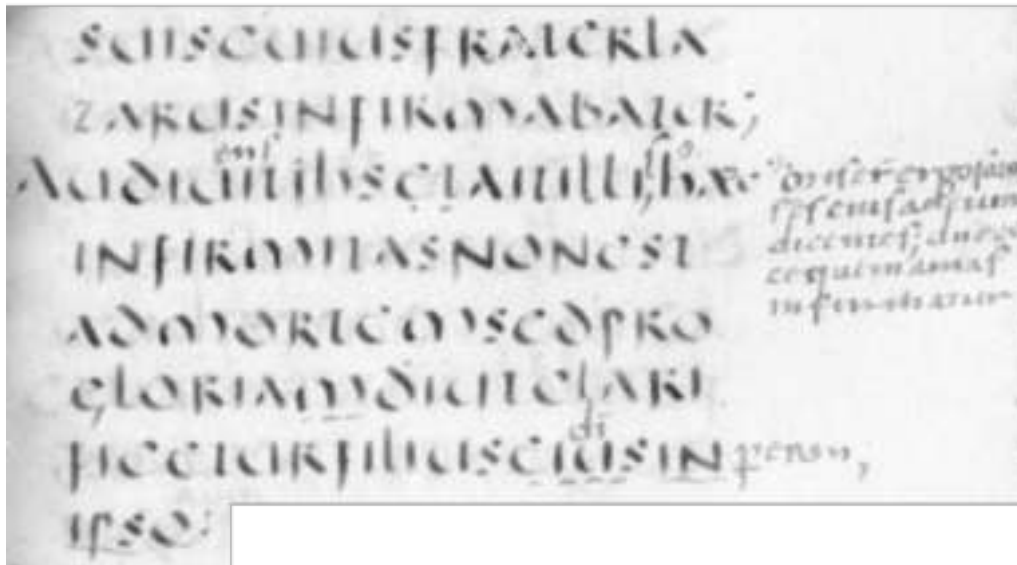
[42]

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[40] "Sororis" in John 11:3 is a nonsense genitive word in a nominative context, and the verb "miserunt" is plural in both transcriptions. Writing an *i* instead of an *e* was a common orthographic scribal error. Thanks to Hugh Houghton for pointing this out.

[41] The omission in *μ* might be due to a scribal leap, especially because the last word of 11:2 ("infirmabatur") looks so similar to the last word of 11:3 ("infirmatur"). Thanks to James R. Royse for pointing this out. However in *ff²* the omission makes more sense in context, since the singular pronoun "illi" in 11:4 now refers back to Mary in 11:2.

[42] Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), "Evangelia quattuor, sive Evangelia antehieronymiana," Gallica,

Here, then, are the variants of John 11:3:

[a] απεστιλεν ουν μαρ[?]α προς αυτον λεγουσα   P^{66*}

["Therefore Mar?a sent (s.) to him, saying (s.) . . ."]

[b] απεστειλαν ουν αι αδελφαι προς αυτον λεγουσαι   P^{66c} K 817^c rell.

απεστειλαν ουν προς αυτον αι αδελφαι λεγουσαι   א 1192 1210 1243

miserunt ergo sorores ad eum dicentes   VL 11A 27 33 47

["Therefore the sisters sent (pl.) to him, saying (pl.) . . ."] VL 48

[c] απεστηλεν ουν αι αδελφαι προς αυτον λεγουσαι   579

["Therefore the sisters sent (s.) to him, saying (pl.) . . ."]

[d] απεστειλαν ουν αι αδελφαι αυτου προς αυτον λεγουσαι   S Ω f^1 f^{13} 28 157

565 817* L1096

απεστειλαν ουν προς αυτον αι αδελφαι αυτου λεγουσαι   743

απεστειλαν ουν αι αδελφαι αυτου προς εαυτον λεγουσαι 1346

miserunt ergo hae sorores eius ad eum dicentes   *a*

miserunt ergo sorores eius ad eum dicentes   *f ff*^{2c} *g*^{1c} *g*^{2} *gat*

["Therefore his sisters sent (pl.) to him, saying (pl.) . . ."] VL 9A

[e] απεστειλαν ουν αι αδελφαι αυτου προς τον ιησουν λεγουσαι   D

miserunt ergo sorores eius ad iesum dicentes   *c d e aur*

miserunt igitur ad iesum sorores eius dicentes   *r*^{1}

["Therefore his sisters sent (pl.) to Jesus, saying (pl.) . . ."]

[f] απεστειλαν ουν αι αδελφαι αυτον λεγουσαι   27

["Therefore the sisters sent (pl.) him, saying (pl.) . . ."]

[g]	And his sister sent vnto hym, sayinge . . .	1526 Tyndale
	Therefore his sister sent unto him, saying . . .	1591 BB
		1611 KJV
[h]	miserunt ergo sororis eius ad eum dicentes	g^{1*} O
	["Therefore of his sister (s.) sent (pl.) to him, saying (pl.) . . ."][43]	
[i]	miserunt ergo ad iesum dicentes	*b l*
	["Therefore they sent (pl.) to him, saying (pl.) . . ."]	
[j]	[verse omitted]	ff^{2*} μ

<u>Analysis</u>

Again I suggest that many of these variants reflect conflate readings. A scribe confronted with two exemplars, one containing reading **[a]** and the other containing reading **[b]**, might resolve the dilemma by simply writing "his sister" instead of the woman's name, resulting in conflate reading **[g]**, a natural compromise. This is in fact a very persistent reading: the 1526 Tyndale Bible, the 1591 Bishop's Bible, and the first printing of the 1611 King James Bible all mention only one sister in this verse.
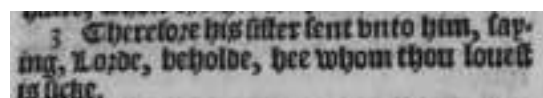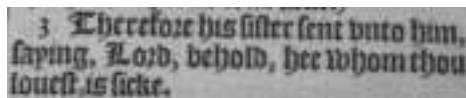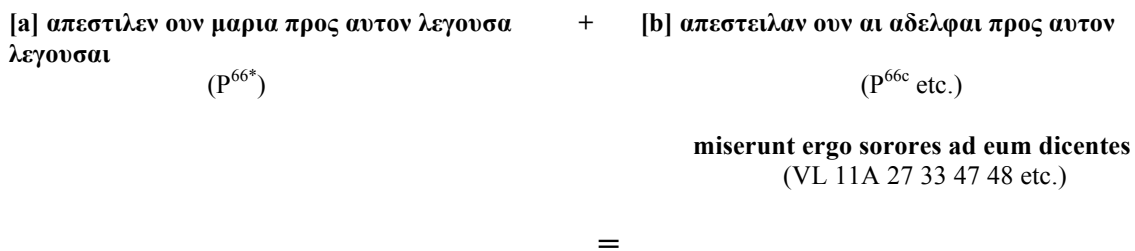

[44]

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[43] Since this reading may well be an orthographic error, I am not including it in the stemma diagram.

[44] *The Holy Bible, Conteyning the Old Testament and the New* (London: Robert Barker, 1611); *The Holy Bible, conteyning the Olde Testament and the Newe* (London: Christopher

Tyndale's 1526 translation says, "And his sister sent vnto hym, sayinge, Lorde, behold! he whom thou lovest, is sicke."[45]

Conflicted scribes could also explain the origin of reading **[c]** (a singular verb paired with a feminine plural subject), reading **[i]** (the sister description actually omitted), and reading **[j]** (the omission of the verse altogether). Reading **[g]** is the natural predecessor of the widely attested **[d]** and **[e]**, which identify Mary and Martha as "*his* sisters." At first glance these may seem like simple scribal or printing errors, but as we examine the greater picture of John 11's text transmission, perhaps we should not dismiss this pattern of singular/plural discrepancies around the Bethany sisters.

