

Codex Zacynthius: Editing a Virtual Manuscript in the Digital Research Environment

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Codex Zacynthius (Cambridge, University Library, MS Add. 10062) is the oldest known Greek New Testament manuscript with the form of commentary known as a catena. Believed to have been copied in the early eighth century, the original manuscript was overwritten in the late twelfth century with a gospel lectionary. A two-year project, funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council, has recently made the first edition and study of the entire manuscript. The catena commentary has been transcribed in full from a set of multispectral images created for the project. The sources of the scholia have been established and their text compared with other traditions. The biblical undertext has been re-examined, with new readings which further underline the importance of this manuscript for the early text of the Gospel according to Luke. In addition, the project has made a full transcription of the lectionary, analysed its structure and affiliation, and identified its copyist.

Every stage of this research project has been digital, from the recovery of the undertext using artificial enhancement of the images, to the online publication of the manuscript. A dispersed project team has relied on electronic methods of communication, transcription, comparison and analysis. This has all been achieved without the development of any new software or platform. Instead, the project has relied on a wide range of existing resources to produce a series of extensive and significant outputs. This, we argue, is the most effective paradigm for textual scholarship in the digital age.