

**The Text-Critical Function of the Umlauts in Vaticanus, with
Special Attention to 1 Corinthians 14.34-35:
A Response to J. Edward Miller**

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J. Edward Miller's recent article in this journal¹ provides compelling new evidence for the text-critical function of Umlauts² in Codex Vaticanus and argues, as I have, that most of them probably go back to the original writing of Codex Vaticanus. This new evidence is to be welcomed, and should stimulate further reflection on the important insights to be gained from study of the sigla in Vaticanus and other New Testament MSS. Along with these positive contributions, however, Miller's article makes several misrepresentations of my work. He begins on p. 217 by stating, 'I am indebted to...Philip B. Payne for [his]...feedback on this paper'. I did give Miller feedback in 2000 on his dissertation, where much of the material the article discusses appears, but I did not see his article prior to its publication. Although Miller edited some of his earlier material in light of my response, his article continues to repeat what I regard, and identified back in 2000, as misinterpretations of my positions. Moreover, the interpretation of the data Miller presents is at the very least arguable. In the following short response, by identifying the relevant misinterpretations and questioning some of Miller's arguments, I seek to demonstrate that his attempt to

1. J.E. Miller, 'Some Observations on the Text-Critical Function of the Umlauts in Vaticanus, with Special Attention to 1 Corinthians 14.34-35', *JSNT* 26.2 (2003), pp. 217-36.

2. I recommend that Umlaut be capitalized to identify it as a specific title for umlaut-shaped, text-critical sigla. This convention has been adopted in the publication of Patrick Andrist (ed.), *Le manuscrit B de la Bible (Vaticanus gr. 1209): Introduction au fac-similé, Actes du Colloque de Genève (11 juin 2001), Contributions supplémentaires* (Lausanne: Editions du Zèbre, 2004).

refute my arguments is ill-founded and unsuccessful.

Although I note that there are 49 unambiguous isolated Umlauts in 1 Corinthians, 32 of which contain Nestle-Aland variants, and that this pattern with Umlauts occurs elsewhere in Vaticanus,³ Miller writes:

According to Philip B. Payne, the scribe of Vaticanus designated an uncertain line of text with the conjunction of two extra-textual notations...when the scribe was aware of more than one possible reading in a line...he inserted this 'bar-umlaut' siglum... Payne...offers abundant evidence that the 'bar-umlaut' is a text-critical indicator in Vaticanus. But he only offers some evidence that the isolated umlaut carries the same function... In 'The Originality', Payne has apparently grown more confident in the text-critical function of the isolated umlaut, classifying it as a text-critical marker.⁴

My view affirming the text-critical purpose of isolated Umlauts has not changed. Not only does my first article cite many more cases of isolated Umlauts than of Umlauts next to bars, that article also concludes, 'The Vaticanus bar-umlaut and/or umlaut text-critical sigla open a new window ...[on] textual variations...'⁵ I even give evidence that where a bar and Umlaut appear together, it may be only the Umlaut which functions as the identifier of textual variants.⁶ As I have explained in my second article with Paul Canart,⁷ although my initial article identifies evidence that supports a possible distinction between Umlauts and bar-Umlauts, it does not conclude that bar-Umlauts are necessarily distinct symbols from Umlauts. There is probably insufficient data to come to a definitive conclusion on this question. Statistically, given the frequency of Umlauts and of bars in Vaticanus, one should expect a fair number of cases where bars just happen to occur in the interface between two lines immediately following an Umlaut. Thus, one should not expect that all or even most bar + Umlaut

3. P.B. Payne, 'Fuldensis, Sigla for Variants in Vaticanus, and 1 Cor 14.34-5', *NTS* 41 (1995), pp. 258-59.

4. Miller, 'Observations', pp. 217-18 and n. 4.

5. Payne, 'Fuldensis', p. 259.

6. Payne, 'Fuldensis', pp. 255, 259.

7. P.B. Payne and P. Canart, "'Umlauts" Matching the Original Ink of Codex Vaticanus: Do they Mark the Location of Textual Variants?', in Andrist (ed.), *Le manuscrit B*, pp. 191-92 This article gives chi-square statistical evidence that Umlauts mark the location of textual variants on pp. 199-200, explores the implications of mirror-image Umlauts on pp. 200-202, describes the steps in the original production of Codex Vaticanus on p. 203, gives evidence for the originality of reinforced Umlauts on pp. 203-205, gives examples of the importance of Umlauts for textual criticism on pp. 205-10 and assesses the significance of Umlauts on pp. 210-11.

combinations signal a particularly important textual variant. A fair number of the bars following Umlauts are probably just marking some kind of break in the text.