Thus I suggest the combination of readings **[a] + [b]**, both of which are present in our oldest extant witness of John 11:3, resulted in the conflate readings **[c]**, **[g]**, and **[i]** (and possibly reading **[j]**, which omits the verse altogether). If **[b]** became widely accepted, when combined with **[g]** it could have resulted in readings **[d]** and **[e]**. I posit this stemma diagram for 11:3:

[a] *απεστιλεν ουν μαρια προς αυτον λεγουσα λεγουσαι*   +   **[b]** *απεστειλαν ουν αι αδελφαι προς αυτον*

(P[66*])   (P[66c] etc.)

                                                miserunt ergo sorores ad eum dicentes
                                                  (VL 11A 27 33 47 48 etc.)

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Barker, 1591). Reproduced with permission. Thanks to Mary Robison and Patrick Cates at the General Theological Seminary library for allowing me to look at these rare volumes.

[45] *The Gothic and Anglo-Saxon Gospels in Parallel Columns with the Versions of Wycliffe and Tyndale* (ed. Joseph Bosworth and George Waring; London: John Russell Smith, 1865) 509.

[c] *απεστηλεν ουν αι αδελφαι προς αυτον λεγουσαι*
(579)

[i] miserunt ergo ad iesum dicentes
(*b l*)

[j] verse omitted (*ff²* μ*)

[g] Therefore his sister sent unto him, saying . . .
(Tyndale, Bishop's Bible, KJV)

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+ further influence from reading **[b]**

=

[d] *απεστειλαν ουν αι αδελφαι αυτου προς αυτον λεγουσαι*
(S Ω *f¹ f¹³* 28 157 565 817* L1096 etc.)

miserunt ergo sorores eius ad eum dicentes
(*f ff²ᶜ g¹ᶜ* VL 9A *g² gat*)

[e] *απεστειλαν ουν αι αδελφαι αυτου προς τον ιησουν λεγουσαι*
(D)

**miserunt ergo sorores eius ad iesum dicentes**
(*c d e aur*)

The textual transmission of John 11:3 thus shows significant instability on how many sisters sent the message to Jesus and whose sisters they were. Reading **[b]** (P⁶⁶ᶜ) shows tremendous influence in the overall transmission. However if Martha was not present in a text form of the Fourth Gospel that circulated in the second century, I suggest (along with Fee, Royse, Comfort and Barrett, Boismard in later years, and Elliott and Parker) that P⁶⁶'s initial reading was απεστιλεν ουν μαρια προς αυτον λεγουσα κυριε ιδε ον φιλεις ασθενει ("Therefore Mary sent to him saying, 'Lord, behold, the one you love is sick' ").

John 11:4—Was the Word αυτη Originally Intended as a Dative Feminine Singular?

The transmission of John 11:4 also raises questions about the number of women to whom Jesus replied. As mentioned above, in John 11:4 the original reading of the fifth-century manuscript *ff²* specifies that Jesus replied to one woman ("Audiuit ih̄s et ait illi" ["Jesus heard

and said to *her*"]). This reading is corrected by a later hand to include 11:3, as well as to add an *s* to the "illi" in 11:4, so that Jesus now replies to two women: "Audiuit i̅h̅s et ait illi**s**." This manuscript is not alone in mentioning only one person in 11:4—the sixth-century Vetus Latina witness Codex Carnotensis/33 also specifies that Jesus replied to one woman, and stands uncorrected ("audiens autem i̅h̅s dixit **ei**"). In fact, the majority of the Latin manuscripts use a pronoun to specify that Jesus is responding to the women here; thirteen (65%) of the twenty Vetus Latina witnesses surveyed include the pronoun, and two of these (10%) originally indicated that Jesus responded to one person. Even Jerome's Vulgate includes the pronoun and states "audiens autem iesus dixit eis." Yet our Greek manuscripts do not mention an equivalent pronoun to "illi" or "illis," "ei" or "eis."

Or do they? If one were to translate the singular Latin pronoun backward into Greek, it would almost certainly say ακουσας δε ο ιησους ειπεν αυτη . . . ("but when Jesus heard he said to her . . ."). And incredibly, this is exactly what the text of John 11:4 says in all printed Greek editions to this day! Since there were generally no accent marks in the earliest manuscripts, the αυτη in this sentence could have originated as the dative feminine singular form αὐτῇ ("to her"), although today it is considered to be a nominative αὕτη (meaning "*this* sickness" when applied to the word ασθενεια). Since in the majority of our Latin witnesses there is a pronoun specifying the women to whom Jesus replied—and this pronoun is occasionally singular—this strengthens the possibility that our canonical word αυτη could have originally referred to a single woman in the Greek text. Amazingly, the scribe of P[66] adds a rare punctuation mark here, which may be deliberately intended to shift the reader's interpretation of the text.
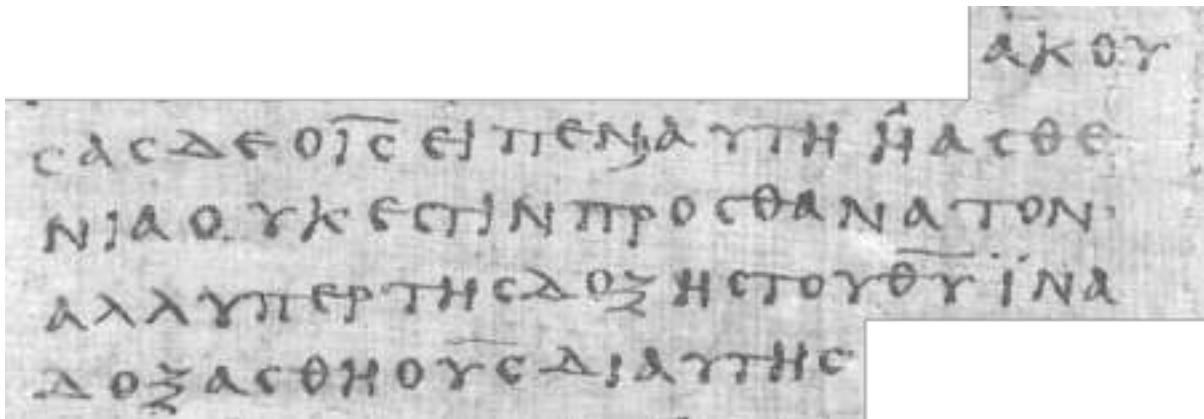
[46]

By the addition of the comma after the word ειπεν, the αυτη clearly causes the text to mean "But Jesus said, '*this* sickness' " (as opposed to "Jesus said *to her*, '*the* sickness' "). P[66c]'s uncharacteristic comma forces a break in the text immediately before a natural pause in the phrasing, which is clearly seen in P[66*] *after* the word αυτη.[47] P[66] is not the only manuscript to show hesitation on a pronoun after the word ειπεν; the scribe of Minuscule 565 originally transcribed a pronoun here but clearly erased it, and the word αυτη appears after the word ασθενεια.[48] Minuscules 579 and 1071 also transcribe ειπεν η ασθενεια αυτη, and Minuscule 69 omits the word αυτη altogether. Thus these witnesses ensure that the verse cannot be interpreted as meaning that Jesus replied to a single woman.

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[46] Reproduced with permission.

[47] Royse believes this mark is a comma, though he suggests it could also be a transposition mark. Either way this mark appears to be an attempt to separate the word ειπεν from the word αυτη. See Royse, *Scribal Habits*, 411.

[48] Swanson states that the initial reading was ειπεν αυτοις η ασθενεια, while iohannes.com states that the initial reading was ειπεν αυτη η ασθενεια (see http://www.iohannes.com/byzantine/XML/transcriptions/04_565.xml).

