

THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PRINTING OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT. DOES THE *TEXTUS RECEPTUS* STILL HAVE A FUTURE?

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The Complutensian Polyglot was the first complete printing of the Greek New Testament. It was printed on 10 January 1514, but it disappeared until 1522.¹ In the meantime Erasmus stole the show. This appearance and disappearance of the Complutensian Polyglot may be likened to the time when Tamar give birth to twins. Zerah put out his hand and the midwife tied a scarlet thread around his wrist, which he then withdrew into his mother's womb, and his brother Perez came out first (Gen 38:27-30). It can be said of Zerah and the Complutensian, "This one came out first," but both went back into a hidden place and did not see the light of day until Perez and Erasmus put in their appearance.

The Complutensian has the honor of being the first to be printed, but Erasmus's Greek text has the honor of being the first to be published, and the first to be put into the hands of the Church.

Following a study of the origin of the text of the Complutensian Polyglot (hereafter CP), the focus of this article will broaden out into a study of the emergence of the *Textus Receptus*² from

¹ The full title of the work is *Biblia Sacra Polyglotta, complectentia Vetus Testamentum Hebraico, Graeco, et Latino idiomate; Novum Testamentum Graecum et Latinum, et vocabularium Hebraicum et Chaldaicum Veteris Testamenti, cum Grammaticâ Hebraicâ, necnon Dictionario Graeco; studio, operâ et impensis Cardinalis Francisci Ximenez de Cisneros*. Compluti, 1514 – 1517. Six vols., folio. This is better known as the Complutensian Polyglot (CP). This text was reprinted in the Antwerp Polyglot (1569-1572, by Plantin, which used the CP for the LXX). The project was funded by Cardinal Spinosa, and edited by Arius Montanus (and 60 others). It was applauded by the Pope as a 'work truly regal,' and it was placed in the catalogue of wonders, but Montanus was hounded by the Inquisition for heresy. Soon other polyglots appeared, Vatable's Bible in 1586 (used CP for LXX), Hutter's Polyglot in 1591 (twelve languages)(used CP for LXX), the Parisian Polyglot in 1645, Walton's in 1657 (nine languages)(used the Roman LXX), and Bagster's in 1818-1821 (used the Roman LXX).

² The Latin preface to Elzevir's 2nd ed. of 1633 was written by the university librarian, Daniel Heinsius, according to Henk Jan de Jonge, *Daniel Heinius and the Textus Receptus of the New Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1971), who made the claim that: *Textum ergo habes, nunc ab omnibus receptum; in quo nihil immutatum aut corruptum damus*. "Thus you have the text now accepted by everyone, in which we give nothing changed or corrupted." It was from this claim that we get the title *textus receptus* to refer to the Greek text behind the Authorized Version (KJV), which is an

the five editions that Erasmus produced between 1516 and 1535. The text of these editions had been compared to thirty printed editions between 1535 and 2005, using the last ten chapters of Matthew's Gospel as the base text for this comparison.³ Both the CP and Erasmus's editions are representatives of the universal Byzantine Text. However, the TR 'departs from the common denominator more frequently than the mass of Byzantine minuscule.'⁴ In other words, it is not a typical representative of the Koine Text.

The cardinal primate of Spain, Francisco Ximenes de Cisneros planned to produce a polyglot Bible of the Old and New Testaments in 1502. The entire work, comprising six large volumes, was eventually completed on 10 July 1517. The first volume to be printed was volume 5 dated 10 January 1514. It contained the Greek New Testament with a parallel Latin translation. Sanction for the publication of the completed work was granted by Pope Leo X on 22 March 1520, but it was not released until the Vatican received back the MSS it loaned to Cardinal Ximenes, who died in 1517, so that it was not released until 1522.

While the Complutensian was in progress, an enterprising printer, Johann Froben of Basle, Switzerland, spotted a gap in the market and promptly got Erasmus to fill it. Erasmus was urged by Froben in a letter of April 1515 to prepare a Greek New Testament.⁵ Erasmus quickly collated

eclectic text. This 'Received Text' should not be confused with the Majority (Byzantine) Text, or the Universal Text, which represents the purest, self-selecting form of the Byzantine text-type. For research purposes the *Textus Receptus* printed in Oxford, 1873, is taken as the representative text of the TR. It should be replaced with Robinson and Pierpont's Greek Text of 2005. The most comprehensive list of editions of the TR is that by Edward Reuss, *Bibliotheca Novi Testamenti Graeci* (Brunswick: C. A. Schwetschke, 1872). The editions are classified in accord with minor differences of text and typography.

³ The choice of the last ten chapters of Matthew's Gospel was dictated by the fact that MS 69 only begins at Mt 18:15. It was thought that Erasmus got his 'exception clause' for divorce from the margin of this manuscript at Mt 19:9.

⁴ Frederik Wisse, *The Profile Method for Classifying and Evaluating Manuscript Evidence* in *Studies and Documents*, Irving Alan Sparks, ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), p. 26.

⁵ Johann Froben sent the letter on 17 April, 1515, while Erasmus was in Cambridge. Erasmus reached Basle in the summer of 1515. By 11 September negotiations were underway whether to print Erasmus's fresh Latin translation alongside the Greek text or to print it separately. Some (e.g., Gerbelius) wanted the Greek text on its own for portability. Soon after 11 September Oecolampadius joined Erasmus at Basle to assist in correcting the proof sheets. Erasmus could

what Greek texts he could find in Basle at this time. He used the actual text of a twelfth-century Greek manuscript, MS 2, which he marked up with his corrections. He gave this to the printer, along with his own Latin translation, which he had been working on for many years. The third and fifth editions were accompanied by annotations explaining his departures from Jerome's Latin Vulgate.⁶ It took Froben six months to type-set Erasmus's first edition, which was published in March 1516. This means that Erasmus had just five months to get his text ready for the printer.

With respect to the Complutensian Polyglot, there is no list of the manuscripts that were available to Cardinal Ximenes when his team created their text of the New Testament, apart from the knowledge that the Pope had lent him some manuscripts from the Vatican Library.

However, by collating the whole of Matthew's Gospel against the Majority (Byz.) Text of Robinson & Pierpont,⁷ (hereafter RP) using Reuben Swanson's apparatus for Matthew,⁸ and von Soden's apparatuses, and through an internal analysis of the variants, it is possible to trace the contribution of non-Byzantine text-types to the distinctive text in Matthew and in the other Gospels. The CP is made up of two families of manuscripts, called f1 and f13.⁹

not give all his time to this work as he had to edit the works of Jerome. In less than six months from the commencement of the printing, the whole volume was completed. The date at the back of the title page is: Sexto Calendas Martias, anno M.D.XVI. The date at the end of the Dedication to Pope Leo X is: M.D.XVI. Calendis Februariis. At the end of the volume the date is M.D.XVI. Kalendis Martij. The publication appears to have taken place immediately. See Samuel P. Tregelles, *An Account of the Printed Text of the Greek New Testament* (London, 1854), pp. 19-21.

