

The Treatment of Mary in the Codex Veronensis

Fr. Robert Nixon, O.S.B.

I. Introduction

The Codex Veronensis, denoted by siglum ‘*b*’, is arguably the most ‘typical’ witness of the *Vetus Latina* Gospel text of the European type,¹ and is held by some scholars to represent a text of the type which formed the primary basis for the Gospels in Jerome’s Vulgate.² The manuscript, inscribed in uncial script in silver and occasionally gold ink on purple vellum, dates from the 4th or 5th Century. It comprises the four Gospels in the Western order, with generally fewer *lacunae* than other Latin Gospel codices of comparable antiquity.³ It is currently held at the Biblioteca Capitolare at Verona. Three editions of the work have been published; the first by Blanchini (1749),⁴ which was reproduced by Migne (1845),⁵ one by Belshiem (1904),⁶ and one Buchanan (1911).⁷ This last edition faithfully replicates the column and verse divisions of the manuscript.

¹ P. BURTON, *The Old Latin Gospels— A Study of Their Texts and Language*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 62.

² H. KOESTER, *History and Literature of Early Christianity* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000), 34.

³ The primary *lacunae* in the Codex Veronensis are portions of Mt 1:15 and 23; Jn 7 and 8; Lk 19-21; and Mk 13-16. While not inconsiderable, these are significantly less than the *lacunae* in either the Codices Vercellensis or Palatinus.

⁴ J. BLANCHINUS (ed.), *Evangeliarium quadruplex latinae versionis antiquae seu veteris italicae* (Rome: Antonio de Rubeis, 1749).

⁵ BLANCHINUS (ed.), “*Evangeliarium quadruplex latinae versionis antiquae seu veteris italicae*”, *PL* 35:9-948.

⁶ J. BELSHEIM (ed.), *Codex Veronensis Quattuor Evangelia* (Prague: Royal Society of Sciences of Bohemia, 1904). Although the Belsheim edition is certainly the most conveniently readable, it does have the disadvantage of inserted punctuation, and even the inclusion of a very considerable number of textual ‘corrections’. (Cf. BELSHEIM [ed.], *Codex Veronensis*, 140-142)

⁷ A.S. BUCHANAN, *The four Gospels from the codex Veronensis (b): Being the first complete edition of the Evangeliarium purpureum in the Cathedral Library at Verona* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911). It is to be noted that Buchanan’s subsequent authorship of manifestly falsified texts of supposed ‘primitive Latin

In this essay, it will be demonstrated that numerous textual variants in the Codex Veronensis reflect a particular focus on Mary, and an emphasis on the virginal conception of Christ, as well as a deliberate highlighting of the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. These textual variants are readily identified through a comparison of the text of *b* with both the Heironymian Vulgate, and/or other *V/L* versions. In themselves, most of the textual variants are apparently minor,⁸ such as the use of a proper name rather than a pronoun, a difference in tense or case, or the insertion or omission of a word or phrase— yet cumulatively they suggest convincingly a tendency on the part of the compiler of the text to highlight the person of Mary, and to emphasize the related themes of the virginal conception of Christ and the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. Although the significance of the variant reading appearing in *b* for Jn 1:13 in relation to the doctrine of the virginal conception has already been widely discussed, it seems the question of the Marian nuances of the Codex, in a more comprehensive sense, has not been explored in the secondary literature.

Gospels', supporting his own theological views, necessarily raises doubts about the observations he offers in the preface of his edition. (Cf. A.S. BUCHANAN, *Evangelium Secundum Joannem, sine Judiazantium Emendationibus* [New York: E.S. Buchanan, 1919]).

⁸ The exceptions to this are two variant readings which present more obvious differences in conceptual sense; namely Jn 1:13 ('*natus est*' vs. '*nati sunt*'), and Lk 1:34 (in which *b* omits altogether the Mary's question '*Quomodo fiet istud quoniam virum non cognosco?*'). Each of these variants has attracted wide discussion. Cf. J.D. CROSSAN, "Mary and the Church in Jn 1,13," *The Bible Today* 20 (1965), 1318-1324. I. de la Potterie, "Il parto verginale del Verbo incarnato: Non ex sanguinibus, sed ex Deo natus est (Jn 1:13)," *Marianum* 45 (1983), 127-176. J.W. PRYOR, "Of the Virgin Birth or the Birth of Christianity: The Text of John 1:13 Once More," *Novum Testamentum* Vol. 27, Fasc. 4 (Oct., 1985), 296-318. R.M. PRICE, *The Incredible Shrinking Son of Man: How Reliable Is the Gospel Tradition?* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 2003), 70.