John 11:5—Who Gets Pride of First Place in the List of Those Whom Jesus Loved?

How Many Sisters? Are They Named? Whose Sister(s)?

The text transmission of John 11:5, the verse naming those whom Jesus loved, demonstrates

what can only be called extreme instability. Although P[66]'s initial reading at last includes

Martha, according to the IGNTP P[66*] transcribes it as follows:

ηγαπα δε ο ις την μαρθαν και την αδελφην και τον λαζαρον.[49]

P[66c] corrects with a marginal note:

ηγαπα δε ο ις την μαρθαν και την αδελφην **αυτης** και τον λαζαρον.[50]
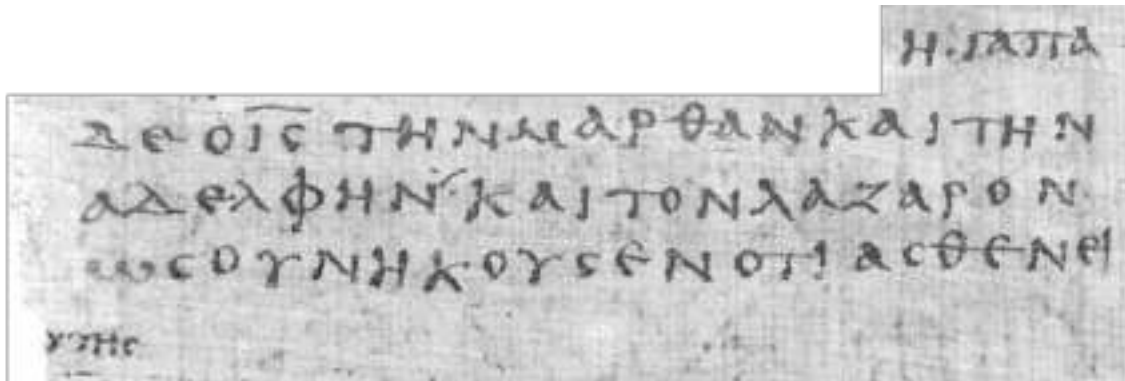
[51]

Out of context, P[66*]'s initial lack of identification of Mary as Martha's sister appears to be

simply a dropped pronoun, an omission, or an alternate exemplar reading.[52] These are

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[49] "Now Jesus loved Martha and the sister and Lazarus."

[50] "Now Jesus loved Martha and **her** sister and Lazarus."

[51] Reproduced with permission.

established tendencies of the scribe of P[66]. Yet the omission of the word αυτης in 11:3 could also reflect hesitation by the scribe in identifying exactly whose sister Mary is. This pronoun matters a great deal, since if Martha was not present in the initial circulating version of the Fourth Gospel, the words "her sister" would not be found anywhere in the story.

Furthermore, although the absence of this pronoun is not reflected in any other witness, there is a tremendous amount of instability in both the Greek and Latin witnesses on the order of the names of those whom Jesus loved. Rochais notes how strange it is to see Lazarus named last: "The mention of Lazarus in last place is surprising! The most likely solution is that this verse has been added by the author to show that the story's leading role is held not by Lazarus, but by Martha."[53] There is also some instability on the number of people whom Jesus loved in this verse, and who exactly is named. These instabilities are also reflected in some patristic quotations. Here are the ten different readings listing the Bethany siblings Jesus loved:

[a]	μαρθαν και την αδελφην και τον λαζαρον	P[66*]
	["Martha and the sister and Lazarus"]	
[b]	μαρθαν και την αδελφην αυτης και τον λαζαρον	P[66c] Chrys[rell] rell.
	martham et sororem eius et lazarum	*d r*[1] *δ*
	["Martha and her sister and Lazarus"]	

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[52] Such as those mentioned by Royse in *Scribal Habits*, 480–81.

[53] "La mention de Lazare en dernière position ne manque pas de surprendre! La solution la plus vraisemblable est que ce verset fut ajouté par l'auteur pour montrer que le rôle principal dans le récit est tenu, non par Lazare, mais par Marthe" (Rochais, *Les récits*, 118).

[c] μαρθαν και την μαριαν την αδελφην αυτης και τον λαζαρον P^6

martham et mariam sororem eius et latzarum   *gat*

["Martha and Mary her sister and Lazarus"]

[d] μαρθαν και την αδελφην αυτης μαριαν και τον λαζαρον 196

martham et sororem eius mariam et lazarum   *b f g*^{1} *g*^{2} *l* VL 9A

11A 33 35 47

["Martha and her sister Mary and Lazarus"]

[e] martham sororem eius et mariam et lazarum   48

["Martha his sister and Mary and Lazarus"]

[f] μαριαν και την αδελφην αυτης μαρθαν και τον λαζαρον 565 1210 1346

994 L253

μαριαμ και την αδελφην αυτης μαρθαν και τον λαζαρον Θ Λ *f*^{1} *f*^{13} Qau

μαριαμ και την αδελφην εαυτης μαρθαν και τον λαζαρον 0233

["Mary and her sister Martha and Lazarus"]

[g] λαζαρον και τας αδελφας αυτου   Chrys^s

lazarum et sorores eius   *a e aur*

["Lazarus and his sisters"]

[h] lazarum et sororem eius   *c*

["Lazarus and his sister"]

[i] lazarum et mariam et sororem eius   *ff*^{2*}

["Lazarus and Mary and her sister"]

[j] lazarum et mariam et sororem eius martham *ff*^{2c}

["Lazarus and Mary and her sister Martha"]

<u>Analysis</u>

Ten (12%) of the eighty-six Greek witnesses surveyed, including Caesarean (f^1 f^{13} 565) and Byzantine (Θ Λ) witnesses, name Mary first in the list of people Jesus loved. This is important because an elevated place for Mary in this verse might be an echo of an earlier text form where only she and Lazarus were present. The same reading is found in the fourth-century Lycopolitan Coptic manuscript Codex Qau.[54] Two additional Greek witnesses, including the fourth-century P^6, opt to include Mary's name in the verse. Thus a significant 14% of the Greek witnesses surveyed, including some very weighty manuscripts, actually name Mary in 11:5. Meanwhile a striking thirteen (62%) of the twenty-one Vetus Latina witnesses surveyed, as well as most Vulgate witnesses, include Mary's name in the verse.

Several Vetus Latina witnesses demonstrate a wholly different trend. Five (24%) of the twenty-one Vetus Latina witnesses surveyed name Lazarus first in the list of people Jesus loved. (In fact, 86% of the Vetus Latina witnesses disagree with the received text "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus"!) Witness ff^2's reading is again especially interesting for this study in that it states that Jesus loved "lazarum et mariam et sororem eius"—with Martha's name added in the margin by a later hand.
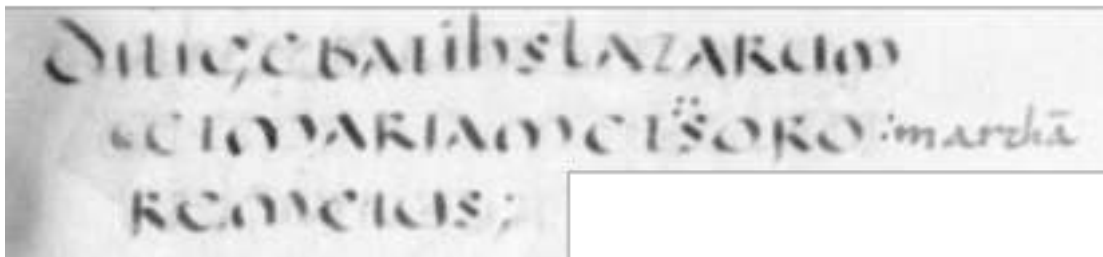

[55]

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[54] Herbert Thompson, *The Gospel of St. John according to the Earliest Coptic Manuscript* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1924) 22.

