Gospel Traditions In The Second Century: Origins, Recensions, Text, And Transmission

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Koester’s essay (“The Text of the Synoptic Gospels in the Second Century,” in Gospel Traditions in the Second Century: Origins, Recensions, Text, and Transmission [ed. William L. Petersen; Notre Dame: from “original text” to “initial text” 639 to the Hebrew bible]). Petersen, after citing Paul Maas’ famous definition of textual criticism—a “The business of textual criticism is to produce a text as close as possible to the original”—suggests that an attempt to apply that dictum to the New Testament is problematic: First and foremost among the problems is the difficulty of defining “original.”