⁶ Erika Rummel, *Erasmus' Annotations on the New Testament* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986); see also, William W. Combs, "Erasmus and the Textus Receptus," *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 1 (Spring 1996) 35-53.

⁷ Maurice A. Robinson & William G. Pierpont (Compiled and Arranged), *The New Testament in the Original Text: Byzantine Textform 2005* (Southborough, MASS: Chilton Book Publishing, 2005).

⁸ Reuben Swanson, *New Testament Greek Manuscripts: Matthew* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press/ Pasadena CA: William Carey International University Press, 1995).

⁹ The following manuscripts have been identified as belonging to Family 1 in John's Gospel: 118, 205 (von Soden δ 500), 205abs (a copy of 205), 209, and 2713 (known as the Venice group), another group comprises MSS 1, 565, 1582, and 2193, and the others are MSS 22, 131, 872, 884, 1192, 1210, 1278, 2372 and 2542, according to Alison Welsby, *A Textual Study of Family 1 in the Gospel of John* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013). See also Didier Lafleur, "Which Criteria for Family 13 (f¹³)

Table 1

CHIEF MANUSCRIPT SUPPORT FOR THE COMPLUTENSIAN VARIANTS IN MATTHEW

MATTHEW	f1	f13	Kr	MS 1424	MS 118 (f1)	(f13)	UNIQUE	TOTALS
LIST 1				6				6
LIST 2	34	13	18	10	10	2		44
LIST 3		12	3	3	2	8		20
LIST 4	13	5						13
LIST 5							45	45
TOTALS	47	30	21	19	12	10	45	128

A word of explanation is needed regarding the totals on the far right columns. List 2 shows a total of 44 non-Byzantine readings in CP. Thirty-four of them occur in f1, and thirteen of them occur in f13. Von Soden's Kr group was a witness in 18 out of the 44, etc. The dominance of the Caesarean¹⁰ Text is clear in Matthew's Gospel. There are 511 differences in Matthew's Gospel

Manuscripts?" *Novum Testamentum* 54 (2012) 105-148. MS Θ in Matthew is closer to f1 from 1:1 to 18:25, but switches to f13 from 18:25 to the end.

¹⁰ A study of the 14 MSS (13 have Mt) comprising Family 1 was completed by Amy S. Anderson, *Textual Tradition of the Gospels: Family 1 in Matthew* (NTTS 32; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2004). Family f1 consists of MSS 1, 22, 118, 131 (possibly just Mt 1-4, Anderson, *Textual Tradition* 133) 205 (von Soden δ 500), 205abs (is a copy of 205), 209 (identical in Mt to 118, Anderson, *Textual Tradition* 116), 872, 884 (not extant for Mt), 1192, 1210, 1278, 1582, 2193 and 2542 (not extant in Mt until 12:30 and considered 'purely Byzantine' by Anderson [p. 145]) (p. 101). Sub-groups are (1) MSS 1 and 1582; (2) 118, 205, 209; (3) 22, 1192, 1210; and (3) miscellaneous 131, 872, 1278, 2193. According to Alison Welsby (*A Textual Study of Family 1 in the Gospel of John* [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2013]) in John's Gospel the sub-groups are (1) 1 565 884 1582; (2) 118 205 205abs 209 2713; (3) 22, 1192 1210 1278 2372; (4) miscellaneous 131 872 2193. These sub-groups are said to be the same in Matthew's Gospel (Welsby, *Textual Study* 74).

The text of Codex 1 (four Gospels) was published with a critical apparatus by Kirsopp Lake, *Codex 1 of the Gospels and Its Allies* (Cambridge: University Press, 1902). The MSS of f1 collated in his apparatus were 1, 118, 131, and 209; and for f13 these were 13, 69, 124, 346, 543, 788, 826, and 828. Swanson transcribed f1: 1 118 1582; and f13: 13 69 124 788 346.

According to D. Lafleur the MSS comprising Family 13 are: 13, 69, 124, 174, 230, 346, 543, 788, 826, 828, 983, 1689, 1547 and possibly 1709 (see Didier Lafleur, "Which Criteria for Family 13 (f¹³) Manuscripts?" *Novum Testamentum* 54 [2012] 105-148). The Ferrar group consists of 13 69 124 346

between CP and RP of which 332 concern the final Nu (= 65%),¹¹ and 51 other spelling differences. This leaves 128 other variants.

Sigla: In the column headings, 'f13' is the evidence from von Soden's apparatus. The column headed '(f13)' indicates substantial support from the f13 group of MSS, but less than 50% of Swanson's group. The column headed 'unique' covers those cases where CP is alone, but only with respect to the restricted number of manuscripts in Swanson's apparatus, or, the variant has the support of only one or two of Swanson's MSS not included in the seven categories (columns) in this table. I have used 'MS 118 (f1)' to show that this manuscript on its own will sometimes support CP when, in Swanson's collation, the rest of Family 1 does not. There are distinct blocks of witnesses as indicated by the five separate lists in Table 1. The totals for each vertical column will not necessarily be the same for the horizontal lines, because the latter represent multiple support.

Table 2

CHIEF MANUSCRIPT SUPPORT FOR THE COMPLUTENSIAN VARIANTS IN MARK

MARK	f1	f13	Kr	MS 1424	MS 118 (f1)	(f13)	UNIQUE	TOTALS
LIST 1				7		1		7
LIST 2	41	17	6	14	2	2		41
LIST 3		15	5	3		3		15
LIST 4			13	2	2	2		13
LIST 5							23	23
TOTALS	41	32	24	26	4	8	23	99

The dominance of the Caesarean text, the f1-f13 group, is more noticeable in Mark's Gospel.

There are 409 differences in Mark's Gospel between CP and RP of which 258 concern the final Nu (= 63.1%), and 107 other spelling differences. This leaves 99 other variants.

543 778 826 828. The text of MS 543 was published in F. H. A. Scrivener's *Adversaria Critica Sacra* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1893), his *d* (no. 66).

¹¹ The omission of the moveable Nu is characteristic of all the Caesarean MSS (f1+f13). It is a text-type signature in its own right. Anderson, *Textual Tradition* 16 notes, however, that MS 1582 (written by Ephraim) retains the moveable Nu, unless, as she claims (p. 21), these were erased by a later corrector. The CP regularly omits the moveable Nu, as did the scribe who re-inked Codex Vaticanus, as does Hodges & Farstad as a policy decision. RP retained the moveable Nu as a policy decision, not as a textual decision.

Table 3

CHIEF MANUSCRIPT SUPPORT FOR THE COMPLUTENSIAN VARIANTS IN LUKE

LUKE	f1	f13	Kr	MS 1424	MS 118 (f1)	(f13)	UNIQUE	TOTALS
LIST 1	1		15	5		1		15
LIST 2		17	6	4		1		18
LIST 3	36		16	12	2	1		36
LIST 4				2		2		2
LIST 5							42	42
TOTALS	37	17	37	23	2	5	42	113

The influence of the Caesarean f1-f13 group is also significant in Luke's Gospel.