[55] From the same page of ff^2. See n. 42. Reproduced with permission.

This is the same manuscript that omitted 11:3 entirely in its initial reading and also added a sister by way of correction in 11:4; thus, like P[66], the fifth-century *ff*[2] contains another sustained cluster of verses where Martha's presentation is unstable.

The remaining Vetus Latina variants of 11:5 deserve special attention because they do not include names of women. Witnesses *a*, *e*, and *aur* state that Jesus loved "lazarum et sorores eius." An eleventh-century manuscript of a Chrysostom homily also lists Lazarus first in Greek when quoting 11:5.
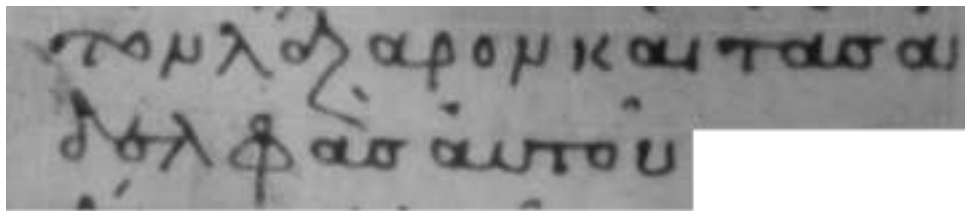
[56]

Vetus Latina witness *c* has similar wording but states there was only one woman whom Jesus loved and stands uncorrected: "Lazarum et sororem eius."
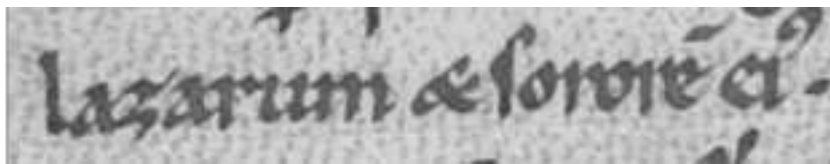
[57]

Perhaps what is most remarkable about the transmission of 11:5 is how much variation appears on which person is named first. As a control, I have studied eighty Greek

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[56] John Chrysostom, *Hom. Jo.* 62, 1. Image from the 11th-cent. Gr. Ms. 320 in St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai, folio 114r. This variant is included as Chrys[s] in the stemma diagram above. Reproduced by permission of Saint Catherine's Monastery, Sinai, Egypt.

[57] The BnF's digitized version of *c*: BnF, "Novum Testamentum," Gallica, http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8426051s/f155.image. Thanks to the BnF for permission to reproduce this image.

and twenty Vetus Latina variants of John 19:25: the first woman listed at the foot of the cross is always Jesus's mother (0% variation). In 144 Greek and thirty-five Latin witnesses surveyed on Luke 9:28, the first man listed at the transfiguration is always Peter (0% variation; there is also 0% variation on the first name in the manuscripts surveyed for Matt 17:1 and Mark 9:2). A rare case of comparable instability can be found in Gal 2:9, where five (7%) of seventy-six Greek and eleven (32%) of twenty-eight Latin witnesses surveyed name Peter first instead of James. One Greek witness (A) drops the name κηφας. It is widely accepted that these names are unstable due to early arguments over Petrine primacy.[58]

Thus with groups of people listed in the New Testament, either women or men, whether in the Greek, the Vetus Latina, or in the Vulgate, it is extraordinary to find any variation on the first name listed; certainly it is odd to find a woman listed before a man in the canon. In the other rare case where variation on the first name occurs, there seems to be a tendency to "move up" the preferred person in the list. Yet unlike Gal 2:9 (where only James or Peter are ever named first), in John 11:5 any of the three Bethany inhabitants might be named first, and all are represented in substantial measure in important witnesses of the text transmission.

How can we make sense of this extreme variation on who is to be named first of those Jesus loved? I suggest that the reason for this instability is that several of these manuscripts again reflect conflate readings created by conflicted scribes, and that the order and naming of the Bethany siblings mattered to them very much indeed. If so, one extant variant could explain the origin of all the other variants: reading **[h]**. Vetus Latina witness *c* states that

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[58] See Gilles Quispel, "Marcion and the Text of the New Testament," *VC* 52 (1998) 349–60, at 352.

Jesus loved "Lazarum et sororem eius." St. Ambrose seemed to know this reading in his *Apologia prophetae David*: "In short, Jesus loved Lazarus and Mary: Christ loved his church."[59] No extant Greek witness demonstrates this wording, a fact that calls to mind Aland and Aland's basic rules that "the primary authority for a critical textual decision lies with the Greek manuscript tradition" and "the principle that the original reading may be found in any single manuscript or version when it stands alone or nearly alone is only a theoretical possibility."[60] Yet Martha's absence is indeed clearly reflected in the Greek manuscript tradition in crucial witnesses of John 11:1 and 11:3 (P[66*], A[*], and 157), and if the story continued without Martha, is reading **[h]** not exactly what we would expect to see? Its ordering of the siblings (first Lazarus, then Mary) matches the order in John 11:1, suggesting that reading **[h]** was indeed composed by the same author who wrote 11:1. Furthermore, reading **[h]** adheres to many other common text-critical maxims, including the following: a) it is the shortest reading; b) it is the most difficult reading (why would a scribe choose to omit the figure of Martha after already mentioning her in John 11:1 and 11:3?); c) it is the reading that explains the origin of all the others; and d) it accords with the tendency of New Testament Greek writers to list men before women. If not for the readings in P[66*], A[*], 157, VL 9A, and *ff*[2*], reading **[h]** would be negligible; but with the greater context in mind,

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[59] "Denique amabat Jesus Lazarum et Mariam: amabat Christos Ecclesiam suam." St. Ambrose, *Apol. Dav.* 8.41. See *S. Ambrosius* (ed. Jacques-Paul Migne; PL 14; Paris: Garnier Fratres, 1882) 946.

[60] Kurt 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* (trans. Erroll F. Rhodes; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) 275–76.

reading **[h]** must be taken very seriously. If Martha was not actually present in the initial circulating version of the Gospel, it is curious indeed that she has now been placed at the top of the list of those whom Jesus loved.

Thus I suggest that the combination of readings **[h]** + **[b]** naturally leads to conflate readings **[a]**, **[g]**, **[i]**, and **[j]**.[61] Furthermore, if scribes were aware of a text form of this story without Martha, they might have wished to rectify the prominence given to Mary in the list of Jesus's beloveds; **[h]** + **[b]** could explain why Mary is given more prominence in **[f]**. A scribe influenced by reading **[b]**, encountering reading **[f]**, would likely produce reading **[c]** or the widely attested **[d]**. In other words, **[h]** + **[b]** = **[a]**, **[c]**, **[d]**, **[f]**, **[g]**, and **[j]**.[62]

[h] lazarum et sororem eius (*c*) + **[b]** μαρθαν και την αδελφην αυτης και τον λαζαρον (P⁶⁶ᶜ etc.)

martham et sororem eius et lazarum (*d r¹ δ*)

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[a]   μαρθαν και την αδελφην και τον λαζαρον (P⁶⁶*)   \

[g]   λαζαρον και τας αδελφας αυτου   (Chrysˢ)   \

lazarum et sorores eius   (*a e aur*)   \

[i]   **lazarum et mariam et sororem eius**   (*ff²**)   \

[j]   **lazarum et mariam et sororem eius martham** (*ff²ᶜ*)   \

[f]   μαριαν και την αδελφην αυτης μαρθαν και τον λαζαρον (565 Θ Λ *f¹ f¹³* etc.)

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[61] The correction of *ff²ᶜ* **[j]** is from a later hand and reflects familiarity with **[b]**.

