

Ryan Donald Wettlaufer, *No Longer Written. The Use of Conjectural Emendation in the Restoration of the Text of the New Testament, the Epistle of James as a Case Study* (NTTSD 44) Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013. Pp. xii + 205. ISBN13 978-90-04-23533-5; E-ISBN 9789004247833. Hardcover, € 96.00/\$133.00.

- [1] The origin of the current volume is a doctoral dissertation, defended in 2011 in Toronto under the title *Unseen Variants: Conjectural Emendation in New Testament Textual Criticism, with the Epistle of James as a Case Study*.¹
- [2] Wettlaufer offers the first book-length case in favour of methodically controlled use of conjectural emendation in New Testament textual criticism. Well, actually not the very first, but the two previous monographs, by van Manen and van de Sande Bakhuyzen, were published more than 130 years ago and then only in Dutch.²
- [3] The book is divided into two parts, aptly called “Theory” (pp. 1–78) and “Practice” (pp. 79–184), followed by a Conclusion, a Bibliography and three Indices. The whole is preceded by “Acknowledgements” and by a “Foreword” by John S. Kloppenborg.
- [4] The part on theory itself is divided into three chapters, “Introduction” (chapter 1), “Rejection” (chapter 2), and “Method” (chapter 3), though chapter 2 is longer than the other two taken together.
- [5] Chapter one first defines conjectural emendation as “the act of restoring a given text at points where all extant manuscript evidence appears to be corrupt” (p. 3). The author distinguishes three types, namely the addition, omission, or substitution of a word or phrase. The reader might wonder whether the fourth traditional textual operation, transposition, should be mentioned as well. Admittedly, conjectural emendation by means of transposition does not occur often, but some examples are known, for instance Schmiedel’s proposal to transpose part of Acts 10:37 into the following verse.³ It should further be kept in mind that many conjectures involve more than one textual operation, for instance combining an omission with a substitution.⁴
- [6] The chapter then convincingly shows how editors of classical texts commonly accept conjectural emendation as a standard tool for their work, thus setting the scene for the closing section on the varying acceptance of conjectural emendation within New Testament textual criticism. The author notes “a common reluctance among New Testament critics today” (p.

¹ Not to be confused with Ryan Donald Wettlaufer, “Unseen Variants: Conjectural Emendation and the New Testament”, in *Editing the Bible: Assessing the Task Past and Present* (ed. John S. Kloppenborg and Judith Hood Newman; SBLRBS 69; Atlanta, Ga.: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), pp. 171–193. There are of course changes between the dissertation and the NTTSD volume, such as a proper “Conclusion” instead of “A Whimsical After Word”, an index and bibliography, and a Foreword by John S. Kloppenborg.

² Wettlaufer mentions the second (in a different context), but not the first (Willem Christiaan van Manen, *Conjecturaal-kritiek toegepast op den tekst van de Schriften des Nieuwen Testaments* [Teyler’s Verhandelingen 9.1; Haarlem: Bohn, 1880]).

³ The conjecture is mentioned in many Nestle editions (N¹³-NA²⁵); see Paul Wilhelm Schmiedel, “Cornelius,” in *Encyclopaedia biblica. A Critical Dictionary of the Literary, Political, and Religious History, the Archaeology, Geography, and Natural History of the Bible. Volume I. A to D* (ed. Thomas Kelly Cheyne and John Sutherland Black; New York: Macmillan, 1899), cc. 908–913, c. 911.

⁴ Thus for instance Naber (and Berlage’s) conjecture βοείαις ἐχρῶντο ὑποζωννύντες for βοηθείαις ἐχρῶντο ὑποζωννύντες τὸ πλοῖον in Acts 27:17 (mentioned in some Nestle editions [N¹³-N¹⁹]). See Samuel Adrianus Naber, “ΥΠΕΡ ΤΑ ΕΣΚΑΜΜΕΝΑ,” in *Mnemosyne (n.s.)* 6 (1878), pp. 85–104, pp. 91–93; “Nautica,” in *Mnemosyne (n.s.)* 23 (1895), pp. 234–269, pp. 267–269; Hendrik Petrus Berlage, “Over hindernissen heen,” in *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 14 (1880), pp. 74–97, pp. 84–86.

