Our libraries hold quite a number of Greek manuscript sources for the New Testament, referred to and used by Greek scholars. Whilst they contain numerous variant readings, these are not significant. What they do have in common is considerable differences from the sources we have just examined—copies made by speakers of Latin—as I have ascertained by consulting a number of the manuscripts in the Colbert Library and the King’s Library.\(^1\) Admittedly I have not come across any manuscripts there as old as the Greek texts accompanying the Old Latin version preceding that of St Jerome: even though there are some from approximately the same period, they are extremely rare. Among them must be included Codex Vaticanus, referred to by some scholars, who have recorded certain of its variants in their work.

The manuscript discovered in Alexandria (Egypt), now known as Codex Alexandrinus, is just as old. Following Cyril Lucar,\(^2\) some English scholars claim, though without any proper evidence, that this Greek copy of the Old and New Testaments, was written over 1,300 years ago by an Egyptian lady called Thecla. When the Patriarch Cyril presented this Bible to Charles I of England,\(^3\) it was in his interest to make it as old as possible. There was more than one Thecla; the name was also given to Roman ladies in St Jerome’s day who had retired to the solitude of the East, where one and all admired their great piety. They knew Greek, and were curious to read the Scriptures in that tongue. There were also monasteries dedicated to St Thecla; and it might well be that this manuscript had belonged to one such. In any event,

\(^1\) See supra, ch. 10 n. 1.
\(^2\) Cyril Lucar (1572–1638), patriarch of Constantinople.
\(^3\) In 1628, through the intermediary of the English ambassador Sir Thomas Roe. Originally it was offered to James I, but did not reach England till 1627. In the British Museum from 1757, it is now held in the British Library.
it is unquestionably very old; yet, as may easily be seen from the variants recorded in the English Polyglot Bible, it differs from other Greek sources referred to by Latin writers. Grotius too records most of these variants in his notes on the New Testament: be advised, however, that this commentator does not always quote with total accuracy. In short, I cannot with certainty rule out the inclusion of the manuscript called Alexandrinus (or even the one held in the Vatican) among those described by Latin copyists in the earliest times.

I am not for one moment suggesting that Cardinal Ximénez failed to consult the most ancient Greek New Testament manuscripts when preparing his edition. But it is to be feared that some readings he included on the grounds that they corresponded more closely to our Vulgate, came from ancient sources that were corrupt. It may be also that the text of Stephanus’s edition, based on comparisons with several Greek manuscripts held in Italy, also contains readings from those same corrupt sources, including the Old Latin version. The same reservation must be borne in mind regarding the sixteen manuscripts used by the Marquess de los Velez, in some of which several passages correspond to our Vulgate. The point of making general observations of this kind is to compensate in some way for the shortcomings of scholars who have failed properly to detail the merits and demerits of their manuscript sources. Erasmus and Beza, dedicated scholars in this area, use several such Greek manuscripts, but often commit errors when referring to them. They were completely unaware of the difference, discussed above, between the two types of Greek sources of the New Testament. In this regard, having adduced several examples of variants in the manuscripts described by Latin writers, it is proper that I also cite some of the variants in the other Greek manuscripts. As acquaintance with these can be made from several existing compilations, I shall discuss only major variants, deserving of some critical comment.

St Matthew, chapter 1 verse 11: the standard Greek text reads Ἰωσίας δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν ἸεχονίανJosias begat Jechonias, which is supported by the Old Latin and Syriac versions, and the other Eastern Church translations. However one of Stephanus’s sources reads: Ἰωσίας δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰακείμ: Ἰακείμ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰεχονίαν, a reading found in several other Greek manuscripts cited in the English Polyglot, except that they spell it Ἰακείμ.

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4 See supra, ch. 29 n. 10.
6 See supra, ch. 30 n. 15.
7 See supra, ch. 29 nn. 26 and 28.