[62] Reading **[e]** is likely an error, since it suggests that Martha is Jesus's sister.

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+ further influence from reading **[b]**

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[c]   μαρθαν και την μαριαν την αδελφην αυτης και τον λαζαρον (P[6])

martham et mariam sororem eius et latzarum (*gat*)

[d]   μαρθαν και την αδελφην αυτης μαριαν και τον λαζαρον (196)

martham et sororem eius mariam et lazarum (*b f g[1] g[2] l* etc.)

If we are to continue exploring the possibility that Martha was not present in a predecessor text form of John 11–12, let us note that reading **[h]** may retain a Latin translation of that predecessor wording, which in Greek would have been **ηγαπα δε ο ιησους τον λαζαρον και την αδελφην αυτου** ("Now Jesus loved Lazarus and his sister").[63]

Thus, I believe we can make a tentative reconstruction of John 11:1–5 without Martha present, using only P[66*], A[*], and *c*:

[1] ην δε τις ασθενων λαζαρος απο βηθανιας, εκ της κωμης μαριας της αδελφης αυτου.

[2] ην δε μαριαμ η αλειψασα τον κυριον μυρω και εκμαξασα τους ποδας αυτου ταις θριξιν αυτης, ης ο αδελφος λαζαρος ησθενει.

[3] απεστειλεν ουν μαρια προς αυτον λεγουσα, κυριε ιδε ον φιλεις ασθενει.

[4] ακουσας δε ο ιησους ειπεν αυτη, η ασθενεια ουκ εστιν προς θανατον αλλ᾽ υπερ της δοξης του θεου ινα δοξασθη ο υιος δι αυτης.

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[63] Or possibly εφιλει δε ο ιησους τον λαζαρον και την αδελφην αυτου. Codex Bezae transcribes εφιλει (another verb for "loved" from a different Greek root).

⁵ ηγαπα δε ο ιησους τον λαζαρον και την αδελφην αυτου.

¹ There was a certain sick man, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary his sister.

² Now this was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

³ Therefore Mary sent to him, saying, "Lord, behold, the one you love is sick."

⁴ But when Jesus heard he said to her, "The sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son may be glorified through it."

⁵ Now Jesus loved Lazarus and his sister.

John 11:19–45—Further Notable Inconsistencies Throughout the Martha Episode

After Martha is included in P^{66*} in 11:5, all goes mostly as expected in the readings around this figure. Nevertheless, some instability is still reflected throughout the wider manuscript transmission around Martha in these verses; for the sake of brevity only those that are most outstanding will be addressed.

a) John 11:21–32—Martha's Dialogue with Jesus is Bounded with Duplicate Quotes by Martha and Mary

As Bultmann, Brown, Smith, and others note, Martha and Mary give Jesus an identical greeting in John 11:21 and 11:32 (κυριε, ει ης ωδε ουκ αν απεθανεν ο αδελφος μου, "Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died"). These critics all consider the possibility that Martha and Mary's duplicate quote indicates something has been changed here.

Although critics like Bultmann and Fortna have suggested that Martha's dialogue with Jesus was added by the evangelist, the christological confession in 11:27 is so important to the theology of the Fourth Gospel that it would be hasty to suggest that it was not present in a circulating text form.[64] Ernst notes that because 11:27 contains a parallel with the author's conclusion to the Gospel in 20:31, "There is wide agreement among the source critics that Martha appears as the carrier of the evangelist's own theology. . . . This has significant implications. Why is *Martha* the carrier of the evangelist's theology?"[65] Ernst's question becomes very serious indeed if we consider that this woman may not have been present in the evangelist's original Gospel.

b) John 11:27—Tertullian Believed Mary Spoke the Christological Confession

In fact, the consensus of the manuscripts of Tertullian's *Adversus Praxean* (written ca. 208 CE) states that the woman who uttered the christological confession in 11:27 was Mary. Due to this manuscript consensus, commentator Ernest Evans argues that Tertullian himself attributed this quote to Mary.[66] I am unaware of any biblical or lectionary witness transcribing Mary's name here, but a substantial eight (36%) of twenty-two Vetus Latina witnesses surveyed include Martha's name (she is usually unnamed). The significant variation in the Old Latin, and the witness of Tertullian, thus may reflect traces of a text form

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[64] See Bultmann, *Das Evangelium*, 309 and Fortna, *Fourth Gospel*, 106.

[65] Ernst, *Martha from the Margins*, 46 [italics in original].

[66] Tertullian, *Treatise against Praxeas* (ed. and trans. Ernest Evans; London: SPCK, 1948) 84, 117n. Only a 16th-cent. printed edition names Martha. Evans attributes it to a slip of Tertullian's memory (see ibid., 304).

where a woman's name was included in this verse. However, conflicted scribes aware of a version identifying Mary might have preferred to omit the name here.

c) John 11:24 and 11:30—Multiple Omissions of Martha in Witnesses VL 9A and *c*

Martha's name has actually been omitted in Vetus Latina witness 9A's initial text of John 11:24, a manuscript that (as already mentioned) also omits her name completely in John 11:1. Furthermore, witness *c*, the manuscript containing reading **[h]** in 11:5 ("Jesus loved Lazarus and his sister"), corrects the name "maria" to "martha" on the same page in 11:30:
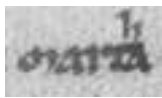
. The consistent width of the vertical bar of the *t* makes it clear that the reading was not originally "marta," since this scribe writes the word "Maria" with a thick vertical bar for the *i*'s and a narrow-to-thick bar for the *t*'s:
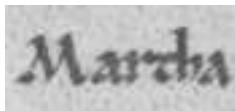
.[67] Including P[66] and *ff*[2], there thus are at least four important witnesses where Martha's presence is uncertain in multiple verses.

d) John 11:39—Who Was the "Sister of the Dead Man"?

Greek Majuscule Θ and seven of the twenty-two Vetus Latina witnesses surveyed in this verse refrain from naming Martha as the "sister of the dead man." As in John 11:27, the omission of the name could reflect a hesitation to name the woman at some point in the

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[67] All images from the same page of BnF's digitized version of *c*. See n. 57. Reproduced with permission.

transmission. Notably, one uncorrected Persian witness from the fourteenth century identifies this woman as Mary.[68]

But more striking is the description of John 11:39 in Chrysostom's *Homilia in Ioannem* 62. Bernard de Montfaucon informs us that in the most reliable manuscripts of this homily, Chrysostom identifies Mary as the "sister of the dead man." In this homily, the woman who mentions the stench is the same woman who sat at Jesus's feet in Luke 10. Here is the text of Chrysostom's homily that de Montfaucon favors: "Do you see how zealous was the affection? It is she concerning whom he says, 'Now Mary has chosen the good part.' How then does she appear more zealous, one might ask? She is not more zealous; it was because she had not yet learned about it, since she was the weaker. For having heard such things, she speaks again, 'By this time he stinks.' "[69] De Montfaucon also notes a minority manuscript variant, beginning with the words "How then": "How then, says one, does Martha appear more zealous? She was not more zealous, but it was because the other had not yet

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[68] Solomon Caesar Malan, *The Gospel according to S. John: The Eleven Oldest Versions except the Latin* (London: Joseph Masters, 1862) xi, 167.

[69] Ὁρας πως ζεον το φιλτρον ην; Αυτη εστι περι ης ελεγε, Μαρια δε την αγαθην μεριδα εξελεξατο. Πως ουν αυτη θερμοτερα εφαινετο, φησιν; Ου θερμοτερα αυτη, ου γαρ ηκουσεν εκεινη, επει αυτη ασθενεστερα ην. Ἡ γαρ ακουσασα τοσαυτα, αυτη φησι παλιν, Ἡδη οζει . . . (Bernard de Montfaucon, *Sancti Patris Nostri Johannis Chrysostomus, Archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani, Opera Omnia Quae Exstant* [11 vols.; Paris: Gaume Fratres, 1836] 8:425) Thanks to Deirdre Good for her help with the translation.

been informed, since Martha was the weaker. For even when she had heard such things, she yet speaks in a groveling manner, 'By this time he stinks.' "[70]

This minority variant is inevitably how this text is presented in translated editions of the Chrysostom homily yet the majority and the best manuscripts clearly present a text where Mary is the sister named in John 11:39.