Miller writes, 'Payne appears to have misdiagnosed the obvious and consistent function of the *paragraphus*, which...is to identify section changes'.⁸ Ironically Miller states that the function of the *paragraphus* (=bar) is 'obvious and consistent', yet he introduces a total of four categories to explain how they 'exhibit such broad usage'.⁹ Also, when applied to written materials, 'section' typically refers to divisions at least as large as paragraphs, yet Miller notes on p. 221 that [only] 13 of the 39 bars appearing with Umlauts correspond with NA²⁷ paragraph breaks and [only] 3 with modern-day chapter divisions (the correlations with modern-day verse divisions, which are vastly more numerous than bars, I consider less relevant). In any case, Miller's use of 'section' covers so much more than most people regard as 'sections of a document' that it would be more appropriate to describe the Vaticanus bars simply as signaling breaks in the flow of the text. It would fit the range of uses of the Vaticanus bars for the scribe of Vaticanus to add a bar to specific Umlauts in order to highlight the interface between the text and an immediately following interpolation or other significant textual variant.

Miller's statistics show that only 15.4% of bar + Umlaut lines lack a Nestle-Aland variant, compared to 40.9% percent of all the Umlaut lines in Matthew (four of which have NA²⁷ variants).¹⁰ If the five bar + Umlaut examples from my study that occur in Matthew were excluded from this calculation, the number would increase to 42.2%. Given the size of the samples, there is a remarkably great difference between 15.4% and 40.9% (still more at 42.2%). Miller gives no reason to support his statement that 'it seems the higher incidence of variants in the so-called "bar-umlaut" lines is likely the result of more variants appearing (on average) at the beginning of paragraphs'.¹¹ Nor does he give any reason why these in particular are much more frequently represented in the NA²⁷. My proposal that they may mark variants having greater significance, however, coincides with the NA²⁷ goal of noting significant variants and so accounts for this striking difference in percentages.

8. Miller, 'Observations', p. 223.

9. Miller, 'Observations', p. 222.

10. Miller, 'Observations', p. 226 n. 29.

11. Miller, 'Observations', p. 226 n. 29.

Miller also attempts to refute my analysis of Umlauts before lines whose ends mark the interface with likely interpolations that are extended independent blocks of text. When Vaticanus omits such an interpolation, an Umlaut marks the line that ends exactly where the interpolation is inserted in other manuscripts. Likewise, when other manuscripts omit text at the point where Vaticanus includes it, an Umlaut marks the line that ends exactly where other manuscripts cease to follow the Vaticanus text. I have noted a pattern of the presence of interpolations that are both self-contained and that could logically be viewed either as beginning at the end of the line with the Umlaut or at the start of the following line. The ones I have observed occur with a bar dividing these two lines. Whether this bar was intended by its scribe to mark the interface between text and variant or not, it has the effect of underlining the interface between the text of Vaticanus and the interpolation or the variant block of text. There is a bar + Umlaut at the interface between 1 Cor. 14.33 and 34 (the probable interpolation being 1 Cor. 14.34-35), between Jn 7.52 and 8.12 (the exact location of the presumed interpolation of the woman taken in adultery) and between Lk. 14.24 and 25 (where many manuscripts have the presumed interpolation 'For many are called but few are chosen').¹² The Umlaut in this last case matches the apricot color of the original ink of Vaticanus.¹³ In each case the likely interpolation follows immediately after the end of the text on the line by this Umlaut.

Miller attributes to me a significantly different thesis on p. 234, one that I told him I rejected since it omits the crucial specification that the Umlaut be 'next to the line immediately preceding the text in question.'¹⁴ Miller narrowly words his representation of my thesis to apply only to text that is omitted from Vaticanus, thereby excluding the 1 Cor. 14.33 example. Based on this he concludes that I have only one example, and then alleges

12. Miller, 'Observations', p. 234 n. 48 states, 'I agree with Payne ... that the three dot construction at 1 Jn 5.7 was probably intended to be an umlaut'. In fact, I wrote that the three dots had an 'undetermined origin' in P.B. Payne and P. Canart, 'The Originality of Text-Critical Symbols in Codex Vaticanus', *NovT* 42 (2000), pp. 112-13 n. 34. Until we know their origin we cannot determine their probable intent. For my position in detail, see Payne and Canart, 'Umlauts', pp. 207-10.

13. Payne and Canart, 'Umlauts', pp. 194-98 identifies the exact location of this and 50 other original ink Umlauts in Vaticanus.