There are 632 differences in Luke's Gospel between CP and RP of which 381 concern the final Nu (= 60.285%), and 251 other spelling differences. This leaves 113 other variants.

Table 4

CHIEF MANUSCRIPT SUPPORT FOR THE COMPLUTENSIAN VARIANTS IN JOHN

JOHN	f1	f13	Kr	MS 1424	MS 118 (f1)	(f13)	UNIQUE	TOTALS
LIST 1	1			1				1
LIST 2	1							1
LIST 3	14	14	7	2				14
LIST 4	7		7	1				7
LIST 5	1					1		7
LIST 6			4		4	4		4
LIST 7		12	4	5	2			12
LIST 8						3		3
LIST 9				1				1
LIST 10			10	4		1		10
LIST 11							25	25
TOTALS	24	26	32	14	6	9	25	79

The statistics show that CP is basically a Kr text, which has been influenced by the two branches (f1 and f13) of the Caesarean Text. There are 389 differences between CP and RP of which 265 concern the final Nu and other spelling differences (= 68.3%). This leaves 124 other variants. If we ignore the Pericope Adultery, which is not in f13 (being moved to follow Luke 21:38), and in f1 it is given in an appendix to John's Gospel, this leaves 79 variants.

If we combine the support for the Complutensian text in the four Gospels we get the following table.

Table 5

SUPPORT FOR THE COMPLUTENSIAN VARIANTS IN THE FOUR GOSPELS

	f1	f13	Kr	MS 1424	MS 118 (f1)	(f13)	UNIQUE	TOTALS
MATTHEW	47	30	21	19	12	10	45	128
MARK	41	32	24	26	4	8	23	99
LUKE	37	17	37	23	2	5	42	113
JOHN	24	26	32	14	6	9	25	79
TOTALS	149	105	114	82	24	32	135	419

If the CP team¹² used a Kr text as their base text then this would account for the close similarity between the RP and the CP texts, because the Kx and Kr¹³ are virtually indistinguishable,¹⁴ which makes the agreements of CP and Kr very significant. The influence of the Caesarean Text is very strong in CP in the form of contributions from f1 and f13. Family 1 has

¹² The group that put the CP together included Aelius Antonius Bebrissensis, Demetrius Ducas, Ferdinandus Pincianus, Lopez de Stunica (fierce critic of Erasmus's editions), Alfonsus de Xamora, Paulus Coronellus, and Johannes de Vergera, a medical doctor of Alcala or Complutum. The work was overseen and financed by Cardinal Ximenez de Cisneros.

¹³ Kr includes Family 35, which constitutes the text of Wilbur Pickering's Greek New Testament, which has been translated as, *The Sovereign Creator has Spoken* (Lexington, KY. Dec. 2013). Given that there are a grand total of 15,975 words in John's Gospel, according to the Greek text of Hodges & Farstad, and Family 35 affects just 98 words in the RP text, this means that the difference between the two texts amounts to 0.613%. In terms of agreement, f35 agrees with RP 99.39%. Pickering's differences could be footnoted in a future edition of RP's text, seeing they are so few in number. Pickering, unfortunately translated Erasmus's Greek text in Mt 5:32 and 19:9, instead of his own Greek text, thus introducing Erasmus's exception for divorce into Jesus' teaching. His translation of Mt 19:9 reads: "And I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except for fornication, and marries another commits adultery." If he had translated his own Greek text it would have read: "And I say to you that whoever divorces his wife—not over fornication *which is punished by death*—and marries another *woman*, he becomes adulterous."

¹⁴ My own study of Luke revealed that there are only 69 differences between the Kx and the Kr texts; 24 of these agree with the Egy. text and the other 45 are non-Egy. variants not shared with any other other sub-group of the Koine text. See David O. Voss, "Is von Soden's K^r a Distinct Type of Text?" *JBL* 57 (1938) 311-18. David O. Voss published the K^r text of Mark as "Appendix D: K Variants in Mark," in Silva Lake's *Family Π and the Codex Alexandrinus* (London, 1936), with his corrections in *JBL* 57 (1938) 317 n. 12.

many more agreements with the *united* Egyptian Text than f13 (197 as against 107). But most significant of all are the 135 'unique' readings in CP. It may be possible, once the entire collection of manuscripts in Münster have been digitised, to isolate a group of manuscripts that contain these so-called unique readings, and so identify the lost list of manuscripts that the CP team used to create the CP text, unless, of course, on some occasions (as in 1 Jn 5:7b-8a), they preferred to adopt the Latin Vulgate in place of the Greek.¹⁵

The rest of this study is focused on an in-depth collation of the last ten chapters of Matthew's Gospel in thirty printed editions of the Greek New Testament between 1514 and 2005. The tables also include the collation of five manuscripts for comparison purposes, namely, Codex Vaticanus, Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Leicestrensis (MS 69),¹⁶ MS 1 and MS 2.

I. THE ORIGIN OF THE *TEXTUS RECEPTUS*

At the instigation of Froben of Basle Erasmus dropped everything and concentrated on the opportunity to be the first to produce the New Testament in Greek, and in five to six months he was able to hand Froben Manuscript 2 with most of his corrections inserted either interlinearly or in the margins. Froben did the work in record time, just five months, 2 October 1515 to 1 March 1516.¹⁷

In double quick time Froben had flooded the market with Erasmus's first edition in 1516. So great was the demand for Erasmus's Greek text of the New Testament among the Protestant

¹⁵ For the story of the making of the CP see Basil Hall, *The Great Polyglot Bibles* (San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1966); *ibid.* "The Trilingual College of San Ildefonso and the Making of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible," *Studies in Church History* 5 (1969) 114-46. The locations of 97 of the original 600 copies are listed in Mariano Revilla Rico, *La Poliglota de Alcalá: Estudio histórico-crítico* (Madrid: Helénica, 1917). For these sources see Bruce M. Metzger, "The Greek New Testament," in *Scholarly Editing: A Guide to Research*, ed. D. C. Greetham (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1995), pp. 69-70.

¹⁶ For an introduction to this codex see Jac. Dean Perrin, "Family 13 in Saint John's Gospel" (PhD Birmingham University, 2012) pp. 64-87.

¹⁷ See Robert Proctor, *The Printing of Greek in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Bibliographical Society, 1900); Victor Scholderer, *Greek Printing Types, 1465-1927* (London: British Museum, 1927); Richard P. Breadon, "The First Book Printed in Greek," *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 51 (1947) 586-92; and Metzger, "The Greek New Testament" 64-74.

Reformers that he produced two more editions, amounting to over 3,300 copies, before the Roman Catholic church released its Complutensian text in 1522.

The CP did not catch on for two reasons. First, it was too expensive, and second, only 600 copies were made, of which a consignment of 200 was lost at sea on its way to Italy. Of the thirty printed editions examined in this study only two of them were heavily influenced by the CP, namely, Arias Montanus (1583) and Joseph Scaliger (1620), but both editions were largely ignored by their successors.