Cyril of Jerusalem seems to have had a similar fourth-century text form of this story as Chrysostom. Although Cyril refrains from providing the women's names in his *Catecheses ad Illuminatos* 5, he clearly identifies the woman who falls at Jesus's feet in John 11:32 (usually Mary) as the woman who mentions the stench in John 11:39 (usually Martha): "For when the Lord had come, the sister fell down before him, and when he said, 'Where have you laid him?'. . . 'Lord, by this time he stinks.' "[71] Thus, Cyril of Jerusalem and

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[70] πως ουν φησι, Θερμοτερα νυν η Μαρθα φαινεται; ου θερμοτερα, αλλ' επειδη ουπω μαθουσα ην εκεινη, επει αυτη και ασθενεστερα ην. Και γαρ ακουσασα τοσαυτα, ετι ταπεινα φθεγγεται, 'Ηδη οζει . . . (Ibid.) Translation from John Chrysostom, "Homily 62 on the Gospel of John" (trans. Charles Marriott in *NPNF*[1] [ed. Philip Schaff; vol. 14; Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing, 1889]; rev. and ed. Kevin Knight), *New Advent*, 2009, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/240162.htm.

[71] Ελθοντι γαρ τω Κυριω προσεπεσεν η αδελφη, και λεγοντι, Που τεθεικατε αυτον; . . . Κυριε, ηδη οζει (Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catecheses ad Illuminatos* 5.9; see Roderic L. Mullen, *The New Testament Text of Cyril of Jerusalem* [Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997] 160). Translation from Cyril of Jerusalem, "Catechetical Lectures" (trans. Edwin Hamilton Gifford in *NPNF*[2] [ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace; vol. 7; Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature

Chrysostom both appear to have had texts where Mary was the woman speaking at the tomb with Jesus.

John 12:2—Was It Mary, or Martha, or Both Who Made the Supper?

Returning to P66, we see that the figure of Martha reveals one final uncertainty in our earliest witness. In John 12:2, P66 transcribes εποιησεν αυτω δειπνον εκει και μαρθα διηκονει ("there she made a dinner for him and Martha served") and stands uncorrected. Although Martha is given her usual task of serving, an unexpected singular verb εποιησεν appears, which is not a common tendency of P66's scribe.[72] Like P66, Minuscule 579 also transcribes the singular εποιεισεν in 12:2—notable because, as mentioned above, 579 also retains a singular απεστηλεν in 11:3. Both singular verbs in 579 stand uncorrected. Meanwhile, at least three Byzantine Greek minuscules (27, 63, and 1194) state that Mary served the dinner, and one manuscript of Origen's *Commentarii in evangelium Joannis* also states that Mary served in 12:2.[73]

Analysis

Publishing, 1894]; rev. and ed. Kevin Knight), *New Advent*, 2009,

http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/310105.htm.

[72] Royse suggests that it may be due to "a simple sound change" (*Scribal Habits*, 526).

[73] Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.15. See *Origenis 4* (ed. Jacques-Paul Migne; PG 14; Paris: Imprimerie catholique, 1862) 345 n. 43. The more modern SC volume omits this variant. See Cécile Blanc, *Origène. Commentaire sur Sainte Jean* (5 vols.; SC 120, 157, 222, 290, 385; Paris: Cerf, 1966–1992) 2:462.

The variants naming Mary in John 12:2 are surprising, especially since the figure of Martha

is so closely associated with the verb διηκονει ("serving" or "ministering"); however, serving

would have been a common task for all female hostesses in antiquity, so it is not

inconceivable that Mary could have served the supper before anointing Jesus. Thus five (6%)

of eighty-three Greek witnesses surveyed for the verse, including our oldest witness, reflect

further uncertainty around the Bethany sisters in John 12. The nineteen Vetus Latina

witnesses surveyed for this verse demonstrate 0% variation in the name and number of

people who serve the supper. Nevertheless, the Mary variants in this verse confirm possible

traces of Martha's absence in witnesses throughout the Fourth Gospel's text transmission,

from her entrance in John 11:1 to her exit in John 12:2.

Summative Analysis: The Figure of Martha of Bethany Shows Significant Instability in

the Greek and Vetus Latina Text Transmission of the Fourth Gospel

After comparing P[66]'s discrepancies to the greater Greek and Vetus Latina manuscript

transmission, and taking into account established rules of text-critical analysis, I hope to have

demonstrated significant instability around the figure of Martha of Bethany throughout the

Fourth Gospel. While I am not aware of any witness where Martha is completely absent,

there are so many Greek and Latin witnesses with possible traces of her absence that I

believe it is worthwhile to question the consensus view that Martha was always present in the

circulating Fourth Gospel. Here are the criteria I consider to be possible traces of Martha's

absence:

- the unexpected omission of Martha's name

- the initially transcribed name "Mary" altered to "Martha"

- the name "Mary" appearing instead of an expected "Martha"

- an unexpected singular noun, verb, or pronoun to describe the Bethany sisters

- a different person named as the first of those Jesus loved in John 11:5

According to these criteria, of the ninety-two Greek witnesses surveyed for John 11:1–12:2, seventeen (18%) contain traces of Martha's absence. These traces are present in some of our weightiest Greek witnesses (P66, A, Θ, 157, and 579), throughout several textual families, and in additional Greek patristic quotations from Origen, Chrysostom, and Cyril of Jerusalem. Of the twenty-three Vetus Latina witnesses surveyed, seven **(30%)** contain traces of Martha's absence. Martha is also absent from Latin patristic quotations from Tertullian and Ambrose. The Vulgate witnesses eliminate these traces.

Thus, I conclude that the entire Greek and Vetus Latina text transmission reflects significant instability around the figure of Martha in the Fourth Gospel. Of all the Greek witnesses, our most ancient witness, P66, most clearly suggests Martha's absence, because it contains a cluster of verses (John 11:1–5) where both her presence and presentation are uncertain. In the Vetus Latina witnesses, *c* (John 11:5 and 11:30), *ff*² (John 11:3–5), and VL 9A (John 11:1 and 11:24) also contain multiple verses where Martha's presence is uncertain. Throughout the transmission, traces of only one sister are most persistent in John 11:3, appearing all the way until the first printed edition of the King James Bible. The verse with the most unstable content is John 11:5.

Graphic Similarity between Mary and Martha

With so much variation around the figures of Mary and Martha in the manuscript transmission of the Fourth Gospel, it is logical to wonder whether this is simply an issue of

scribal blunder due to the graphic similarity of the two names. Fortunately for this study, the exact same two names appear in the manuscript transmission of Luke 10:38–42. Yet of 134 Greek and thirty-six Latin witnesses surveyed in these verses, 0% contain an unexpected "Maria" transcribed instead of "Martha," or vice versa, either corrected or uncorrected.[74]

Furthermore, the opposite trend must be examined in John—that is to say, whether Martha's name is ever changed to "Mary," whether Martha appears unexpectedly instead of Mary, or whether Mary's name is ever unexpectedly omitted. I am aware of four instances of the opposite trend: in John 11:19, one Greek witness surveyed omits Mary's name (Minuscule 28). In John 11:45, one Greek witness (Minuscule 213) and one Vetus Latina manuscript (μ) transcribe Martha's name instead of Mary's. Curiously, Hippolytus of Rome attributes the Johannine anointing scene to Martha in his *In Canticum Canticorum*.[75] These are the only occurrences in the Fourth Gospel of which I am aware where the trend goes in the opposite direction; indeed, the last three examples could be seen as further evidence of instability around Martha in the Fourth Gospel. Notably, it is often the same scribes who had no trouble discerning the two names in Luke who produced these variants in John. Thus I believe that the significant uncertainty around the Bethany sisters' names in the Fourth Gospel is not so much an issue of their graphic similarity, but a phenomenon unique to the text transmission of the Fourth Gospel.