For the purposes of this brief article, the analysis will be restricted here to variants in the text of the Gospel of Matthew.⁹ Firstly, a number of relevant textual variants will be identified, and their significance analysed. Secondly, the devotional and theological context in which the manuscript emerged will be considered, with particular reference to the writings of Zeno of Verona. Finally, some conclusions will be offered, and some strategies for testing the argued hypothesis more systematically and comprehensively will be proposed.

II. Relevant Textual Variants in the Gospel of Matthew

II.1. *Matthew 1,16*

The reading of Mt 1:16 offered by the Codex Veronensis differs markedly from that of the Vulgate, as shown below:

Codex Veronensis, <i>b</i> ¹⁰	Vulgate (Codex Amiatinus, A ¹¹)
(...) <i>Jacob autem genuit Joseph cui desponsata erat Virgo Maria. Virgo autem Maria genuit Jesum (.....)</i>	(...) <i>Jacob autem genuit Joseph virum Mariae de qua natus est Jesus, qui vocatur Christus.</i>

In the *b* reading, the name of *Maria* appears twice, in comparison to its single appearance in A (where it is replaced by a relative pronoun ‘*qua*’ in the latter part of the verse). In both cases in *b* (unlike A), the title ‘*Virgo*’ is attached to the proper name, suggesting

⁹ This limitation of field excludes the aforementioned well known textual variants. (Jn 1:13 and Lk 1:34) Textual variants in the remaining Gospels in Codex Veronensis which seem to emphasize Mary or the virginal conception are listed, with only minor comment, in Appendix I.

¹⁰ The texts of the Codex Veronensis used in this paper are taken from a consensus of the published editions of Blanchini, Belsheim, and Buchanan. Editorial punctuation has been omitted.

¹¹ The Vulgate text given through this paper is that of the Codex Amiatinus (accepted as the most reliable witness), according to Tischendorf’s edition. (C. TISCHENDORF [ed.], *Novum Testamentum Amiatinum* [Leipzig, F.A. Lirockhausius, 1859.]

that for the compiler of the Codex, the expression ‘*Virgo Maria*’ was understood as a standard expression.

Indeed, the insertion of ‘*autem*’ between ‘*Virgo*’ between ‘*Maria*’ in the second part of the verse demonstrates even more clearly the highly familiar way in which the devotional title and name were linked for the compiler of the text and his readers. It is, of course, a common idiom in Latin for names and titles which are in familiarly recognized conjunction to be separated by an ‘*autem*’ (e.g. ‘*Julius autem Caesar*’, ‘*Jesus autem Christus*’, ‘*Sanctus autem Spiritus*’, etc.). This same idiom seems to be employed here (‘*Virgo autem Maria*’).

There is an important and conspicuous syntactic difference between the Codex Veronensis and the Vulgate reading of Mt 1:16—in the former, ‘*Virgo Maria*’, for both of its appearances, functions as a grammatical subject (nominative); whereas in A, it (or its pronoun) appears each time in grammatically subsidiary roles (as a genitive and ablative).

Syntactically also, the relationship of Christ and Mary is highlighted more strongly in Mt 1:16 in the text of *b* than in A. In A, Jesus is the subject of the verb (albeit in a passive form—‘*natus est*’), and the pronoun designating Mary is an ablative, not of agency, but of location (‘*de qua*’). In *b*, however, it is Mary who ‘begets’ (*genuit*) Christ, in the relationship of a subject to a direct object. Interesting this verb ‘*genuit*’ is reserved in the remainder of the Matthean genealogy (in both A and *b*) to signify the relationship between a male parent and his progeny.¹²

It also seems that the marital relationship between Mary and Joseph is presented in a more reserved modality in *b* than A. Indeed, for *b*, Mary merely ‘had been promised’ (‘*desponsata erat*’) to Joseph, whereas in A, Joseph is/was ‘the husband of Mary’ (‘*virum Mariae*’). Arguably, this mode of expression in *b* highlights the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary more strongly than A.