Erasmus might have been lauded throughout Europe for his edition of the Greek New Testament, except that he used the opportunity to put his own Latin translation of his Greek text on the same printed page as the Greek in the first three editions and the fifth (all were two-columned editions).¹⁸ But in the fourth edition of 1527, he made the bold move to include Jerome's Vulgate alongside his own Latin translation in his first three-columned edition. This was an invitation to all to compare his translation with Jerome's.

Erasmus's new Latin translation was seen as a threat to Jerome's Vulgate text, which had been the 'authorized version' in the Roman Catholic church for over one thousand years. Erasmus's additions and omissions from the Vulgate were soon noted, which Erasmus was able to defend because, as he explained, he was translating the original Greek text of the New Testament. So attention soon turned to the Greek text itself and it was found that his Greek text did not agree with Codex Vaticanus. Erasmus sometimes followed the Vulgate rather than the Greek.¹⁹

The following table notes 212 *homoioteleuthon* errors in the *united* Egyptian Text (Vaticanus & Sinaiticus) in the four Gospels. Out of this total Jerome's Vulgate (and presumably the Old Latin

¹⁸ The third (1522) and the fifth (1535) editions contained his *Annotations*, in which he justified his departures from Jerome's Vulgate.

¹⁹ For a list of these places see Ezra Abbot, *The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel and Other Critical Essays* (Boston: G. H. Ellis, 1888), p. 218. These include Acts 9:5, 6; Rom 7:6; 2 Cor 1:6; 1 Pet 3:20; Rev 1:9, 11; 2:3, 20, 24; 3:2, 5, 10, 14; 15:3; 16:5; 17:8, 16; 18:2. Perhaps the most devastating critique ever written of the *Textus Receptus* is that by James D. Price, *King James Onlyism: A New Sect* (Published by the author; Printed in Singapore by Saik Wah Press, 2006. ISBN 978-0-9791147-0-0). He exposed the AV to have departed from the Hebrew and Greek originals on numerous occasions. See, for example, Appendix 1 for occasions where the AV preferred to go with the LXX, Targums, Latin, or Syriac in the OT. For a shorter critique see Nicholas R. Warse, "The Theological Fingerprints on the King James Old Testament," *Restoration Quarterly* 54 (2012) 229-40.

behind it) agrees with the Byzantine Text 67.45% and agrees with the united Egyptian Text 32.55%. Jerome's Vulgate appears to have been based on the Caesarean text-type, which is an offshoot of the Universal (Byzantine) Text. Jerome only revised the Old Latin, so these differences very likely ante-date Jerome's edition.

	VULGATE AGREES WITH THE EGYPTIAN TEXT (Ba)	VULGATE AGREES WITH BYZANTINE TEXT (MT)
MATTHEW	13	14
MARK	21	41
LUKE	22	55
JOHN	13	33
	69	143

Embarrassingly for the Roman Catholic church, it was found that overall their own Complutensian Greek text was almost identical to Erasmus's Greek text, and certainly far closer to it than to the Greek text of Vaticanus. The pope's secretary, Supelveda, wrote to Erasmus in 1533, criticising his departure from the church's sacred text of the Vulgate, and from the Greek text of Codex Vaticanus. He sent Erasmus a list of over 350 instances of these departures. Unfortunately, this list has not survived. These departures, from either the Latin on its own, or from the Greek of Vaticanus, are, very likely, marked with marginal 'umlauts' in the present Codex Vaticanus. Erasmus had been sent variant readings found in Vaticanus, but he chose to ignore them²⁰ because he considered Vaticanus to be too corrupt to be relied upon. He noted the huge disparity between Codex Vaticanus and the majority of manuscripts he had begun comparing in his travels around Europe.²¹ Concerning his Greek text he admitted that he did the work of six years in a few months and that the whole project was hurried through the press, rather than carefully edited. He claims in his letters to friends that he had revised his new Latin translation with diligence and checked it 'against the true Greek text' (Epistle 373; *CWE* vol 3, pp. 198-99²²). Erasmus also replied to his detractors and critics as follows:²³

²⁰ One of the rare exceptions was the spelling of *Clauda* in Acts 27:3.

²¹ Erasmus made seven visits to England (the dates have been abstracted from his letters). (1) Autumn 1499 (Greenwich, London); (2) Oct-Nov 1499 (Oxford); (3) Dec 1505–June 1506 (London); (4) May 1511 (London); (5) Aug 1511–July 1514 (mainly Cambridge, London), this is when he came across MS 69 (Codex Leicestrensis); (6) May–Sept 1516 (London, Rochester); and (7) April 1517 (London).

²² P. S. Allen, *Opvs Epistolarvm Des. Erasmi Roterodami* (3 vols.; Oxonii: Clarendoiano, 1906-58).

²³ He had a formidable opponent in Jacob Hochstrat [c. 1465–1527], a Dominican of Cologne, who was the '*generalis fidei censor ac quaesitor*' in the provinces of Cologne, Mainz, and Trèves. In

We do not tear up the Vulgate Edition—which is, however, of uncertain authorship, though it is ascertained not to be the work of either Cyprian or Ambrose or Hilary or Augustine or Jerome—but we point out where it is depraved, giving warning in any case of flagrant error on the part of the translator, and explaining it, where the version is involved or obscure. If it is desirable that we should have the Divine Books as free from error in their text, this labour of mine not only corrects the mistakes which are found in copies of the Sacred Volumes, but prevents their being depraved in future; and if it is wished that they should be rightly understood, we have laid open more than six hundred passages, which up to this time have not been understood even by great theologians. . . . Although we have translated throughout the reading of the Greek scribes, we still do not so approve it in every case, as not in some instances to prefer our own [Vulgate] text, pointing out in every case where the orthodox Latin writers agree or disagree with the Greek. (Epistle 402 [EE II.226]²⁴)

Erasmus took the liberty of occasionally correcting or supplementing his Greek text from the Vulgate; and hence in more than twenty places his Greek text is not supported by any known Greek MS.²⁵

It is an unfortunate legacy of Erasmus's hurried work that it contained hundreds of errors and one glaring theological error. Theologically, Erasmus disagreed with the Roman Catholic church's doctrine that divorce was not permitted for fornication. So when Erasmus came to Matthew 19:9 he saw his opportunity to clarify²⁶ Jesus' teaching on divorce. To do this he

May 1517 he had threatened 'persecution' of Erasmus in a document called *Destructio Cabale* for his views on divorce. See P. S. Allen, *CWE IV.47ff.* and letter 1006 (11 Aug. 1519) for the details. See also E. Rummel, *Erasmus and his Catholic Critics*. 2 vols. (Nieuwkoop, 1989); *ibid.* "Nameless critics in Erasmus' annotations on the New Testament," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 48,1 (1986) 41-57.

²⁴ Francis M. Nichols (trans. and ed.), *The Epistles of Erasmus From His Earliest Letters to His Fifty-First Year* (3 vols.; London: Longman, 1901).