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[74] I am aware of one Lukan Coptic witness in which the scribe initially transcribed "Maria" in 10:40 and was corrected to "Martha"; *The New Testament in Greek: The Gospel according to St. Luke* (ed. IGNTP; Oxford: Clarendon, 1983) 241.

[75] Hippolytus, *In Cant.* 2.29–30. For more on Hippolytus's treatment of Martha and Mary in his commentary, see below.

Implications for the Absence of Martha in the Fourth Gospel

Papyrus 66 is indeed an important and curious witness that may hold undiscovered clues to a more ancient text form of the Fourth Gospel. My observation is that P^{66}'s instability around the figure of Martha is substantial and reflected throughout the Gospel's entire manuscript transmission. My intention with this text-critical contribution is to open up further discussion and scholarly study on what Martha means to the Fourth Gospel. Clearly, the next question is: Why would early Christian scribes have chosen to add the figure of Martha to the Lazarus story? A few hypotheses are worth considering.

It is clear that an early tradition circulated where Mary, the sister of Lazarus in the Fourth Gospel, was identified with Mary, the sister of Martha in the Third Gospel. Although there is no mention of a brother or a resurrection scene in Luke 10, and the Lukan story suggests a more likely Samaritan or Galilean context, the pair "Mary and Martha" seems to have been accepted into the Fourth Gospel regardless of these contextual inconsistencies. Perhaps the Mary of Luke 10 was somehow confused in second-century oral tradition with the Mary of John 11, and scribes began harmonizing their text of John 11 to Luke 10— possibly even going so far as to expand the actual content of the Lazarus story to include Martha. Boismard and Lamouille, the only source critics to date to address textual variants around Martha, postulate that Martha was added to this story by Christian scribes due to early quarrels in the church. They actually state that the underlying Johannine story structure has been "broken" ("rompue") by the inclusion of Martha and postulate that Johannine scribes intended a "reversal of values" ("renversement des valeurs") of the Lukan story—that is, they

believe a later generation of Christians wished to elevate Martha's "active" service over Mary's more "contemplative" approach.[76]

However if Martha were not present in the text of John 11, it must be pointed out that there would be no real reason to connect the Lazarus story to Luke 10. In fact, with only Mary present I believe readers would be far more likely to connect John 11 to John 20:11–17, where one woman named Mary also cries and speaks with Jesus at another tomb. Several specific words are emphasized in both chapters: μαριαμ ("Mary," 11:2, 20:16); κλαυση, κλαιουσαν/κλαιουσα ("crying," 11:31, 11:33, 20:11); που τεθεικατε αυτον / που εθηκαν αυτον ("where have you laid him" / "where you have laid him," 11:34, 20:15); μνημειον ("tomb," 11:38, 20:11); λιθος/λιθον ("stone," 11:38, 20:1); σουδαριω/σουδαριον ("handkerchief," 11:44, 20:7); and ο αδελφος μου / τους αδελφους μου ("my brother" / "my brothers," 11:21, 20:17). Deirdre Good notes that "both [Marys] weep over a dead man at a tomb; both are consoled (11:31, 33; 20:11, 15); both accrue followers (11:32, 45; 20:18); both experience resurrection (11:43, 45; 20:16)."[77] Mary of Bethany is also associated with Jesus's burial (12:7), as is Mary Magdalene (20:1). These repeated themes demonstrate an obvious parallelism between the chapters, a parallelism that would certainly be amplified in Martha's absence.

Consequently, this study yields an interesting exegetical result: a Johannine text form without Martha would create a strong textual implication that Mary of Bethany was Mary Magdalene. Mary Ann Beavis and Mark Goodacre have already challenged the relatively

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[76] Boismard and Lamouille, *La vie des Évangiles*, 83, 85, and 87–90.

[77] Deirdre Good, "The Miriamic Secret," in *Mariam, the Magdalen, and the Mother* (ed. eadem; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005) 7.

recent scholarly tendency to make a clear delineation between Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany. Beavis believes that "the boundaries between the two Gospel characters are amenable to blurring, especially in John."[78] A forthcoming paper from Goodacre notes that in John 11 and 12,

> her name is simply 'Mary.' The term "Mary of Bethany" is a scholarly convenience, used to distinguish her from other women of the same name. . . . Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany are never seen in the same room at the same time and they share similar traits like weeping at a tomb before a resurrection (John 11, John 20). Although Mary "of Magdala" has become a scholarly commonplace, it is worth remembering that she is never described this way in the Synoptics or John, where she is always "Mary Magdalene" or just "Mary."[79]

Beavis and Goodacre argue for the two Johannine Marys' possibly being one woman even with Martha present in the text; yet without Martha, such arguments would certainly be more formidable.

Obviously Mary cannot be from both the Galilean Magdala and the Judean Bethany. And if it were so clear that the word "Magdalene" meant "from Magdala," then why did so many generations of early Christians (both gnostic and orthodox) believe Mary Magdalene to

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[78] Mary Ann Beavis, "Reconsidering Mary of Bethany," *CBQ* 74 (2012) 281–97, at 282.

[79] Mark Goodacre, "The Magdalene Effect: Misreading the Composite Mary in Early Christian Works" (unpublished essay), 12–13, 16. Thanks to Dr. Goodacre for sending this paper to me.

be from Bethany, centuries before Gregory the Great's famous sermon of 591 CE?[80] If Mary

of Bethany was indeed the same Johannine figure as Mary Magdalene, the word

"Magdalene" would need to have been a nickname, or an honorific applied to Mary. Beavis

emphasizes that

> it is also debatable whether the title μαγδαληνη would have been taken as a gentilic
>
> ("Mary of Magdala"), since as the popular Mary Magdalene scholar Margaret
>
> Starbird has noted, *there is no reference to such a town in sources contemporary with*
>
> *Jesus.* . . . Luke's observation that Mary was "the one called Magdalene" (8:2)
>
> suggests that μαγδαληνη was a nickname or title from the Aramaic *magdala* ("Mary
>
> the Tower" or "Mary the Great"). . . . It is conceivable that, irrespective of authorial
>
> intent, the reader/audience [of John] would have associated the Mary at the cross with
>
> the Mary earlier associated with his death (12:7).[81]

As another tentative solution for how a Judean woman could have had the name Magdalene,

I would like to suggest that the Aramaic מִגְדָּל (*migdāl*, "tower") may have been combined

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[80] Gregory the Great, *Homilia* 33. Some earlier works identifying Mary Magdalene with

Mary of Bethany include the 3rd- or 4th -cent. Manichaean Psalm 192, the 3rd- or 4th-cent.

Pistis Sophia (see 1.36–38, 1.72–73), and the 4th-cent. second Greek version of the Gospel of

Nicodemus. See Beavis, "Reconsidering Mary of Bethany," 290–92 for a helpful survey and

a table of the evidence. The case can also be made that Hippolytus's 3rd-cent. *In Canticum*

canticorum (25.2–3, discussed in more detail below) and the 4th-cent. Acts of Philip (8.94)

identify Mary Magdalene with Mary of Bethany.

