CHAPTER 4

Syntax and Representation of Matt 12:3–27

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 State of Preservation
The next leaf for analysis constitutes pages 29–30 of the codex, containing 12:3–27. It is perhaps the best preserved leaf of the manuscript, containing about 1,500 letters and sense unit spaces altogether, although 100–130 letters are missing, mostly at the corners. There is little need for reconstruction, and the several produced by Schenke are probably correct, except for readings in v. 15 and possibly vv. 4, 17 (discussed below). I have however, provided my own transcription for each verse below. It largely collaborates Schenke’s transcription, except that mine indicates a greater uncertainty than his in many cases.

4.1.2 Mae² as a Witness to “ Canonical” Matthew
The previous two chapters have already shown that mae² is not an alternative Matthew, but is substantially the same Matthew that is known in the extant manuscript tradition. I do not focus on refuting Schenke’s claim further, although there is much in 12:3–27 to corroborate my earlier discussion in chapter 3. In particular, two points may be summarised.

First, the same kind of homogeneity and heterogeneity between mae² and the other Coptic versions is evident in 12:3–27 as in 5:38–6:18. This is important since mae²’s frequent agreement with the other Coptic versions where the syntax differs significantly from NA²⁷ suggests that the differences are translational rather than textual. Conversely, the considerable number of unique readings in sa⁸, bo⁸, and mae¹ imply that mae² also is likely to have unique renderings as a matter of course, without implying differences in their respective Vorlagen.

Mae²’s homogeneity with the other Coptic versions can be illustrated by 12:23 where nine of mae²’s twelve words are identical with two, if not three of the other versions (excepting dialectal features), while only one element is unique (the singular article in ⲡⲱⲣⲓⲣⲓ ⲥⲧⲧⲧ the crowd). On the other hand, the heterogeneity of the Coptic versions is evident in 12:18 where sa⁹ has seven

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1 The reconstructions in vv. 11, 14, 26 also raise questions, but can hardly be improved.
unique elements, boA has five, mae2 has three, and mae1 has one. In 12:3–27, mae2 has slightly more agreement with boA (see especially vv. 3, 9, 11, 14, 15, 18, 25, 26) than with mae1 (see especially vv. 7, 10, 16, 18, 19, 23, 27), whereas in 5:38–6:18, mae2 has slightly more agreement with mae1 than with boA.

Secondly, the present chapter corroborates the previous conclusions which showed Schenke's retroversion to be little more than a slavish, formal equivalent translation of mae2's Coptic into Greek. A single example may suffice. In Jesus' assertion that it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath, all Greek witnesses put the dative object τοῖς σάββασιν prior to καλῶς ποιεῖν, while all four Coptic versions postpone the Sabbath reference to the last position (12:12). This variation in word order reflects a typical concession to the receptor language (Layton 2004, 146), but Schenke's retroversion suggests that mae2's Vorlage (and by implication the Vorlagen of all four Coptic versions) puts the Sabbath reference in the last position. Because chapter three showed Schenke's retroversion to be entirely unviable, I generally avoid commenting on it further.

### 4.1.3 Presentation of Analysis

In this and the next chapter, I emphasise the translator's method and habits of rendering his Greek text, with a view toward establishing his Vorlage. The analysis has two components, a translational analysis and a textual analysis. For the textual analysis, I continue to analyse every variant cited in NA27's apparatus which is attested by Greek New Testament manuscripts. I also give consideration to any variant cited in the other apparatuses which might correspond to the reading of mae2 where mae2's meaning differs from that of NA27, although in actual practice, such readings rarely occur (12:24.a.1).

As in the previous chapter, whenever a verse has any of the frequently recurring syntactical elements listed in 1.5, I indicate such by writing "Cf. 1.5" at the pertinent section heading. My comments such as "The verse has no syntactical differences from NA27" or "There are two syntactical differences" are not to be taken absolutely, but as being duly qualified by the data in 1.5.