- 14). One may however add that actually the role of conjectural emendation within classical studies is not entirely undisputed, and its popularity tends to fluctuate over time.⁵
- [7] Chapter two explores and addresses the most common reasons for the rejection of conjectural emendation as such, which are the following. First the conviction (Wettlaufer speaks about a “belief”; p. 15) of textual tenacity, which states that in all cases the original reading can still be found among the extant witnesses. This section also contains a useful explanation of the Coherence Method, used to demonstrate the extent to which especially early manuscripts must have been lost. Second the “doctrine of theological preservation” (p. 43; perhaps better: “theological doctrine of divine preservation”). Interestingly, Wettlaufer not only criticises the doctrine for its being completely isolated from (and insulated against) textual evidence, but also for its lack of internal consistency. Third the emergence of “narrative textual criticism” (David Parker’s term, cited on p. 56), instead of the presumably impossible quest for the original text. Wettlaufer could have stated more clearly that this third kind of rejection is different from the first two, as it redefines the goal of textual criticism itself. Moreover, in practice critics partaking in “narrative textual criticism” can still be involved in producing the best possible edition, in which conjectural emendation could still play a role.
- [8] Chapter three, “Method”, describes in three sections “when to make a conjecture”, “how to make” one, and “how to reject” one. According to the first section, a conjecture can be made when three controls are taken into account: “internal deficiency” (p. 64), its “confirmation” in early versions and patristic sources, and awareness of the textual difficulties in modern scholarship. The author also contends that conjectural emendation should not be limited to places where several variant readings already exist. The second section characterizes the proposal of a conjecture as “a scientific art requiring both a knowledge of the text and a creativity of the mind” (p. 74), because it aims at undoing scribal error in all its forms, not merely mechanical. The final section lists some grounds for rejecting a conjecture, namely (1) its anachronism, that is, when it solves a problem that only exists to present-day readers; (2) its going against “the author’s known tendencies” (p. 76); or (3) its being “exegetically inferior” (p. 77). In a way, this last section is closely connected to the second, for it could also be read as “how *not* to make a conjecture”.
- [9] As an example of a conjecture that can be rejected on the third ground Camerarius’s famous conjecture in John 19:29 ὑσσῶ for ὑσσώπω is used.⁶ According to Wettlaufer, reading “javelin” instead of “hyssop” here “undermines the greater thematic context” (p. 77). To the present reviewer, the example rather shows how precarious judgments on such exegetical matters can be. While no one denies that Passover elements are woven into John’s narrative, the real questions here should be (1) whether the gospel writer was willing to include such elements at the expense of narrative conceivability, and (2) how much the symbolic meaning attached to the “hyssop” by some exegetes (Wettlaufer mentions Bruce) owes to that very creativity through which so many difficulties can be explained away. The “greater thematic context”, in this case, feels like an unfinished construction, and as such may be less relevant than Wettlaufer assumes.
- [10] In the part on “Practice”, Wettlaufer devotes four entire chapters to individual conjectures on the letter of James. Chapter 4 argues in favour of Junius’s conjecture πολυάλοι for πολλοί in Jas 3:1. In chapter 5, Wettlaufer discusses and adopts Erasmus’s conjecture to Jas 4:2, φθονεῖτε for φονεύετε. In chapter 6, he accepts for Jas 4:5 the conjecture τὸν θεόν for φθόνον.

⁵ See e.g. Richard John Tarrant, “Classical Latin Literature,” in *Scholarly Editing: A Guide to Research* (ed. David C. Greetham; New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1995), pp. 95–148, pp. 118–120.

⁶ In this form, the conjecture is actually Beza’s rendering of Camerarius’s original conjecture (ὑσσῶ προπεριθέντες for ὑσσώπω περιθέντες). See Joachim Camerarius, *Notatio figurarum sermonis in libris quatuor Evangeliorum, et indicata verborum significatio, et orationis sententia, ad illorum scriptorum intelligentiam certiore* (Leipzig: Vögelin, 1572), pp. 297–298; Theodorus Beza, *Novum D. N. Iesu Christi testamentum, sive Novum Foedus* (Geneva: Henricus Stephanus, 1582), p. 397.

