

BRIEF NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY

1st century

Original Greek Autographs

2nd - 3rd century

Greek NT canon

Translations:
Coptic (125 AD)
Aramaic (157 AD)
others¹

via Antioch⁹

Latin NT¹ (157 AD)

4th - 5th century

start of the
"Received Text"

New Latin
of Rome
(410 AD)

~2700 NT
doctrinal
verses
changed
by the
Roman
church

Based on
2nd century Greek,
designated 05 / D

Bezae (400 AD)
other Greek texts
"Received Text"

Greek NTs:
Sinaiticus², Vaticanus³
(Alexandrian text type)

~2400 verses
back-translated
from Latin

15th - 17th century

Erasmus: Greek versus
"faulty" New Latin⁶
other Greek sources

~300 verses
also reflect
Gnostic & Arian
doctrinal changes

99.9%
backed up by
Coptic, Aramaic and
1000s of extant
quotations from
150-400 AD

Stephanus Greek NT⁷

10+ English NTs,
150+ other language NTs⁸

NOTE: modern verse
numbering

19th - 21st century

"new" Received Text translations:
Noah Webster
21st Century KJV
Jubilee 2000 (Spanish)
Jubilee 2000 (English)
Schlachter 2000 (German)
others

Westcott & Hort GNT⁵,
ERV, RSV translations

authors with
dubious
reputations

UBS, NA, SBL GNTs,
other GNTs

virtually all
"modern" translations⁴

reality:
uniquely Catholic, Arian and Gnostic
doctrinal accommodations

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DIAGRAM NOTES

1. The Coptic (125 AD), Aramaic (157 AD) and “old Latin” (157 AD) were authored in Antioch for distribution by missionaries, who planted churches in areas they evangelized.
2. While Sinaiticus is supposed to be dated to the 5th century, there is mounting evidence that Constantine Simonides (1820–1890), a trader in antiquities (many of which were fakes), said himself that he created this forgery in 1839. In fact, from 1843 until 1856 no one would buy this manuscript, including the famous [British Museum](#) and the [Bodleian Library](#). (Apparently, their experts also thought they were fakes.)

Eventually the manuscript was purchased and subsequently treated as if it were 5th century in origin. It was then used in the production of the Westcott and Hort Greek NT, and indirectly, most all modern translations.

3. While Vaticanus is supposed to be of the 4th century in origin, it is overwritten in thousands of places, using newer ink and newer Greek spellings, changing the texts significantly, and it also includes 15th century artwork within. Some characteristics of it are:
 1. it is missing 1st and 2nd Timothy and all text after Hebrew 9:14
 2. it has large sections of other texts missing, that appear to be intentionally removed, as proven where in the middle of pages there are jumps from a particular verse to some verse 5-10 verses later, with no gap in between
 3. via photo-shop filtering, we now see a text that is overwritten in thousands of places, revealing the original, different text beneath, proving the original was in effect altered, making the manuscript fraudulent.

Vaticanus also was used in the production of the Westcott and Hort Greek NT, and indirectly, most all modern translations.

4. If your modern translation acknowledges its Greek source is SBL, NA, USB, Westcott & Hort, and not the Stephanus GNT or not some other Received Text Greek source, it is, to one degree or another, a “uniquely Catholic, Arian and Gnostic doctrinal accommodation,” having originated from Sinaiticus and Vaticanus GNTs (see diagram).

Today, modern translations vary from the least amount of Westcott and Hort text used, such as the New KJV, to the NRSV, which appears to use more Westcott and Hort source text than most of the rest. Everything else (except a Received Text translation) falls somewhere in between.

5. Our detailed studies (over 3500 man-hours) have revealed (1) a Greek text that was modified progressively, first to accommodate Catholic doctrine of the 1st few centuries (2700+ verses, mostly deletions), and a text further modified to accommodate Arian and Gnostic doctrines (300+ verses), likely due to creation of these source texts in Alexandria, Egypt. (2) These texts came to be collated in the Westcott and Hort Greek NT, used directly or indirectly, in whole or in part in virtually all modern translations. Handlers of modern versions, Westcott and Hort, Dr Kurt Aland, and Dr Bruce Metzger, in their own words, seem to have contradicted sound doctrines, making them dubious to heretics, which you will have to discern on your own. (See http://www.millpark.org/bible/doctrine-critical/_STUDY_2_HANDLERS_03.html for detailed information.)
6. Erasmus got the trend started of exposing the textual faults in the New Latin Text of Rome

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(Jerome, 410 AD) by comparing the Greek NT sources to the Latin, including Greek sources going back to the 2nd century. Being a Catholic theologian, he was able to get access to private Catholic church libraries to acquire early Greek NT texts, which he used to show the faults in the New Latin Text of Rome. Incidentally, Erasmus was inspired by an Italian, Lorenzo Valla (1407-1457), who is credited for creating a document over a thousand pages long that noted where the Latin was not faithful to early Greek texts, titled “*Collation Novi Testamenti*” (*Collation of the New Testament*) (1447). Erasmus found this work in 1504 in a library near [Louvain](#) and later published this work. Next, Stephanus followed up with corrections to the Greek NT of Erasmus based on other additional early sources, such as Bezae, a 400 AD Greek NT text (which was based on 2nd century Greek texts).

