

Alan Mugridge

Copying Early Christian Texts

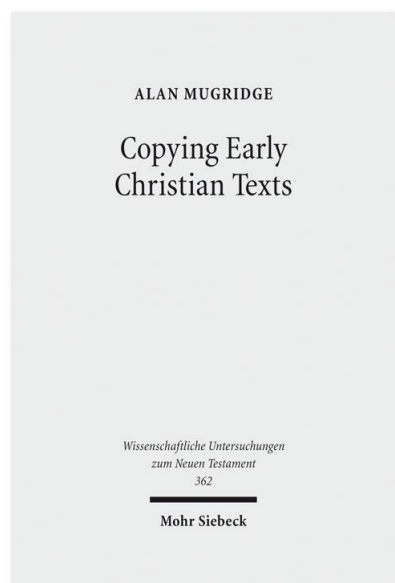
A Study of Scribal Practice

[Copying Early Christian Texts]

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It is widely believed that the early Christians copied their texts themselves without a great deal of expertise, and that some copyists introduced changes to support their theological beliefs. In this volume, however, Alan Mugridge examines all of the extant Greek papyri bearing Christian literature up to the end of the 4th century, as well as several comparative groups of papyri, and concludes that, on the whole, Christian texts, like most literary texts in the Roman world, were copied by trained scribes. Professional Christian scribes probably became more common after the time of Constantine, but this study suggests that in the early centuries the copyists of Christian texts in Greek were normally trained scribes, Christian or not, who reproduced those texts as part of their trade and, while they made mistakes, copied them as accurately as any other texts they were called upon to copy.

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