Of the many conjectures that have been proposed for the problems found in Jas 4:5–6 (at least 11), he discusses only two, and that in 33 pages!

- [11] The conjecture τὸν θεόν is attributed to Wettstein (p. 151; “first proposed in 1730 by Wettstein”), but that is actually not certain.⁷ It is given without an author’s name in Wettstein’s 1730 *Prolegomena*, and not even mentioned in his 1751–1752 *NTG*. Interestingly, the latter has a rare exegetical note in the text-critical apparatus, dealing with the difficulty of the scriptural quotation James seems to give. In any case, it can only be said that Wettstein is our earliest source for the conjecture.
- [12] Chapter 7 discusses and rejects the conjectures according to which in Jas 1:1 and 2:1 the references to “Jesus Christ” are interpolations. In slightly different forms, these conjectures originate with Spitta and Massebieau at the end of the nineteenth century, and have found, as Wettlaufer duly notes, support by various scholars, though not many (p. 163 n. 7). At the end of the chapter, he discusses the fact that many scholars reject these conjectures, not because of their lack of quality, but for the mere fact that they are conjectures. This discussion creates some overlap with the theoretical part.
- [13] As said, the book closes with a conclusion, a bibliography and three indices. The conclusion itself once again argues in favour of conjectural emendation, partly with arguments not used before. Most importantly, the author notes a revival of conjectural emendation.
- [14] The strong points of the book are clear: it is marked by careful and inspired reasoning, a vivid style with a good use of metaphors and examples. It is also clearly structured, and both the theoretical and the practical parts are welcome additions to a much needed reevaluation of conjectural emendation. Together, they demonstrate the main thesis of the book: conjectural emendation, if properly practised and controlled, is a useful and necessary part of New Testament textual criticism. As the present reviewer already belongs to the converted, he leaves it to its cultured despisers⁸ to counter Wettlaufer’s carefully mounted case. Let it only be understood that a single conjecture can never be shown to be necessary, or “certain”, but it can be the best solution to a text-critical problem.
- [15] The author’s choice of James seems wise: Erasmus’s conjecture on Jas 4:2 has found wide support over the centuries, and the problem in Jas 4:5–6 has left many commentators in despair; also, the letter has given occasion to an interesting set of conjectures (Jas 1:1 and 2:1) that are just waiting to be dismantled.
- [16] There are some weaker points in the book, notably in the ways the author deals with the scholarly history of New Testament conjectural emendation. The impression prevails that he is not very much interested in the sources for the conjectures he discusses.
- [17] For instance in the discussion of Erasmus’s conjecture on Jas 4:2, there is no reference other than a year (1519), which is not entirely correct: Erasmus already proposed φθονεῖτε in the annotations to his 1516 *Novum Instrumentum*, but had it printed as his Greek text only in the second edition of 1519. In later editions the Greek text returned to φονεύετε, though the Latin translation still reflected the conjecture. Moreover, a short exposé on Erasmus’s opinion on the case might have been welcome.⁹

⁷ Wettlaufer may seem to follow Kirn’s conclusion here (“Noch einmal Jakobus 4, 5,” in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 77 [1904], pp. 593–604, p. 595). However he does not mention Kirn here.

⁸ Cf. Friedrich Daniel Schleiermacher, *Über die Religion. Reden an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern* (Berlin: Unger, 1799); ET (of 1821) *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers* (London: Kegan Paul etc., 1893).

⁹ The interested reader can find more information in my *Beyond What Is Written. Erasmus and Beza as Conjectural Critics of the New Testament* (NTTS 35; Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 125–127.