14. Payne, 'Fuldensis', p. 259; Payne and Canart, 'Originality', p. 112 and n. 34, where I made it clear that Jn 5.7-8 would not be a comparable instance since it did 'not begin the next line'.

eight passages that ‘raise suspicions about this theory’.¹⁵ None of the eight passages or any of the subsequent examples he cites¹⁶ entails a variant that would begin immediately following the end of a line of text in Vaticanus. All of the variants he cites begin in the middle of a Vaticanus line, and so, of course, the Umlaut is by that line, not the preceding line. Consequently, none of the examples he cites provides any evidence against the pattern I have identified of Umlauts preceding lines whose ends mark the interface with an interpolation that is an extended independent block of text.

The Umlaut by the last line of 1 Cor. 14.33 in Vaticanus parallels the ‘hd’¹⁷ mark in the margin of Codex Fuldensis immediately after the end of 1 Cor. 14.33. Just like the Umlaut in Vaticanus, the ‘hd’ mark is associated with the final line of 14.33. Neither is located by the beginning of 14.34. The ‘hd’ in Fuldensis points to the variant reading that is reproduced in the bottom margin, which omits 1 Cor. 14.34-35. The most natural reading of the ‘hd’ mark in Fuldensis and of the Umlaut in Vaticanus by the last line of 14.33 is to identify a different text, presumably known to their scribes, that omitted 1 Cor. 14.34-35. In the case of Fuldensis we can be confident that its editor, Bishop Victor of Capua, had another text that provided the alternate reading in the margin since in every other case where he introduces an alternate reading in the margin with ‘hd’, we today possess manuscripts with that alternate reading. In this case there is particularly strong evidence that he had a text supporting this reading since this is the only case where the ‘hd’ introduces a reading that departs from the standard Vulgate reading. In every other case, Victor’s corrections introduced with ‘hd’ brought the text that his professional scribe had produced for him into greater conformity with what is now regarded as the ‘standard’ Vulgate reading. Since we know that this was his tendency, we must assume that he had manuscript evidence that caused him to change his text in this case to deviate from standard Vulgate readings. It is much more natural to read the corrected Fuldensis text as omitting 14.34-35 than to jump around the text without supporting markers to reproduce the Western transposition of 14.34-35, which puts these verses after 14.40.¹⁸

The Umlaut at the end of 1 Cor. 14.33 must represent the reading of another manuscript since this is the established purpose of the Umlaut. By

15. Miller, ‘Observations’, p. 234. He was aware of the Lk. 14.24 Umlaut as evidenced by his reference to it on p. 218 n. 5.

16. Miller, ‘Observations’, p. 234 and nn. 49-51.

17. Payne, ‘Fuldensis’ contains a photograph of this mark on p. 261.

18. Cf. Payne, ‘Fuldensis’, pp. 243-45.

far the most significant variant at this point is the disputed 14.34-35. This Umlaut most naturally marks the interface with the variant text that would begin following 1 Cor. 14.33, namely 1 Cor. 14.36-40 in all Western text-type texts. However, the Western transposition of vv. 34-35 is probably not being noted since there is no corresponding Umlaut after v. 40, as there should be if the scribe's intention were to indicate a variant reading that inserts 14.34-35 at that point. Consequently, a text like that written in the margin of Fuldensis, which omits vv. 34-35, best explains this Umlaut.

Miller has not given any evidence against the pattern I have identified, so he has laid inadequate basis for his conclusion: 'Since the copyist did not employ the umlauts with 1 Cor. 14.34-35 and the *Pericope* in mind, other variants must have been intended'.¹⁹ The variants he proposes for 1 Cor. 14.34-35 and for Jn 7.52 are so minor that neither is listed in the NA²⁷. He writes, 'Since there remains enough space at the end of the line [of 1 Cor. 14.33] to begin another word, the marginal notation is provided next to this line'.²⁰ It is highly doubtful the scribe of Vaticanus imagined that a delta would have been added on this line. It is customary for the scribe of Vaticanus to begin a word, especially a long word, on the next line if the line he has just written is in the normal range of line lengths in the preceding text. Even without adding a delta to it, the last line in 14.33 is longer than the preceding line. The letter delta is exceptionally wide in Vaticanus. For instance, in 1470 A 18 (1 Cor. 10.28) there are two deltas, both of which are noticeably wider than any other letters on that line. Furthermore, the word ΔΙΔΑΣΚΩ is a long word. Consequently, if this were the variant intended by the Umlaut, according to Miller's own view regarding Umlaut positioning (with which I disagree) the Umlaut should have preceded the following line in Vaticanus.