7. The Stephanus GNT and subsequent translations are free of uniquely Catholic, Arian and Gnostic doctrinal accommodations. The Greek text of Stephanus also appears to be the most authentic Koine Greek of them all, even reflecting the evolution of Greek spellings during the 1st century. In fact, this is what helps paleontologists to estimate the approximate years of authorship, with Paul's 1st Thessalonians being the earliest and John's writings being last.

Time and time again, the Stephanus GNT demonstrates remarkable accuracy over all other Greek NTs, because where the others fail it:

1. always uses the right words, over other variants, to fit the context in hundreds of places
2. has more 2nd to 4th century extant text quotations than others to back it up in thousands of places
3. has no grammatical flaws (unlike others, in hundreds of places)
4. uses correct word order that emphasizes “Jesus”, “Christ”, “Lord” and “Savior”, per the context, when others are “clueless” (ex: “Jesus, who is Christ,” or “Christ, who is named Jesus”, etc)
5. uses correctly emphatic word ordering of subject-verb-object, per the context, and other language constructs (where these 3 can be in 6 different orders)
6. has the “look and feel” of authenticity, because its choice of wording with respect to variants is consistent with sound doctrine and lack of conflicts, and even when its choice of word(s) conflicts with most all others, it comes across as amazingly accurate after in-depth research is performed.
7. While Stephanus relied heavily on about 20 Byzantine texts, a current-day comparison shows that Stephanus Greek NT differs from Byzantine Greek NT in over 1500 verses (out of about 8000 verses in the NT). He used a number of other source he felt reflected the original text better in certain variants, including the Bezae Codex.
8. At the time of the printing of the KJV, there were about 10 other English translations in existence based on the Received Text line of Greek manuscripts. In subsequent years, over 150 other language translations were created. The KJV has over 150 “sister” translations based on the same Received Text Greek. The KJV is not alone, but was widely supported in over 150 other languages.

Today, a few dozen more language translations exist based on traditional Received Text, both in English and other languages as well. (These are not based on Westcott and Hort, UBS, NA or SBL GNTs, which are based on Sinaiticus & Vaticanus Greek texts.)

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9. Antioch was one center of Christianity in the region north of Jerusalem from the 1st century until the early 7th century, and during this era it trained and sent out missionaries and provided them with translations in several languages, including, but not limited to, Aramaic (157 AD) and the early Latin version (157 AD), and assisted in the earliest known translation into Coptic (125 AD). These early texts assist in validating the Stephanus Greek New Testament as faithfully accurate.

NOTES ABOUT ERASMUS AND STEPHANUS

STEPHANUS

Editio Regia (*Royal edition*) is the third and the most important edition of the Greek New Testament of [Robert Estienne](#) (1503-1559). It is one of the most important printed editions of the Greek New Testament in history, the [Textus Receptus](#). It was named *Editio Regia* because of the beautiful and elegant Greek font it uses.

It was edited by Estienne in 1550 at [Paris](#). It is the first Greek Testament that has a [critical apparatus](#). Estienne entered on the margins of the pages variant readings from 15 Greek manuscripts as well as many readings from the [Complutensian Polyglot](#). [1] He designated all these sources by symbols from α' to $\iota\zeta'$. The *Complutensian Polyglot* was signified by α' . The critical collation was the new subject, and although Estienne omitted hundreds important variants from used witnesses, it was the first step towards modern [Textual Criticism](#). The oldest manuscript used in this edition was the [Codex Bezae](#), which had been collated for him, "by friends in Italy" (*secundo exemplar vetustissimum in Italia ab amicis collatum*). The majority of these manuscripts are held in [National Library of France](#) to the present day. Estienne made only a few changes in Erasmian text. He added to the Erasmian text verse Luke 17:36. He took it from Codex Bezae.

The text of the editions of 1546 and 1549 was a composition of the Complutesian and [Erasmian Novum Testamentum](#). The third edition approaches more closely to the Erasmian fourth and fifth editions. According to [John Mill](#) first and second editions differ in 67 places, and the third in 284 places. [2] The third edition became for many scholars, especially in England, the normative text of the Greek New Testament. It maintained this position until 1880. The fourth edition used exactly the same text as the third, without a critical apparatus, but the text is divided into numbered verses for the first time in the history of the printed text of Greek New Testament. It was used for the [Geneva Bible](#).