²⁵ Philip Schaff, *A Companion to the Greek New Testament and the English Version* (4th ed.; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1896), p. 231.

²⁶ Note the statement in the quotation from Erasmus that he took it upon himself to bring the Vulgate into line with his Greek text, in over 600 places (quote), ' . . . where the version is involved or obscure.' In the case of Mt 19:9 he reversed the procedure and *changed the Greek* to bring it into line with his understanding of the Latin of Mt 19:9!

introduced an exceptive clause to allow divorce for fornication. This he achieved by adding the small Greek word εἰ ('if') before μὴ ('not') which resulted in 'except,' and this is how the 'exception clause' got into the first published Greek New Testament. Erasmus states that he made about 600 improvements to the text of the New Testament in the sincere belief that he was only bringing out what was already in the Greek words.²⁷

The Reformers were not aware of the addition of εἰ before μὴ, and so they assumed that Erasmus had rediscovered a lost teaching of the Lord Jesus. Through their acceptance of Erasmus's tampered Greek text divorce entered all the Reformed Churches of Europe, and this new teaching was consolidated in their Confessions of Faith and in their colloquial translations.

II. THE EVOLUTION OF THE *TEXTUS RECEPTUS*

The *Textus Receptus* really had its birth in the first edition of Erasmus's Greek New Testament in 1516. Chart 1 below sets out the 300-year old history of the text of the *Textus Receptus* showing it in a continuous state of revision between 1516 and 1830 (Scholz). At no stage during this period did the *Textus Receptus*, or the Authorized Version, stop being altered or become fixed and its text frozen for all time to come.²⁸ Even Erasmus's own editions show how fluid was his text. In his second edition (1519) he made over 400 changes to the New Testament, and a further 118 in his third, including the addition of 1 John 5:7b-8a, on the strength of a transcript of it from Codex Montfortianus (MS 61) from Trinity College, Dublin. The third edition (1522) became the basis of Tyndale's English New Testament in 1526, which was the first complete printed English New Testament from a Greek text. The fifth edition (1535) differed from the fourth (1527) in only four places.

It is interesting that for his fourth edition in 1527 he consulted the Complutensian Polyglot for the missing Greek text at Revelation 22:16-21, which he had obtained for his first edition by translating the Vulgate back into Greek.

Robert Stephens's (or Stephanus's) third edition (1550) is said to have followed Erasmus's fifth edition, but according to Scrivener it differed from its predecessors in 334 places. It was

²⁷ Erasmus to Antonio Pucci. Basel, 26 August 1518. For the text see Nichols III, 429-32 (Francis M. Nichols (trans. and ed.), *The Epistles of Erasmus From His Earliest Letters to His Fifty-First Year* (3 vols.; London: Longman, 1901); and Allen III, 380-82 (P. S. Allen (ed.), *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami* (11 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906-47).

²⁸ For the evidence, see Price, *King James Onlyism* 91-104.

the first to contain a critical apparatus and it refers specifically to the Complutensian text on 598 occasions.

Stephens's fourth edition (1551) differed from the third in just 14 places. It was the first to contain the verse divisions we take for granted today,²⁹ and the first to contain a Harmony of the Gospels (based on Osiander's work³⁰).

Theodore Beza (1519–1605) based his first edition (1565) on Stephens's fourth edition (1551). It differed from it in 25 places (9 times going with CP, 4 times with Erasmus, 3 times with both, and had 9 new readings). In his second edition (1582) he removed one of his new readings but added 14 more, making 38 differences with Stephens's 1551 edition. His third edition (1588) has only five differences from his second; and his fourth edition (1598) has only two differences from his third. Beza's fourth edition was the last improved Greek text before the Authorized Version was published in 1611.³¹ After the publication of the AV, Beza's text became the foundation for all future editions by the Elzevir family, culminating in the *textus receptus* of 1633.

After the death of Erasmus his text was continuously revised as the number of manuscripts increased dramatically, and as the ancient versions became the focus of intense interest, plus the discovery of the writings of the early Church Fathers. All these new facets of research were being put to good use to recover the 'original' text. It has been estimated that during this period (1516 to 1830) there were over one thousand editions of the Greek New Testament in circulation.

We can divide this 300-year old development of the TR into four periods.

²⁹ The first English version to use verse divisions was by William Whittingham, *The Newe Testament . . . and most profitable annotations of all harde places* (Geneva: Conrad Badius, 1557). On the origin of versification the fullest treatment is that by William Wright, 'Verse,' in *A Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature* (ed. John Kitto; Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1845), 2:905-91; idem, for the full text of this article, see *Christian Remembrancer* 3 (1842) 455-69, 672-90.

³⁰ Andrea Osiandro [1496–1552], *Harmoniae Evangelicae Libri IIII Graece et Latine* (Basileae, anno MDXXXVII).

³¹ The closeness of Beza's last edition to Stephens's last edition amounts to 50 differences, see F. H. A. Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament for the Use of Biblical Students* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell & Co., 1883), II.193.