¹² Cf. Mt 1:2-16 (Vulgate and VL versions)

II.2. *Matthew 1,19*

In Mt 1,19, Joseph's plan to divorce Mary privately is described. The Codex Veronensis differs, both from the Vulgate and other *Vetus Latina* texts,¹³ in employing the adverb '*tacite*', rather than the '*occulte*'. Thus the *b* text reads: (...) '*voluit tacite illam dimittere.*' However, A gives: '(...) *voluit occulte dimittere eam.*'

The text's preference for '*tacite*' here effectively avoids the suggestion of deception or dissimulation which is often associated with the word '*occulte*'. Indeed, a little later, the *b* text does employ '*occulte*'— to describe Herod's deceptive consultations with the Magi.¹⁴ Perhaps the compiler of the text was eager to distance the plan of Joseph to divorce Mary privately from any such tone of underhanded concealment. While Herod's enquiries are made '*occulte*', Joseph's plans (for the compiler of *b*), innocent of any intention of dissimulation, are merely considered 'silently'. Interestingly, the *b* text comfortably allows the adverb '*tacite*' to be understood as describing either the manner in which Joseph's 'willed' ('*voluit*') the course of action, or the manner of divorce he was considering.

Does the position of the pronoun before the verb ('*illam dimittere*' rather than '*dimittere eam*'), together with the choice of the slightly more emphatic and sonorous '*illam*', rather than '*eam*', give Mary extra prominence and centrality in the sentence? Quite possibly.¹⁵

II.3. *Matthew 1,25*

¹³ Cf. Codices Vercellensis, Corbeienis and Brixianus.

¹⁴ Mt 2:7 (*b*).

¹⁵ The line in question, in both the A and the *b* versions, forms a *logaoedic* tetrapody, thus:

A: *volúit occúlte dimittére éam.*

b: *volúit tácite íllam dimittére.*

In such a quadruple rhythmic grouping, the third beat tends normally to be more accented than the fourth. Thus, '*illam*' in the *b* text will tend, according to this principle, to be more strongly accented, than '*eam*' is in the A text.

Matthew 1,25, as presented in the Vulgate (and most *Vetus Latina* texts¹⁶), has generated much discussion, since the time of Hilary¹⁷ and Jerome,¹⁸ concerning how it is best to be understood, especially in connection with the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. Its reading differs in several key words in the *b* text, as shown below:

Codex Veronensis, <i>b</i>	Vulgate (Codex Amiatinus, A)
<i>Et non cognovit eam donec peperit filium et vocavit nomen ejus Jesum.</i>	<i>Et non cognoscebat eam donec peperit filium suum primogenitum et vocavit nomen ejus Jesum.</i>

There are certain obvious, but by no means insuperable, difficulties in reconciling the A text with the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. Does the term ‘*donec*’ imply that *after* the birth of Christ Joseph did ‘know’ Mary? Both Hilary and Jerome point out that ‘to know’ here is not necessarily to be understood in the sense of implying physical relations.¹⁹ Moreover, Jerome argues that ‘*donec*’, while it refers to the time *before* an event, does not necessarily imply any change after the event.²⁰

A further difficulty may arise in the use of the term ‘*primogenitum*’ in the A text. Does this imply that Jesus was a first-born, rather than an *only* son of Mary?²¹

¹⁶ Cf. Codices Vercellensis, Corbeienis, Brixianus, etc.

¹⁷ HILARY OF POITERS, *Commentarius in Evangelium Matthei*, 1:3.

¹⁸ JEROME, *De Perpetua Virginitate B. Mariae*, 23:197-199.

¹⁹ HILARY, *In Evangelium Matthei*, 1:3. JEROME, *De Perpetua Virginitate*, 7.

²⁰ JEROME, *De Perpetua Virginitate*, 7.

²¹ Cf. JEROME, *De Perpetua Virginitate*, 9-10. According to orthodox commentators, ‘*primogenitum*’ should not be understood to exclude ‘*unicum*’ or ‘*unigenitum*’. Cf. EPIPHANIUS, *Panariorum*, Liber III, 2:78. BENEDICT XIV, *De Festis D.N. Jesu Christi et de B. Mariae Virginis Libri Duo*, I:XVII:22 (Parma: Typographia Fratrum Borsi, 1768), 226.