[81] Beavis, "Reconsidering Mary of Bethany," 286–87 [italics added].

with the Greek woman's name Ελένη ("Helen"), and thus *migdāl +Helenē* might be another potential etymology.[82]

Interestingly, there are several ancient witnesses where Martha unexpectedly appears beside Mary Magdalene, or instead of Mary Magdalene, in scenes from the Fourth Gospel.[83] Hippolytus's *In Canticum canticorum* provides perhaps the clearest examples of this phenomenon. His replacement of Mary with Martha in John 12's anointing scene has already been noted above. Furthermore, in Hippolytus's description of Easter morning, he states, "The Savior answered and said: 'Martha, Mary.' And they said 'Rabbouni!' . . . Martha and Mary said this to him. [The bride] showed Martha's secret beforehand through Solomon."[84]

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[82] Thanks to Hal Taussig for confirming that this construction is etymologically plausible in our conversation of 8 October 2014. Jesus often gave Greek nicknames to his closest disciples, such as Simon "Peter," Thomas "Didymus," and James and John "Boanerges." The nickname Boanerges (like Bartimaeus) is also a combined Aramaic/Greek name.

[83] Ernst makes a convincing case for a widespread tradition in early Eastern Christianity of Martha as a myrrophore and apostle of the resurrection, citing many sermons, pieces of liturgical and archaeological evidence, and hymns (see *Martha from the Margins*, 73–175). Most of the liturgical evidence seems to place Martha in the Matthean resurrection scene, not the Johannine scene, so I do not treat it in great detail here. Ernst's work on Martha is invaluable, but considering the changes made to P[66] and throughout the Fourth Gospel's manuscript transmission, I am more likely to agree with Bovon (see below).

[84] Hippolytus, *In Cant.* 25.2–3. This translation is found in Esther de Boer, *The Mary Magdalene Cover-Up: The Sources Behind the Myth* (trans. John Bowden; London: T&T Clark, 2007) 100. Ernst notes that Hippolytus combines elements of both Matthew's and

Hippolytus's pairing of Martha with Mary Magdalene here diffuses the Johannine Mary's most poignant moment; one might wonder why Mary of Bethany and Mary Magdalene were receiving a similar sort of treatment by one of Christianity's most prominent early church fathers. Perhaps Hippolytus's commentary provides the answer to Raymond Brown's question about John 11: "If Mary had the original role, why would an editor feel impelled to give a longer role to the less important Martha?" Could it be that early orthodox Christians specifically wished to deflect attention away from the woman who spoke with Jesus at Lazarus's tomb, and from her similarities with the Mary of John 20? By the simple addition of Martha, the reader of the Lazarus story is instead subtly urged to identify Mary of Bethany with the woman who sat at Jesus's feet in Luke 10.[85]

Of course the Easter morning scene is notorious for the fluctuating women who may or may not appear beside Mary Magdalene. In John 20:1, Mary Magdalene is described as going alone to the tomb, although in John 20:2 she uses the plural οιδαμεν when describing the scene to Simon Peter and the other disciple Jesus loved. Yet this plural use depends on the manuscript; in three Greek witnesses (579, 1243, and S), three Latin witnesses (*e r*[1] T), Tatian's *Diatessaron*, and quotations from Augustine, Mary uses the singular verb here, duplicating her words from John 20:13 (ουκ οιδα που εθηκαν αυτον, "I do not know where

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John's Easter narratives in the commentary, but Jesus's speaking of names here and the women answering "Rabbouni" is distinctly Johannine. See Ernst, *Martha from the Margins*, 104.

[85] Who, as many have noted, has no connection to the anointing scene of Luke 7:36–50.

they have laid him").[86] In Matthew 28:1 Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" appear, and in the second-century Gospel of Peter, Mary Magdalene goes to the tomb with unnamed "women friends."[87] In Mark 16:1, the women who visit the tomb are usually "Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome," but again these women vary depending on the manuscript. In Codex Bezae and Vetus Latina *n*, only Mary of James accompanies Mary Magdalene; in Vetus Latina *k* Mary of Joses accompanies her, and in Vetus Latina *c* we find "Mary of James and Joseph." Strikingly, in all of these Markan witnesses Salome is not present at the tomb.

In the second-century *Epistula Apostolorum*, Martha is present on Easter morning—but yet again, the women presented here fluctuate depending upon which manuscript we are examining. A fourth- or fifth-century Coptic manuscript of the *Epistula* states that "Mary, Martha, and Mary Magdalene" went to anoint Jesus's body, but the later Ethiopic manuscripts of the same story state that it was "Sarah, Martha, and Mary Magdalene" who came.[88] Furthermore there is specific uncertainty around Martha's and Mary's roles in the *Epistula*. In the Coptic manuscript, it is Martha who is given the distinctively Johannine commission to be the first to announce to her "brethren" that Jesus has risen from the dead.

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[86] See Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John XII–XXI* (AB 29A; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970) 984; Tatian, *Diatessaron* 53.9–10; Augustine, *Nupt.* 1.34; Augustine, *Serm.* 229L.

[87] Gospel of Peter 50–57.

[88] *Epistula Apostolorum* 9. Ernst provides a helpful survey of the scholarship around the changing names here. See Ernst, *Martha from the Margins*, 81–84.

Yet in the Ethiopic manuscripts, it is Mary Magdalene who is sent first.[89] François Bovon has suggested that Martha was included in the *Epistula Apostolorum* specifically to undermine the authority of Mary Magdalene: "The polemic here would be even more dramatic: contrary to the gnostics who honored Mary Magdalene, the *Epistula Apostolorum*, using all means available, has called Martha to the rescue."[90] Regardless of authorial intentions, the *Epistula Apostolorum* clearly provides a further ancient example of women fluctuating around Mary Magdalene, and Martha and Mary Magdalene changing places, depending on which manuscript of the text is being read.

In conclusion, I suggest that Papyrus 66 may reflect the final stages of a text form of the Fourth Gospel where the figure of Martha was being secondarily added to the resurrection story of Lazarus. I believe there is a strong possibility that this change was made in order to hamper the text's subtle identification of Mary of Bethany with Mary Magdalene, and perhaps in particular to ensure that John 11:27's crucial christological confession would not be on her lips. David C. Parker has noted that, "based on a period of transmission extending . . . at least a century, [an early witness like P^{66}] will already show signs of what its

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[89] *Epistula Apostolorum* 10.

[90] "La polémique serait d'autant plus nette: contre les gnostiques qui valorisent Marie-Madeleine, l'*Epistula apostolorum*, faisant flèche de tout bois, appellerait Marthe à la rescousse" (François Bovon, "Le privilège pascal de Marie-Madeleine," *NTS* 30 [1984] 50–62, at 53). For a dissenting opinion, see Ernst, *Martha from the Margins*, 82–83.

readers rather than its author thought it should contain."[91] I believe the changes around Martha in P[66] cannot simply be dismissed as scribal mechanical errors, because there are so many strange variants around Martha throughout the text transmission of the Fourth Gospel, as well as in patristic quotations and ancient extracanonical texts. I believe we can still see a literary prehistory reflected in P[66], giving us a window into a predecessor circulating text form with only Mary and Lazarus present, now overlaid with secondary interpolations of the figure of Martha. It seems likely that there was an early harmonization of the Johannine Lazarus story to the Lukan story of Mary and Martha. The larger questions are: Who exactly added Martha to this story, and why? Is it possible that one very important figure in the Fourth Gospel has been deliberately split into three? My hope is that this paper will be a substantial contribution to and invitation for future dialogue on how Martha's presence affects our interpretation of the Lazarus story, especially our perception of Mary of Bethany.

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[91] David C. Parker, "Editing the Gospel of John," in *The Textual History of the Greek New Testament: Changing Views in Contemporary Research* (ed. Klaus Wachtel and Michael W. Holmes; Leiden: Brill, 2012) 20.