Period 1. The transition from handwritten copies to the printed Bible

CHART 1. 30 PRINTED EDITIONS OF MATTHEW 18-28 COLLATED AGAINST THE MAJORITY TEXT OF ROBINSON-PIERPONT

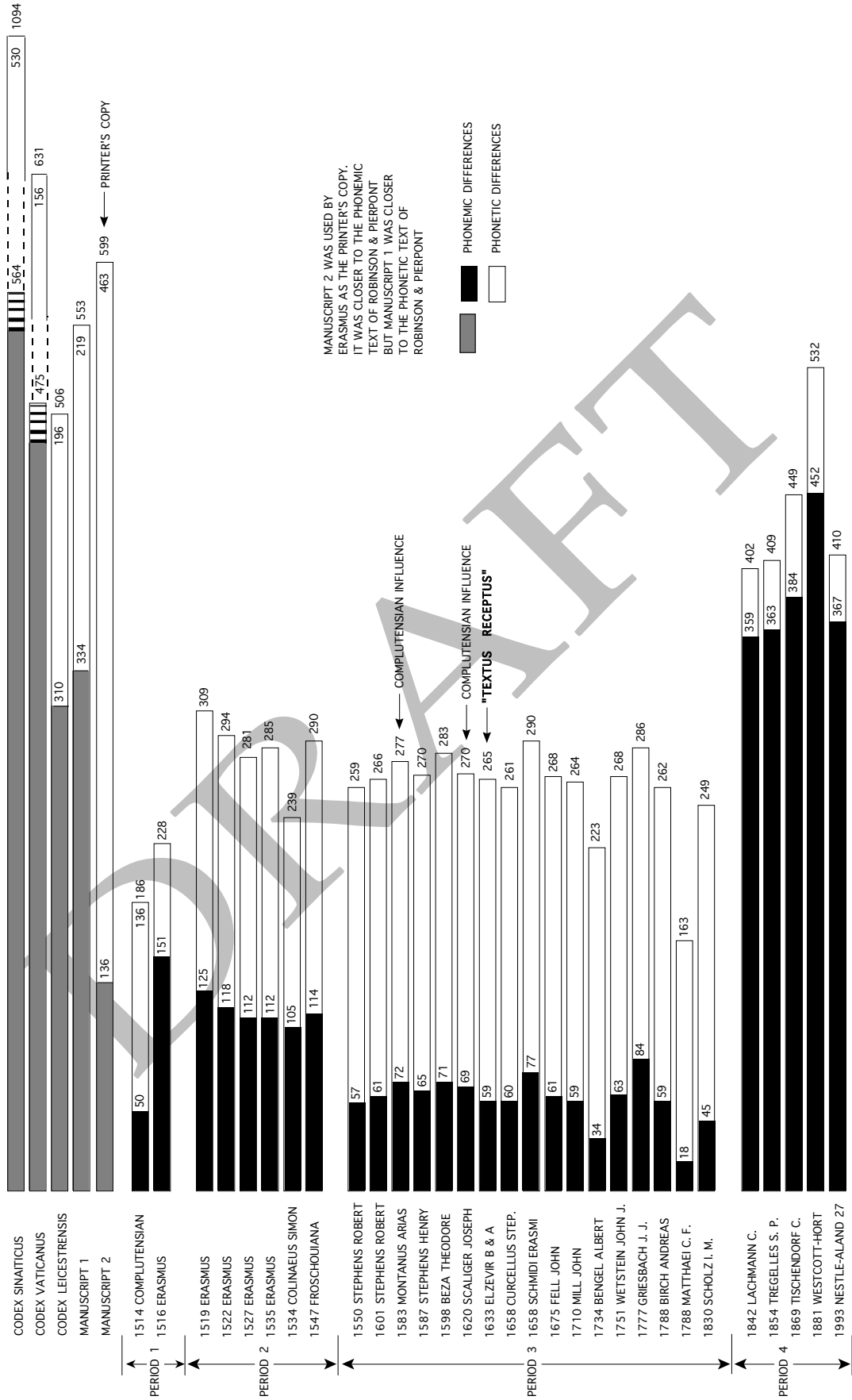


TABLE 1. 30 PRINTED EDITIONS COLLATED AGAINST THE MAJORITY TEXT OF ROBINSON-PIERPONT

	ADDITIONS		OMISSIONS		REPLACEMENTS		TRANPOSITIONS		NU-FINAL		ROUGH BREATHING		SOFT BREATHING		SIGMA-FINAL		OTHER SPELLINGS		SUB-TOTAL		GRAND TOTAL		
	SHARED	UNIQUE	SHARED	UNIQUE	SHARED	UNIQUE	SHARED	UNIQUE	SHARED	UNIQUE	SHARED	UNIQUE	SHARED	UNIQUE	SHARED	UNIQUE	SHARED	UNIQUE	SHARED	UNIQUE	SHARED	UNIQUE	
ERASMUS'S SOURCES	53	24	19	108	24	84	141	29	112	32	6	26	334	310	53	23	30	310	310	53	23	30	310
PERIOD 1	14	4	10	35	18	17	82	14	68	5	5	136	68	2	66	9	8	119	12	119	12	119	136
PERIOD 2	13	13	4	2	2	26	9	17	7	7	7	50	119	119	12	12	10	10	12	12	10	10	136
PERIOD 3	20	4	16	31	4	27	93	16	77	7	7	151	12	12	12	12	10	10	12	12	10	10	77
PERIOD 4	17	17	17	23	1	22	77	1	76	8	1	7	79	79	79	79	62	62	79	79	62	62	184
	16	16	22	22	22	67	73	7	7	7	7	118	79	79	79	79	56	56	79	79	56	56	176
	16	16	22	22	22	67	73	7	7	7	112	79	79	79	79	54	54	79	79	54	54	169	294
	16	16	21	21	21	68	68	7	7	7	112	80	80	80	54	54	54	80	80	54	54	173	281
	25	7	18	12	3	9	58	11	47	10	3	7	86	86	86	8	8	86	86	8	8	35	285
	17	17	24	2	22	66	66	7	7	7	114	84	84	84	57	57	57	84	84	57	57	30	239
	15	15	10	10	10	28	28	4	4	4	57	123	123	123	56	56	56	123	123	56	56	17	259
	15	15	9	9	9	32	32	5	5	5	61	122	122	122	57	57	57	122	122	57	57	19	266
	22	22	7	7	7	36	36	7	7	7	72	124	124	124	57	57	57	124	124	57	57	18	277
	18	17	11	11	11	32	32	4	4	4	65	123	123	123	56	56	56	123	123	56	56	19	269
	19	19	11	11	11	35	35	4	4	4	71	124	124	124	57	57	57	124	124	57	57	21	283
	19	19	7	7	7	35	35	7	7	7	68	123	123	123	56	56	56	123	123	56	56	16	269
	12	12	12	12	12	30	30	5	5	5	59	121	121	121	58	58	58	121	121	58	58	2	265
	15	15	11	11	11	29	29	5	5	5	60	119	119	119	58	58	58	119	119	58	58	18	261
	18	3	15	17	6	11	36	7	29	6	6	77	125	125	125	58	58	125	125	58	58	19	290
	15	15	11	11	11	30	30	5	5	5	61	123	123	123	57	57	57	123	123	57	57	18	268
	15	15	10	10	10	29	29	5	5	5	59	124	124	124	57	57	57	124	124	57	57	17	264
	8	8	10	10	10	14	14	2	2	2	34	124	124	124	56	56	56	124	124	56	56	4	223
	15	15	11	11	11	31	31	4	4	4	63	124	124	124	57	57	57	124	124	57	57	18	268
	8	3	5	35	35	37	37	6	6	6	84	124	124	124	57	57	57	124	124	57	57	16	286
	14	14	11	11	11	29	29	5	5	5	59	123	123	123	58	58	58	123	123	58	58	16	262
	2	2	2	2	2	11	11	3	3	3	18	124	124	124	1	1	1	124	124	1	1	14	163
	5	5	14	14	14	23	23	2	2	2	45	125	125	125	55	55	55	125	125	55	55	14	249
	37	11	26	128	21	107	140	11	129	54	4	359	4	4	4	38	38	4	4	4	40	40	402
	27	2	25	138	14	124	147	3	144	51	50	363	2	2	2	43	43	2	2	2	2	46	409
	25	7	18	154	15	139	151	14	137	54	3	384	2	2	2	63	63	2	2	2	2	65	449
	36	9	27	177	34	143	178	46	132	61	8	452	10	10	10	70	70	36	36	36	36	80	532
	31	6	25	151	8	143	136	1	135	49	1	367	2	2	2	41	41	31	31	31	31	40	410

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PHONETIC DIFFERENCES

PHONETIC DIFFERENCES

MATTHEW 18:15-28:20 (7,997 WORDS) CODEX VATICANUS : 631 DEVIATIONS FROM THE MAJORITY TEXT. CODEX SINAITICUS : 1,094 DEVIATIONS FROM THE MAJORITY TEXT