The Codex Veronensis reading of the text seems largely to solve, or to obviate, these ambiguities. Firstly, the use of the perfect tense (*'cognovit'*) in *b*, rather than the imperfect used in the Vulgate and some other Latin versions (*'cognoscebat'*), reduces the implication of any subsequent change (since the imperfect tense has some sense of describing a transitory or temporary condition). Rather than saying: 'And he had not *been* knowing her *donec* (...),' the text becomes, 'And he had not known her *donec* (...).'

Furthermore, the potentially problematic word '*primogenitum*' is dropped altogether in *b*, eliminating any possibility that '*primogenitum*' will be interpreted as indicating the Jesus was not an only, but merely a first-born, son.

Curiously, Jerome himself cites a combination of both the Veronensis and the Vulgate readings of this verse in his *De Perpetua Virginitate B. Mariae*.²²

II.4. Matthew 11:11

The text of Matthew 11:11 does not refer directly to Mary, but to John the Baptist, and his greatness:

(...) non surrexit inter natos mulierum major Joanne Baptista (...)

This line, however, necessarily has a connection to the position of Mary. If John is 'the greatest of those born of women,' (Mt 11:11) as Christ here states, does this imply that his status is somehow 'higher' than that of the Virgin Mary? This question of how this line is to be interpreted to avoid such a problematic conclusion (inconsistent with Christian devotional practice) has given rise to various solutions amongst orthodox exegetes.²³

²² JEROME, *De Perpetua Virginitate*, 3 & 7.

²³ Alfonso de Madrigal solves the problem by noting that the Vulgate text gives '*inter natos mulierum*', and therefore refers compares John only to men, but not to women. (ALFONSO DE MADRIGAL, *Commentaria in tertiam partem Matthaei* [Venice: Typographia Balleoniana, 1728], 459.) A perhaps more fanciful solution is offered by Dorn, who notes the word '*surrexit*' in the Vulgate text,

The text of the Codex Veronensis, however, presents a different wording, matching the verse more closely to Lk 7:28,²⁴ which explicitly contains a solution to this difficulty:

(...) *non surrexit inter natos mulierum propheta major Johanne Baptista*

The field of comparison thus limited merely to other prophets, thereby excluding Mary (as well as Christ), and so neatly solving what might otherwise remain problematic.

II.5 Matthew 12,47-49

The last portion of Matthew 12 deals with the incident in which Jesus' mother and brothers are 'seeking him'; in response to which Christ asks the question 'Who are my mothers and my brothers?' (Mt 12:47-50) A number of key words vary in the *b* text from the Vulgate and other *Vetus Latina* version, which subtly change the tone of the action of Jesus' mother and brothers, as well as Christ's own response. Specifically, the Codex Veronensis reduces any way in which the passage can be read to reflect uncomfortably upon Mary, or Jesus' response to the situation.

In the text of A, in Mt 12:47, someone informs Jesus that: '*Mater tua et fratres tui foris stant quaerentes te.*' But the *b* text introduces a somewhat more fully expressed sense: '*Mater tua et fratres tui foris stant quaerentes loqui tecum.*'²⁵ The Vulgate text is slightly ambiguous as to what was conveyed to Christ regarding the intentions of his mother and brothers— do they wish to speak to him, or to take him home,

(*non surrexit major*) arguing that Mary did not '*surrexit*', since, being immune to the effects of original sin, she did not need to rise up (F.X. DORN, *Diurnale Concionatorium In Festa: Complectens Conceptus Praedicabiles Pro singulis B. V. Mariae Festivitatibus* [Burkhart: Augusta Vindelicorum Burkhart, 1762], 63.)

²⁴ The Lukan redaction undoubtedly reflects a more developed Mariology.

²⁵ This same variant appears also for Mk 3:32. Interestingly, most *Vetus Latina* texts offer a version of this line similar to the Codex Veronensis (cf. Codices Vercellensis, Brixianus, Corbeinsis, etc.), and the Vulgate text ('*quaerentes te*') seems to be curiously isolated amongst Latin versions at this point.

or are they ‘seeking him’ in the sense of simply determining his whereabouts?²⁶ The Codex Veronensis text, however, specifies that their intention, as conveyed to Christ, was purely to converse, thus reducing the sense a confrontational encounter between Jesus and his family members.

Indeed, congruent with observation is the reading offered by the Codex Veronensis for Mk 3:21. The Vulgate (not without a certain ambiguity as to the *relati* of ‘*sui*’) has at this point:

Et cum audissent sui, exiirent tenere eum dicebant enim quoniam in furorem versus est.