- [18] Wettlaufer goes astray in the identification of the author of the conjecture on Jas 3:1. Despite Bowyer's reference to a "P. Junius" (which can also be found in Wettstein's New Testament edition), Wettlaufer concludes that the author has to be "Franciscus Junius" (either father or son) (p. 95). He then concludes, without further inquiry: "Either way, πολύλαοι turns out to be quite a pedigreed conjecture that can be dated back at least as far as the very beginnings of modern critical study." The footnote (p. 95 n. 42), referring to Eberhard Nestle's *Introduction*, may give a clue as to the source of this identification, for Nestle mentions a "Junius" as the author of the conjecture, and "Franciscus Junius" in the corresponding entry in the index.¹⁰ Anyway, the author is not Franciscus, but Patricius Junius, also known as Patrick Young, the King's librarian at the time Codex Alexandrinus arrived in England. Young never published his many conjectures in print, but transmitted them to scholars in Europe in manuscript form. Some of those manuscripts have already been traced, including one that contains this very conjecture;¹¹ others may still await discovery.
- [19] As for William Bowyer, it is somewhat odd to refer only to the third, 1782 edition of his famous collection of conjectures (though passing on Georg Luck's remark on the existence of four editions). The first edition appeared in 1763, as part of Bowyer's Greek New Testament,¹² and as the most important edition the fourth of 1812 should be mentioned, simply because it is the most extensive one.¹³
- [20] Returning to Jas 3:1, Wettlaufer does not realise that de Hoop Scheffer and van de Sande Bakhuyzen (see p. 95) actually propose a slightly different conjecture: contrary to Junius, they want to omit διδάσκαλοι, thus reading πολύλαοι instead of πολλοὶ διδάσκαλοι.¹⁴ As Wettlaufer points out, "no bibliographical information is given for de Hoop Scheffer". The reason for this silence is actually simple: van de Sande Bakhuyzen's book is the only existing source for this conjecture. In 1876, Teyler's Godgeleerd Genootschap (Theological Society) issued an essay contest on New Testament conjectural emendation. As member of Teyler's committee, de Hoop Scheffer read all submissions before their eventual acceptance and publication; as such, he suggested some additions and fresh conjectures to van de Sande Bakhuyzen. And this de Hoop Scheffer, by the way, is the rather famous Dutch Mennonite theologian Jacob Gijsbert de Hoop Scheffer (1819–1894).
- [21] Still at Jas 3:1, on p. 85 Wettlaufer mentions "a scholar named Naber", without any further information. Actually Samuel Adrianus Naber (1828–1913), a classical scholar, was one of the most prolific and original authors on New Testament conjectural emendation. A few of his conjectures are mentioned in earlier Nestle editions, and the total number of New Testament conjectures made by Naber is almost 200.

¹⁰ I use the German editions (*Einführung in das griechische Neue Testament* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht]): in the second (1899), Junius's conjecture is mentioned on p. 135, but there is no Junius in the index; in the third (1909), the conjecture is found on p. 181, and the index contains a "Junius, Franciscus" (p. 291c).

¹¹ Namely p. 2 of a manuscript called "Secundae stricturae Patricii Junii", shelf mark UBA III C 20 e add. (Library of the University of Amsterdam), to be dated approximately 1642.

¹² William Bowyer, *Novum Testamentum Graecum, ad fidem Graecorum solum Codicum Mss. nunc primum expressum, ad stipulante Joanne Jacobo Wetstenio: iuxta sectiones Jo. Alberti Bengelii divisum; et nova interpunctione saepius illustratum. Accessere in altero volumine emendationes conjecturales viro- rum doctorum undecun- que collectae* (London: William Bowyer, 1763).

¹³ William Bowyer, *Critical Conjectures and Observations on the New Testament, Collected from Various Authors, as well in regard to Words as Pointing: With the Reasons on which both are founded ... The Fourth Edition, Enlarged and Corrected* (ed. John Nichols; London: Nichols, 1812).

¹⁴ Let it be some consolation that Baljon subsequently concluded that Junius omitted διδάσκαλοι as well, thus committing the mirror image of Wettlaufer's error. See Johannes Marinus Simon Baljon, "De brief van Jakobus," in *Theologische Studiën* 9 (1891), pp. 377–394, p. 383.

- [22] In conclusion, while the present reviewer understands and applauds Wettlaufer's focus on the present-day value and importance of the conjectures discussed, he regrets that the field's rich history is left mostly unexplored.
- [23] All in all, the book lives up to the Brill series of which it is now part: as a *study* of New Testament conjectural emendation and a *tool* for those who want to know how it is practised and defended. It will be interesting to see how the scholarly discussion develops in coming years, and whether (and how) conjectures will be taken into account in projects such as the *Editio Critica Maior*.¹⁵ Regrettably, there are some minor errors (see below), which make me hope a second edition (“auctior, emendatior”) will be published one day.