TABLE 2. 29 EDITIONS COLLATED AGAINST THE PREVIOUS EDITION

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 18:15 TO 28:20 (END)	PRECEDING EDITION					THE NEXT EDITION						
	ADDITIONS	OMISSIONS	REPLACEMENTS	TRANSPPOSITIONS	SUB-TOTAL	NU-FINAL	ROUGH BREATHING	SOFT BREATHING	SIGMA-FINAL	OTHER SPELLINGS	SUB-TOTAL	GRAND TOTAL
1514 COMPLUTENSIAN	21	44	103	12	169	109	—	3	1	53	166	335
1516 ERASMUS	10	7	40	—	57	73	58	—	3	26	160	217
1519 ERASMUS	3	1	15	1	20	—	2	7	—	14	23	43
1522 ERASMUS	—	—	7	—	7	—	3	2	—	6	11	18
1527 ERASMUS	—	1	5	—	6	2	1	1	1	3	8	14
1535 ERASMUS	29	14	43	5	91	19	8	56	1	18	102	193
1534 COLINAELUS SIMON	11	34	42	5	92	17	53	10	—	16	96	188
1547 FROSCHOUJANA	21	8	44	3	76	38	3	1	3	21	66	142
1550 STEPHENS ROBERT	—	—	4	1	5	1	—	—	—	3	4	9
1601 STEPHENS ROBERT	10	5	24	9	48	4	1	1	—	6	12	60
1583 MONTANUS ARIAS	6	14	23	7	50	5	3	5	—	7	20	70
1587 STEPHENS HENRY	3	3	7	2	15	2	3	1	—	6	12	27
1598 BEZA THEODORE	10	10	24	9	53	3	3	3	—	11	20	73
1620 SCALIGER JOSEPH	3	13	23	8	47	4	2	1	—	5	12	59
1633 ELZEVIR B & A	1	2	2	—	5	4	—	—	—	3	7	12
1658 CURCELLUS STEPH.	3	8	9	1	21	6	3	2	—	8	19	40
1658 SCHMIDI ERASMI	7	5	7	1	20	5	3	—	—	11	19	39
1675 FELL JOHN	2	—	—	—	2	1	2	—	—	7	10	12
1710 MILL JOHN	4	11	17	3	35	2	1	—	1	16	20	55
1734 BENGEL ALBERT	12	9	18	3	42	2	4	—	1	18	25	67
1751 WETSTEIN JOHN J.	13	32	22	—	67	1	2	—	—	8	11	78
1777 GRIESBACH J. J.	36	7	21	—	64	2	1	—	—	4	7	71
1788 BIRCH ANDREAS	9	13	32	6	60	4	60	—	1	9	74	134
1788 MATTHAEI C. F.	5	14	14	4	37	3	57	1	1	20	82	119
1830 SCHOLZ I. M.	35	115	133	52	335	117	48	1	6	39	211	546
1842 LACHMANN C.	25	56	49	16	146	4	—	—	—	8	12	158
1854 TREGELLES S. P.	24	69	64	14	171	1	—	—	—	30	31	202
1869 TISCHENDORF C.	49	55	69	15	188	7	1	—	—	14	22	210
1881 WESTCOTT-HORT	56	31	51	15	153	7	1	—	—	32	40	193
	PHONEMIC DIFFERENCES					PHONETIC DIFFERENCES						
CODEX VATICANUS	39	178	189	69	475	13	—	—	—	143	156	631
CODEX SINAITICUS	47	234	206	77	564	8	—	—	—	522	530	1094

VAT. & SIN. WERE COLLATED AGAINST THE MAJORITY TEXT (Kx)

Both Cardinal Ximenes and Erasmus were instrumental in bringing the era of handwritten copies of the Greek New Testament to an end (not that the scriptoria closed down immediately). While the Cardinal set himself the task of producing a triglot of the Old Testament (Hebrew, Greek and Latin) and a diglot of the New Testament (Greek and Latin), Erasmus restricted himself to the lesser goal of producing a diglot of the New Testament (Greek and Latin), and make a name for himself in the process.

Period 2. The consolidation of Erasmus's search for the 'original' text

From 1516 to 1535 Erasmus worked on four revisions of his base text. Table 2 shows that his second edition produced a total of 217 changes in Matthew 18–28 alone. Of the 217 changes only 57 (or 26%) affected the meaning. Table 2 shows that he made 43 changes to his second edition. So the most extensive and most important revision was his second, and thereafter he seems to have

coasted his way to the end, as he was heavily engaged in producing the works of the early Church Fathers for Froben, his printer.

Period 3. The dominance of Robert Stephens's 1550 text

Chart 1 shows a clear break between the dominance of Erasmus's five editions and the emergence of Robert Stephens's 1550 text. The marginal notes in his 1550 edition are to the CP and 15 other Greek MSS, including Codex Bezae, marked b in his apparatus. Beza was the first to use a recognised critical apparatus.³²

Table 3 sets out the close relationship that existed between all the printed editions from 1550 to 1830. So popular was Stephens's 1550 edition that it was still in print up until 1601, and the table shows that the printer made just nine errors (only four affected the meaning) when he made new printing plates for the reprint, which did not have any verse numbers, even though most editions by this time had employed them.

Note the large figure of 58 in the 'soft breathing' column for Matthaei's 1788 edition. He was the first editor to spot the 58 printing errors,³³ which involved the mistake of writing a rough breathing instead of a soft breathing (such as $\acute{\alpha}\tau\omicron\upsilon$ for $\alpha\acute{\upsilon}\tau\omicron\upsilon$, and $\acute{\alpha}\tau\eta\varsigma$ for $\alpha\acute{\upsilon}\tau\eta\varsigma$, and $\acute{\alpha}\tau\omega\upsilon$ for $\alpha\acute{\upsilon}\tau\omega\upsilon$)³⁴ that had crept into Erasmus's second edition (1519), and which successive printers faithfully reproduced, because the next editor would mark up his corrections on the latest printed edition for his printer to follow. But note that Scholz, who followed Matthaei, did not use Matthaei's 1788 text as his base, but instead he used Griesbach's 1777 text, with its 58 misprints, which his printer faithfully reproduced(!). Simon Colinaeus (or Colines) based his 1534 text on

³² Jan Krans, *Beyond What Is Written: Erasmus and Beza as Conjectural Critics of the New Testament* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2006).

³³ F. H. Scrivener rated Matthaei very highly (above Griesbach and Scholz) for 'precision and accuracy' in his collations of MSS, see *A Full and Exact Collation of about Twenty Greek Manuscripts of the Holy Gospels* (Cambridge: University Press, 1853), p. xii.