In contrast, *b* (in common with the sense of several other *Vetus Latin* texts²⁷), gives:

Quod ut audierunt de illo Scribae et caeteri, exierunt ut tenerent illum dicebant enim quoniam exsentiati eos.

This variant can be linked back to the *b* text of Mt 12:46-47, effectively eliminating any suggestion in the text that Mary and Jesus’ other close family members were concerned about his sanity.

In Mt 12:48, the Codex Veronensis offers an interesting and unique reading for the rhetorical question with which Jesus responds, which in the Vulgate is simply:

Quae est mater mea, et qui sunt fratres mei?

Here, *b* introduces the word ‘*mibi*’:

Quae est mihi mater mea et fratres mei?

At first glance, the ‘*mibi*’ appears to be tautological, replicating the meaning of ‘*mea*’ and ‘*mei*’. However, the effect of the combination of both ‘*mibi*’ and ‘*mea/mei*’ seems to emphasize the non-literal nature of the question, as if Jesus is saying ‘Who is, to me,

²⁶ Both the A and *b* texts had, in fact, indicated a little earlier (Mt 12:46) that the intention of Jesus’ mother and brothers was ‘*loqui ei*’. However, Mt 12:47 speaks not about their actual intentions, but what was communicated to Jesus about their intentions.

²⁷ cf. Codices Vercellensis, Palatinus, Brixianus, Corbeiensis, etc.

like my mother and my brothers?’ Indeed, this explicitly metaphorical sense is reinforced in *b* text by the use of a single, singular verb (*est*), rather than introducing (in a more grammatically ‘correct’ way), the plural verb (*sunt*) and masculine pronoun (*qui*) for *‘fratres mei’*. The overall effect is to ‘soften’ the otherwise difficult effect of Christ’s rhetorical question. Of course, the question in either form is necessarily metaphoric— but in *b* its self-consciously non-literal nature is more prominently articulated.

Christ’s response to his own question, in Mt 12:49, *‘Ecce mater mea et fratres mei’*, is accompanied by gesture of extending his hand towards (?) his disciples. But the quality of this gesture is differently nuanced in various Latin versions, according to the choice of preposition. In this case, *b* and A match. However, other *Vetus Latina* witnesses differ, as shown:

Codex Veronensis, <i>b</i> Codex Amiatinus, A (Vulgate)	Codex Vercellensis, <i>a</i> Codex Corbeiensis I, <i>ff</i> ^f	Codex Brixianus, <i>f</i>
<i>Extendens manum in discipulos suos (...)</i>	<i>Extendens manum ad discipulos suos (...)</i>	<i>Extendens manum super discipulos suos (...)</i>

The *a* and *ff* texts (and, in a different way, the *f* text²⁸) both emphasize the directional dynamic of Jesus’ gesture, making it evidently a demonstrative act, akin to pointing. However, the *b* and A text, while not totally excluding that sense, is less emphatic as to the directional or demonstrative quality, as reflected in the very literal translation of Wycliffe:

And he helde forth his boond in to hise disciplis.

²⁸ It is to be noted that the *f* text may, in fact, be interpreted as “extending his hand over his disciples, he said, ‘Behold.....,’” i.e. that Jesus was pointing (over the heads of his disciples) to his mother and brothers when saying, “Behold, my mother and brothers.”

Thus the Codex Veronensis text (like that of the Vulgate) is less clear about whether Jesus actually *indicates* his disciples (to the apparent exclusion of Mary and his ‘brothers’), when saying ‘*Ecce mater mea et fratres mei*’; or whether he is simply making some other kind of gesture accompanying his discourse, in the midst of an audience of his disciples.

The total effect of these three textual variants in the Codex Veronensis for Mt 12,47-49 is to reduce the sense of a clash between Jesus and his mother and brothers. These subtle nuances in wording quite possibly reflect a desire to expunge any sense of disharmony between Mary and her Son.

III. The Theological Context in which the *b* Text Emerged, and its Relationship to the writings of Zeno of Verona

Consistent with the hypothesis that the text of the Codex Veronensis reflects a particular emphasis on Mary, and the related doctrines of the virginal conception of Christ and perpetual virginity of his mother, is the evidence that this was a particular feature of the Church at Verona in the fourth and fifth centuries. The most useful evidence of the theological and devotional *zeitgeist* of the Veronese Church at the time of the Codex’s origin is the corpus of sermons of Zeno—who served as Bishop of Verona in the 4th Century, and is closely associated with the early articulation in the Latin Church of the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary.