Appendix 1: some remarks and additions

- [24] p. 9: the exact number of conjectures in the Nestle editions: in n. 29 Wettlaufer cites from Erwin Nestle's preface in NA²⁵; the reader should be aware that the reference to the multiplied number of conjectures concerns the 13th Nestle edition, not the 25th.
- [25] p. 38 “within the Catholic Epistles the closest surviving relative of codex Vaticanus 03 is found to be codex Bezae 04”; it can happen to anybody, but someone should have spotted the problem (preferably the author): 04, of course, is not Codex Bezae, but Codex Ephraemi rescriptus; furthermore, the statement is correct for James, but not for all Catholic Epistles (according to the ECM data).
- [26] p. 47 “As is well known, in a bid to beat to press the Complutensian Polyglot of Cardinal Ximenes de Cisneros, Erasmus in 1516 rushed the publication of the first edition of his Greek New Testament, ...” This story is “well known” but nobody ever mentions a source for it, let alone a sixteenth-century one. I for one would challenge the reader to substantiate the omnipresent claim that the nature of the Basel New Testament project by Froben and Erasmus was influenced in any way by the imminent publication of the Complutensian edition.
- [27] p. 61: Wettlaufer quotes my “estimated total number of New Testament conjectures documented so far” as “at least 15,000”; the reader should keep in mind a large “if” here: the estimation is based on an extrapolation of the total number of documented conjectures on the text of Galatians. Further research since 2006 suggests that the total number for the New Testament is at least 4,500, while 6,000 seems a reasonable upper limit; apparently the text of Galatians has been subjected to scrutiny by conjectural critics more than many other parts of the New Testament. In any case, in my expression “probably ... several thousands” (quoted on p. 10), the word “probably” has now become “certainly”.
- [28] p. 69 “a scribe likely dropped a μ and heard θ instead of τ in order to change λημψεταιί (receive) into ληψεσθαι”: besides the errors in the accents (λήμψεται; λήψεσθαι), the alternation between λημψ- and ληψ- is so ubiquitous that it hardly needs to be pointed out.

¹⁵ In my view, the text of ECM (and subsequently NA²⁸) is already based on conjecture (first proposed by Holwerda) at 2 Pet 3:10 (the adoption of οὐχ before εὐρεθήσεται; see also pp. 62–63). This fact should not be obscured by a reference to some early versions, because retroversion is conjectural as well, and one can easily imagine early translators trying to make sense of a text without the negation. Therefore the result of their work neither allows the assumption of a Greek *Vorlage* with οὐχ, nor the conclusion that the translators made a conjecture on the Greek text. For Holwerda's conjecture, see Jan Hendrik Holwerda, *De betrekking van het verstand tot het uitleggen van den Bijbel, inzonderheid van de schriften des Nieuwen Testaments* (Gorinchem: Noorduy, 1853), pp. 127–129.