SUNDRY NOTES:

1. The 1550 edition of Stephanus varied from the fifth edition of Erasmus in 284 places, apparently because Stephanus used older texts, such as Bezae Codex, and other variants that Stephanus thought were correct, mostly because of consensus. Erasmus was familiar with some of the older texts Stephanus used, but was unsure of their validity. Stephanus was able to determine that they were indeed reliable, plus he had access to more texts than Erasmus.
2. Many variants were listed in the margins of the Stephanus 1550, but not all of them. It seemed

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that these were useful for future comparison, even as a reminder to verify the text he chose over the variant(s).

3. The Stephanus 1551 text was the same as the 1550, but without variants in the margins and with verse numbering added.
4. While the Complutesian Polyglot was used in his earliest two editions, it appears that both he and Erasmus favored other variants over the Polyglot. They thought that the sources were better Greek sources.
5. Codex Bezae of the 5th century gives us a lot of confidence in the wording in the gospels and the book of Acts. The rest of the New Testament came from various Greek sources Stephanus had at his disposal.

ERASMUS and STEPHANUS Greek compilations

Notes on Erasmus

1. He believed both free will and election coexisted, which was a good anti-Catholic stance. Luther did not believe in “free will” with respect to salvation, because obviously to Luther, children that were baptized could be saved, and babies have no free will. (And this is why some pulled Acts 8:37, namely, to support baptizing babies.)
2. Erasmus preferred reconciliation with scoffers and heretics over outright punishment of them, also an anti-Catholic stance.
3. He believed in transubstantiation, however. But this might have been so deeply ingrained from religious teachings and also from lack of time to study the issue fully. However, even if the bread and wine did transubstantiate, this is not that bad a thing, as long as we do not let it become an idolatrous thing over the real body and blood of Christ.
4. He argued against “formalism”, a deep tradition, in favor of the real substance of demonstrating Christ living through us.
5. He lived as an independent scholar, despite being trained in Catholic universities. He also shunned lucrative offers to teach at leading universities. Money was not his goal.
6. He ignored some earlier Greek text over newer ones and relied somewhat on the Byzantine text, but that may be what Stephanus reversed in whole or in part since Stephanus GNT differs from the Byzantine GNT in 1525 verses. Note that several hundred places the Byzantine uses Medieval Greek (400 AD onward), while the Stephanus is 100% Koine Greek (300 BC to 300 AD), and even reflects spelling changes that evolved in the 1st Century.
7. Internal forensics of the Stephanus GNT indicates that about 4200 verses differ from the Latin of Jerome, so it is likely that any uniquely Catholic doctrinal accommodations were pulled out of Erasmus' GNT by Stephanus by using Greek sources that allowed him to get rid of these accommodations. Stephanus declared himself a protestant at some point, so it is possible he recognized the Catholic accommodations and found replacement texts from Greek sources.
8. Erasmus was a reformer, writing about needed reformations, but not always in agreement with

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Luther. In fact, he seemed to be less sympathetic to Catholic teaching than even Luther. And indeed the Catholic church had a counter-reformation movement going on against Erasmus and some others.

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Narrative

1. the original texts were penned and distributed
2. eventually Coptic, Aramaic and Latin version translations appeared in the 2nd century and many were produced in Antioch, so missionaries sent from there would have a translation
3. from there on, other translations appeared, so Christians outside of the Catholic church had sources for their spiritual guidance
4. The production of the Erasmus versions:
 1. Erasmus starts with Bezae and the Polyglot, and via 4 more revisions had a Latin text to compare with that matched Jerome's Latin, which shows wide differences
 2. he also puts in the margins many variants he rejected
 3. Luther uses the 2nd edition for his translation
 4. Tyndale uses the 3rd edition for his translation
5. The production of Stephanus:
 1. Stephanus initially uses the 3rd edition of Erasmus, but also makes revisions to his own to match the 4th and 5th editions of Erasmus
 2. Stephanus makes further revisions of his own, preferring additional Greek sources Erasmus did not have or use when he had them
6. The production of other authors' versions vary from Stephanus, and appear to be flawed:
 1. Beza, of the late 1500s, admits to emendation just because he thought it was right to do so, even without references to back up his changes
 2. Scrivener created parts of his NT from back-translated English, which any linguist knows does not produce the correct Greek words most of the time.
 3. Other editors had similar issues to the above two
 4. these facts leave Stephanus towering over the others.

CONCLUSION

The Stephanus GNT is the best GNT because it

1. was not revised in a dubious manner, like Beza and Scrivener,
2. got better with each revision, that is, it appears to have eliminated all uniquely Catholic doctrinal influence, and never had any Arian and Gnostic influences to begin with and,
3. has Koine Greek over Medieval Greek, an indication that the earliest sources of Greek were used, or at least faithful copies of the originals penned by the Apostle