According to the Ballerinius’ commentary, Zeno, anticipating Jerome, was the first to formulate in precise terms the doctrine of virginity of Mary ‘*post connubium, post conceptum, post filium*.’²⁹ Guiliari similarly expresses the view that the orthodox Catholic position on the perpetual virginity of Mary finds its first and most apt expression

²⁹ P. BALLERINIUS, ‘Footnote 5’, in ZENO OF VERONA, *Sermones* (Verona: Typis Semanirii, 1739), 49.

in the writings of Zeno.³⁰ This undoubtedly was a particular theme for the Veronese Bishop, figuring in a quite number of his extant homilies.³¹

In one case, he even refers to the evidence a midwife, supposedly present at the birth of Christ, whose hand burned when she presumed to test the physical virginity of Mary after the birth.³² Interesting, Jerome himself dismisses that story as apocryphal.³³

A prominent feature of Zeno's Mariology is that Mary suffered no pain or discomfort, either in gestation or birth. This idea (which also figures in Jerome and Ambrose, and indeed Cyprian) is, however, articulated particularly emphatically by Zeno.³⁴ This theme of Mary's 'blessed calmness' seems to be reflected at several points in the *b* text. (See appendix— Lk 1:29; Lk 1:34; Lk 2:48b.)

If the status of Mary, and her perpetual virginity, was then a key topic for Zeno (and, presumably, the Church at Verona which he led), it seems reasonable that the Codex Veronensis, a treasured possession of the Cathedral at Verona since approximately his time, should reflect this emphasis. The findings of the analysis of textual variants in the Codex undertaken previously thus seem wholly consistent with the evident Marian emphasis of the Veronese Church of that time.

³⁰ GIAMBATTISTA CARLO GIULIARI, *S. Zenonis episcopi veronensis Sermones* (Rome: Typ. episc. F. Colombari, 1883), 69.

³¹ Cf. ZENO OF VERONA, *De Continentia*, 1:5. ZENO, *De eo, quod scriptum est "Cum tradiderit regnum Deo et Patri"*, 2:6. ZENO, *De Nativitate Domini* (i), 1:5. ZENO, *De Nativitate Domini* (ii), 1:5.

³² ZENO, *De Nativitate*. A more detailed variant of this story is present in the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew. "Pseudo-Matthei Evangelium," XIII:3-5, in C. TISCHENDORF (ed.), *Evangelia Apocrypha* (Leipzig: Avernarius & Mendelssohn, 1853), 75.

³³ JEROME, *De Perpetua Virginitate*, 8.

³⁴ Cf. ZENO, *De Nativitate Domini* (ii), 1:5.

IV. Conclusions

On the basis of the few examples considered, it seems that the variant wordings found in the text of the Codex Veronensis, *b*, do reflect a particular emphasis on Mary, and the doctrines of the virginal conception of Christ, and the perpetual virginity of Mary. This is in accordance with the special emphasis on those themes found in the writings of Zeno, whose episcopacy of Verona approximately coincides with the date of origin of the Codex.

Although the textual variants in Matthew have been the focus of the present paper, the Marian trend appears equally strongly and consistently in the texts of the other Gospels. These variants are tabulated with brief comment in Appendix I. While none of the variants, taken in individually and in isolation, are perhaps sufficient to prove this (except, arguably, the most widely discussed variant reading, in Jn 1:13), in combination they form a convincing case. Given the key importance of the Codex Veronensis as a witness of the *Vetus Latina* Gospel tradition, the identification and demonstration of this significant and consistent Marian theological/devotional nuance in the text may well be of real interest.

**APPENDIX I—
Additional Textual Variants in other Gospels Suggesting a
Marian Emphasis**

Verse	Codex Veronensis, <i>b</i>	Vulgate	Comment
Jn 1:12b-13	(...) <i>credentibus in nomine ejus qui non ex sanguine neque ex voluntate carnis nec ex voluntate viri sed ex deo natus est</i>	(...) <i>credentibus in nomine ejus qui non ex sanguine neque ex voluntate carnis nec ex voluntate viri sed ex deo nati sunt</i>	A widely discussed variant. The <i>b</i> reading obviously appears to refer to the virginal conception of Jesus, which otherwise is not explicitly mention in John.