Appendix 2: errata

- [29] Regrettably the book contains some errors, especially in names and in Greek words. In general, the author is inconsistent in changing the grave accent into an acute accent on the ultimate syllable in single Greek words or the last Greek word of a quote. (The present-day rule is that one should do that.)
- [30] Some inconsistencies are also found in the bibliography. If the author had followed SBL guidelines and abbreviations,¹⁶ his task would have been easier. One can and should not apply English title case to titles in other languages (e.g. “L’Epitre De Jacques: Est-Elle L’Oeuvre D’Un Chretien?” should be—with some further corrections—“L’Épître de Jacques est-elle l’oeuvre d’un chrétien?”). Indenting is off several times (pp. 191; 196), and there are numerous missing spaces between words.¹⁷ Some further problems I noted in passing:
- [31] p. 6 E.J. Kenny] E.J. Kenney (also p. 6 n. 10; p. 195; p. 199)
 p. 9 n. 25 Wettstein’s 1750–1751 edition] Wettstein’s 1751–1752 edition
 p. 9 n. 25 Jacobus Wettstein] Johann Jakob Wettstein
 p. 9 n. 28 T. Könncke] C. Könncke (also 151 n. 127 and p. 200, but correct in the Bibliography)
 p. 12 William Peterson] William Petersen (also p. 194, though the correct name occurs in the title cited; p. 200)
 p. 31 Jeffery Kloha] Jeffrey Kloha (also p. 31 n. 56 and p. 196; but correct on p. 65 n. 8; in the index however “Jefry” [p. 200])
 p. 32 Wescott] Westcott (also p. 110 n. 25; p. 123 n. 79)
 p. 62 εὐρηθῆσονται] εὐρεθήσεται (the error actually originates with Mink’s article that is quoted; yet a writer on conjectural emendation should know that it is not advisable to repeat the errors made by others)
 p. 95 Willem Hendrik Van De Sande Bakhuyzen] Willem Hendrik van de Sande Bakhuyzen (not “William” as in the index [p. 200])¹⁸
 p. 95 *Over De Toepassing Ven De Conjecturaal-Kritiek Op Den Tekst Des Nieuwen Testaments*] *Over de toepassing van de conjecturaal-kritiek op den tekst des Nieuwen Testaments* (note the “van” [also in the Bibliography]; besides, it feels odd to see *Over* (“About”) used as a short title for this book [p. 95 n. 39 etc.], but Wettlaufer also uses *Beyond* ...)
 p. 95 n. 1 Junias] Junius
 p. 95 n. 41 *Conjecture*] *Conjectures*
 p. 108 φονεύτε] φονεύετε (2x)
 p. 148 γραθή] γραφή
 p. 148 πληρωθη] πληρωθῆ
 p. 149 n. 119 Findlay’s article is not mentioned in the bibliography; it is cited as “J.A. Findlay, “James iv. 5, 6” *The Expository Times* 37/8 (1926): 381–382”; the correct volume is 37 (which ran 1925–1926; this article is indeed from 1926).
 p. 150 ἄρξεις] ἄρξεις

¹⁶ See SBL HS: *The SBL Handbook of Style for Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (eds. Patrick H. Alexander et al., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999).

¹⁷ p. 192 “*ofThe*” [Ehrman & Holmes, *Text*]; “*inHonor*” [Epp 1989]; p. 195 “*NewTestament*” [Westcott & Hort]; p. 197 “*offames*” [Plummer]. Inconsistent is also the use of spaces in entries for articles; thus one finds “73 (1980): 131–151” as well as “92(1999):245–281” (the first form is correct).

¹⁸ The error “de Sande Bakhuizen”, for which Wettlaufer refers to BDF, goes back as far as the second edition of Blass’s *Grammatik* (1902; p. 71 n. 2).

p. 151 n. 128 (and Bibliography) Vorschlag zu Jacobus] Vorschlag zu Jakobus (further also referred to as “Jacobus”, and even as “James” [p. 153 n. 133])

Kirn’s article is not mentioned in the Bibliography; on p. 151, Wettlaufer refers to “a series of articles”, but he never mentions the second one. It is Otto Kirn, “Noch einmal Jakobus 4, 5,” *TSK* 77 (1904) 593–604.

p. 151 über die lesung] über die Lesung

p. 191 [Bowyer] *Conjectures on the New Testament*] *Critical Conjectures and Observations on the New Testament*¹⁹ (the title is also mentioned twice in the Bibliography; see p. 195)

p. 191 [Hilary of Arles] Why is the title given in English, while reference is made to PL?

p. 191 Wettstein, Jacobus] Wettstein, Johann Jakob

p. 192 [Comfort & Barrett] Wheaton, Il] Wheaton, IL²⁰

p. 193 [Hurtado] *origins*] *Origins*

p. 196 [Krans] *New Testament Tools and Studies*, 35] *New Testament Tools and Studies*, 35

p. 196 [Allison] *Revu Biblique* 108–104] *Revue Biblique* 108

p. 197 [Spitta] Gottingen] Göttingen (and why is the publisher, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, not mentioned?)

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¹⁹ Eventually add the rest of the title as well: ... *Collected from Various Authors, as well in regard to Words as Pointing: With the Reasons on which both are founded.*

²⁰ In fact, SBL HS (p. 69) discourages the use of two-letter postal abbreviations of US states; in that case “Il” should be “Ill.”, etc.