Miller states regarding 1 Cor. 14.34-35, 'no known manuscripts omit the passage altogether'.²¹ This is factually correct if by 'manuscript' one means documents containing this portion of 1 Cor. 14 and does not mean the different texts contained within the same document. Within textual criticism, however, lists of manuscripts supporting different readings routinely distinguish B* from B^c and sometimes with B^o. Miller's statement fails to give any consideration to the important evidence that points towards the omission of these verses. Two manuscripts in particular include more than one reading of 1 Cor. 14.34-35. In both cases the reading that omits

19. Miller, 'Observations', p. 235.

20. Miller, 'Observations', p. 235.

21. Miller, 'Observations', p. 235 n. 53.

1 Cor. 14.34-35 is the more important of the two readings for that manuscript. Bishop Victor of Capua writes at the end of Codex Fuldensis that he read the manuscript through twice, giving the exact month, day and year in which his editorial revisions were completed. Codex Fuldensis is said to be the first dated manuscript in history. Because of his elevated position in the church and his status as a recognized scholar (e.g. when a copy of the Diatessaron, which had been long suppressed, was discovered, it was brought to Bishop Victor, and he published it in Codex Fuldensis) his text-critical choices are far more important than those of the professional scribe he commissioned to write the manuscript originally. He had that scribe rewrite 1 Cor. 14 with instructions to read vv. 36-40 immediately after v. 33. I have argued that the most natural reading of his text is that he is reproducing a text without 14.34-35.²² Thus, although the words of 1 Cor. 14.34-35 do occur on this vellum, since Bishop Victor of Capua had the text rewritten in the bottom margin without vv. 34-35, this manuscript does present a text that seems to omit the passage altogether. Similarly, ms. 88 was written with 1 Cor. 14.33 immediately followed by v. 36.

The most logical explanation of the features of ms. 88 is that it was copied from a Greek manuscript without 1 Cor 14.34-5. All of the other explanations require an implausible assumption such as inadvertent displacement, intentional displacement later reversed, or derivation from a Western manuscript. The one other possibility, derivation from a non-Western manuscript with vv. 34-5 after v. 40, requires the existence of a reading which no surviving non-Western Greek manuscript [up to the time of ms. 88] supports.²³

Again the words of 14.34-35 are on the vellum, but the vellum preserves evidence for an earlier text that omits vv. 34-35. Thus, Vaticanus, Fuldensis and 88 provide manuscript evidence for a text without 1 Cor. 14.34-35, and this evidence deserves to be taken with full seriousness. Even before this manuscript evidence came to light many textual critics such as G.D. Fee argued that 1 Cor. 14.34-35 is an interpolation²⁴ on the basis of Bengal's first principle, namely the text which best explains the rise of all the other texts is probably the original text.

22. Cf. Payne, 'Fuldensis', pp. 240-50.

23. P.B. Payne, 'Ms. 88 as Evidence for a Text without 1 Cor 14.34-5', *NTS* 44 (1998), p. 156, cf. pp. 152-58.

24. G.D. Fee, *1 Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), pp. 699-710.

Although there is probably not sufficient data to conclude with confidence that the bar + Umlaut combination was intended by its scribe as a symbol of significant textual variants, this thesis is congruent with several factors and explains some otherwise perplexing statistical anomalies. In particular, this thesis explains the significantly higher frequency of NA²⁷ variants for this category of Umlauts than others. Vaticanus has three cases where a bar + Umlaut combination occurs precisely at the interface where a variant reading of an independent block of text begins in some manuscripts. Consequently, there is evidence that some of these bar + Umlaut combinations may mark the locations of interpolations or other significant textual variants. If the Umlaut marking the end of 1 Cor. 14.33 is regarded as functionally independent of the bar, it still makes sense to regard this Umlaut as marking the most important textual variant that we know at this point in the text, namely that many texts skip from the end of 1 Cor. 14.33 to v. 36. This is exactly the location that Bishop Victor of Capua inserted his 'hd' mark into Codex Fuldensis, indicating that the text should from that point (the end of 14.33) read the content of v. 36 and following, apparently omitting 14.34-35. Miller provides no evidence against the pattern I have identified of Umlauts preceding lines whose ends mark the interface with a variant that is an extended independent block of text. Thus, while his article valuably highlights the text-critical importance of the Umlauts in Vaticanus, it fails to undermine my arguments concerning a plausible function of the bar-Umlaut and specifically concerning 1 Cor. 14.34-35.