Verse	Codex Veronensis, <i>b</i>	Vulgate	Comment
Jn 2,3-8	(...) <i>dicit mater Jesu ad eum</i> (...) <i>dixit ei Jesus</i> (...) <i>dicit mater ejus ministris</i> (...) <i>ait illis Jesus</i> (...) <i>ait illis Jesus</i> (...)	(...) <i>dicit mater Jesu ad eum</i> (...) <i>dicit ei Jesus</i> (...) <i>dicit mater ejus ministris</i> (...) <i>dicit eis Jesus</i> (...) <i>dicit eis Jesus</i> (...)	In the description of the utterances of Mary and Jesus in wedding at Cana pericope, the <i>b</i> text reserves the historical present for Mary, giving Christ the perfect tense. The Vulgate used historical present for both Jesus and Mary. Other versions (<i>ε</i>) use only the perfect, while others mix perfect and historical present variously between both figures (<i>a</i> , <i>ϰ</i>). The effect of the reservation of the historical present to Mary is a ‘foregrounding’ of her role in the narrative of the event.
Jn 6,42	<i>Nonne hic filius Joseph, cujus noscimus patrem?</i>	<i>Nonne hic est Jesus filius Joseph cujus nos novimus patrem et matrem?</i>	The <i>b</i> reading here seems to emphasise the separation of Mary from the Jews. The Jews assume (falsely) the paternity of Joseph, but are depicted as being not interested in his mother.

Verse	Codex Veronensis, <i>b</i>	Vulgate	Comment
Lk 1:27	<p><i>eodem autem tempore missus est Angelus Gabriel a Domino in civitatem Galilaeae cui nomen Nazareth ad Virgine Maria desponsatam viro cui nomen erat Joseph de domo David et nomen VIRGINIS MARIA</i></p>	<p><i>in mense autem sexto missus est angelus Gabrihel a Deo in civitatem Galilaeae cui nomen Nazareth ad virginem desponsatam viro cui nomen erat Joseph de domo David et nomen virginis Maria</i></p>	<p>Note extra appearance of name ‘<i>Maria</i>’ in <i>b</i>, in both cases joined to the title ‘<i>Virgo</i>’, and in the second case using larger letters. Note also the ‘ungrammatical’ use of ablative for ‘<i>ad Virgine Maria</i>’ possibly to preserve the morphology of the name. The use of ‘<i>eodem (...) tempore</i>’, rather than ‘<i>in mense sexto</i>’ may well reflect the apocryphal tradition that Jesus’ gestation was of an extended length (referred to by Zeno), since the Baptist and Jesus were conceived ‘<i>eodem tempore</i>’. The introduction of this <i>motif</i> highlights Mary’s closeness to Christ, and the importance of His ‘supernatural’ birth/conception/gestation.</p>

Verse	Codex Veronensis, <i>b</i>	Vulgate	Comment
Lk 1:28	<i>et ingressus angelus evangelizavit eam et dixit illi (...)</i>	<i>et ingressus angelus ad eam dixit (...)</i>	Note use of ‘ <i>evangelizare</i> ’, tying in with the ancient tradition that Mary was the first to receive the Gospel. Since ‘ <i>dixit</i> ’ is also given, it conveys the sense that the ‘ <i>evangelization</i> ’ was something additional to the angel’s announcement (i.e. ‘ <i>evangelizavit</i> ’ is not simply used instead of ‘ <i>dixit</i> ’).
Lk 1:28	<i>(...) benedicta tu inter mulieres</i>	<i>(...) benedicta tu inter mulieribus</i>	Note that the Vulgate’s ablative ‘ <i>mulieribus</i> ’ has a sense of comparison (‘Blessed are you, <i>compared</i> to women’). This is not present in <i>b</i> (‘Blessed are you, in the midst of women’). This seems to be a higher statement of praise, since it is not qualified by a comparative aspect.

Verse	Codex Veronensis, <i>b</i>	Vulgate	Comment
Lk 1:29	<i>ipsa autem ut vidit eum mota est in introitu ejus et erat cogitans quod sic benedixisset eam</i>	<i>quae cum audisset turbata est in sermone ejus et cogitabat qualis esset ista salutation</i>	Mary is not depicted as being ‘disturbed’ here, but merely ‘moved’ by the angel’s appearance (but not the speech). The <i>b</i> text may be read as: ‘She, since she had seen him, was moved by his entrance, and was meditating that he had thus blessed her.’ There is no suggestion (unlike in the Vulgate) that Mary did not comprehend the significance of the angel’s salutation. This paints a ‘calmer’ Mary, consistent with Zeno’s portrayal.
Lk 1:34	<i>(...) ecce ancilla domini</i>	<i>(...) quomodo fiet istud quoniam virum non cognosco</i>	Mary’s momentary questioning or doubt is removed; she obeys even before the angel’s explanation.

Verse	Codex Veronensis, <i>b</i>	Vulgate	Comment
Lk 2:41 & 2:43	<i>Maria et Joseph</i>	<i>parentes ejus</i>	Extra naming of Mary, and removing possibly problematic use of ‘ <i>parentes</i> ’ (connected with ‘ <i>parere</i> ’— not applicable to Joseph, and also troublesome to apply to Mary, because of the crudity of sense of ‘ <i>parere</i> ’)
Lk 2:48a	(...) <i>et dixit Maria</i>	(...) <i>et dixit mater ejus</i>	Extra naming of Mary.
Lk 2:48b	(...) <i>dolentes quaerebamus te.</i>	<i>pater tuus et ego dolentes quaerebamus te</i>	Dropping of reference to Joseph as ‘ <i>pater tuus</i> ’. Whereas the Vulgate reading makes it clear that Mary included amongst those (i.e. ‘ <i>pater tuus</i> ’) ‘ <i>dolentes</i> ’, the <i>b</i> (by not naming the subject of ‘ <i>quaerebus</i> ’) text leaves this open. ‘ <i>Tristes</i> ’, which is also found is several texts (<i>a, ff</i>) is omitted both from <i>b</i> and A. (Note link with Zeno’s theme of Mary not suffering).
Lk 3:22	<i>tu es filius meus, ego hodie genui te</i>	<i>tu es filius meus dilectus, in te complacui mihi</i>	The <i>b</i> text clearly presents a stronger emphasis on Divine paternity.

Verse	Codex Veronensis, <i>b</i>	Vulgate	Comment
Lk 3:23	<p><i>et ipse Jesus erat incipiens fere annorum, quod videbatur et dicebatur esse filius Joseph</i></p>	<p><i>et ipse Jesus erat incipiens quasi annorum trigenta, ut putabatur, filius Joseph</i></p>	<p>The <i>b</i> text emphasises more strongly that Jesus was <i>not</i> the son of Joseph, by doubling up the verb (<i>videbatur et dicebatur esse filius Joseph</i>), and also presented it in a personal form, rather than the impersonal ‘<i>putabatur</i>’ of the Vulgate. The fact that his status as son of Joseph was merely putative is expressed in just two words in the Vulgate (‘<i>ut putabatur</i>’), compared to the very emphatic five words in <i>b</i>.</p>

Verse	Codex Veronensis, <i>b</i>	Vulgate	Comment
Lk 11:27-28	<i>mulier de dixit illi beatus venter qui te portavit et ubera quae suxisiti</i> <i>At ille dixit ad eos beati qui audient verbum dei et custodiunt illud</i>	<i>mulier de turba dixit illi beatus venter qui te portavit et ubera quae suxisiti</i> <i>At ille dixit quinimmo beati qui audient verbum dei et custodiunt illud</i>	The omission of the ‘ <i>quinimmo</i> ’ from <i>b</i> has the effect of reducing/eliminating the rhetorical contrast between ‘the womb that bore you (...)’ and ‘those who do the will of hear the word of God (...)’.
Mk 3:21	<i>Quod ut audierunt de illo Scribae et caeteri, exierunt ut tenerent illum dicebant enim quoniam exsentiati eos.</i>	<i>Et cum audissent sui, exiirent tenere eum dicebant enim quoniam in furorem versus est.</i>	According the <i>b</i> version (found also in <i>a</i> , <i>e</i> , <i>f</i> and <i>ff</i> ^l) it is the ‘scribes and others’ who claim the Jesus is insane, not his ‘relatives’. This preserves Mary from this otherwise difficult incident.
Mk 3:23	<i>quaerentes loqui tecum</i>	<i>quaerentes te</i>	(As <i>per</i> Mt 12:47. <i>Vide supra.</i>)