³⁴ Scrivener, *Full and Exact Collation* xli, recorded that he found one manuscript (k) where the exact opposite occurred. This ms consistently substituted the demonstrative pronoun $\alpha\acute{\upsilon}\tau\omicron\upsilon$, $\alpha\acute{\upsilon}\tau\eta$, $\alpha\acute{\upsilon}\tau\omega\upsilon$ with the reciprocal forms $\alpha\acute{\upsilon}\tau\omicron\upsilon$, $\alpha\acute{\upsilon}\tau\eta\varsigma$, $\alpha\acute{\upsilon}\tau\omega\upsilon$ (starting at Mt 18:35, over one hundred times), even when the sense required the latter meaning. Another manuscript (t) perpetually interchanges $\acute{\eta}\mu\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ and $\acute{\upsilon}\mu\epsilon\iota\varsigma$! (idem, lvi).

Erasmus's first edition (1516) and so he avoided the misprints that Erasmus's printer made in his 1519 edition, while Froschouiana based his 1547 edition on Erasmus's second edition.

Of all the editors of the *Textus Receptus*, C. F. Matthaei came closest to the Universal (Byzantine) Text. In the ten chapters of Matthew collated for this study he had just 18 phonemic and 145 phonetic deviations compared to the Majority Text as published by Robinson & Pierpont.

1. *The Influence of the Complutensian text on the Textus Receptus.* The following is a list of 186 places where the Complutensian (CP) differs from Stephens's text. This list formed the basis for an analysis of the agreements and disagreements between the texts of the Complutensian, Montanus, and Scaliger. The object of the study was to quantify the influence of the CP on the texts of Montanus (1583) and Scaliger (1620), both of whom preferred to followed the CP as their base text.

In the table below the letters A, B, C, indicate different readings.

In order to isolate the influence of the CP on the transmission of Stephens's *Textus Receptus*, it was necessary to collect the differences between Stephens's 1550 text and the Complutensian.

	COMPLUTENSIAN (1514)	STEPHENS (1550)	MONTANUS (1583)	SCALIGER (1620)		
CLASS 1	A	A	B	A	TOTAL	8
CLASS 2	A	A	B	B	TOTAL	9
CLASS 3	A	B	A	A	TOTAL	32
CLASS 4	A	B	B	A	TOTAL	4
CLASS 5	A	B	B	B	TOTAL	145
CLASS 6	A	B	B	C	TOTAL	1
CLASS 7	A	B	C	C	TOTAL	4

There are 203 differences between the Complutensian (CP), Stephens (1550), Montanus (1583) and Scaliger (1620).

The breakdown of this total is as follows.

Class 1. CP, Stephens, and Scaliger agree against Montanus eight times, so that Montanus and Scaliger disagree with each other.

Class 2. CP and Stephens agree against Montanus and Scaliger 9 times. Here Montanus and Scaliger agree with each other.

Class 3. CP, Montanus and Scaliger agree 32 times. Stephens is on its own. This shows that Scaliger used Montanus as his base text.

Class 4. CP and Scaliger agree four times (21:28f; 24:17b; 25:44; and 26:75c), while Stephens and Montanus agree with each other at these places.

Class 5. CP is alone 145 times. Stephens, Montanus and Scaliger agree with each other. This shows that Stephens's text was the base text for Montanus's edition, and not the CP; and it shows that Montanus's text was the base for Scaliger's edition.

Class 6. CP disagrees with the other three editions on one occasion, as does Scaliger. Stephens and Montanus agree with each other on this occasion.

Class 7. CP disagrees with the other three editions 4 times. Stephens is on its own. Montanus and Scaliger agree with each other on these occasions.

The large total of 145 in Class 5 includes 99 spelling differences, which do not affect the meaning. Of these 99 cases, 58 relate to misprints which entered Erasmus's 2nd edition in 1519. The 58 misprints all relate to wrong pointing. The soft breathing has been replaced with the rough breathing: 2x αὔτης; 1x αὔτην; 42x αὔτου; 1x αὔτω; 12x αὔτων. These misprints were

retained in all editions from 1519 to 1830 (Scholz’s edition), except for Colinaeus (1534) and Matthaei (1788), because Colinaeus followed Erasmus’s 1516 edition, and Matthaei followed Stephens’s 1550 edition, but he was careful to correct all the wrong pointings. This means that the CP is a ‘cleaner’ text because it does not have these 58 misprints.

This leaves 46 cases where Stephens, Montanus and Scaliger agree with each other against the Complutensian.

The influence of CP is seen clearly in the editions of Montanus and Scaliger, but for some reason these editions did not become the base text for any of the following editions, even though Montanus used Stephens’s 1550 text as his base text. It is almost as if the Roman Catholic CP edition was avoided by the Protestant fraternity who dominated lower textual criticism for the next three centuries.

The following table sets out the relationship between all the editions in Period 3.

TABLE 3. 15 EDITIONS OF THE *TEXTUS RECEPTUS* COLLATED AGAINST THE TEXT OF ROBERT STEPHENS’ 1550 EDITION

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 18:15 TO 28:20 (END)	ADDITIONS	OMISSIONS	REPLACEMENTS	TRANSPPOSITIONS	SUB-TOTAL	PHONETIC DIFFERENCES					SUB-TOTAL	GRAND TOTAL		
						NU-FINAL	ROUGH BREATHING	SOFT BREATHING	SIGMA-FINAL	OTHER SPELLINGS				
1550 STEPHENS ROBERT	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	STEPHENS 1550
1601 STEPHENS ROBERT	—	—	3	1	4	1	—	—	—	4	5	9	STEPHENS 1601	
1583 MONTANUS ARIAS	11	5	20	7	43	5	1	1	—	3	10	53	MONTANUS (CP)	
1587 STEPHENS HENRY	3	2	3	—	8	3	2	4	—	6	15	23	STEPHENS H.	
1598 BEZA THEODORE	4	3	6	2	15	3	2	2	—	12	19	34	BEZA	
1620 SCALIGER JOSEPH	9	5	20	7	41	4	1	2	—	2	9	50	SCALIGER (CP)	
1633 ELZEVIR B & A	—	5	1	1	7	4	1	—	—	6	11	18	ELZEVIR	
1658 CURCELLUS STEP.	—	2	3	1	6	6	1	—	—	3	10	16	CURCELLUS	
1658 SCHMIDI ERASMI	3	8	8	2	21	7	4	1	—	11	23	44	SCHMIDI	
1675 FELL JOHN	—	3	1	1	5	2	1	1	—	6	10	15	FELL	
1710 MILL JOHN	—	1	1	1	3	3	—	—	—	1	4	7	MILL	
1734 BENGEL ALBERT	9	7	12	4	32	5	—	1	1	8	15	47	BENGEL	
1751 WETSTEIN JOHN J.	—	2	3	1	6	3	1	1	—	7	12	18	WETSTEIN	
1777 GRIESBACH J. J.	14	30	18	2	64	1	1	1	—	5	8	72	GRIESBACH	
1788 BIRCH ANDREAS	1	1	2	1	5	4	1	—	—	1	6	11	BIRCH	
1788 MATTHAEI C. F.	9	15	33	5	62	4	—	58	1	10	73	135	MATTHAEI	
1830 SCHOLZ I. M.	8	21	26	1	56	5	1	4	—	13	23	79	SCHOLZ	

2. *The Significance of the Elzevir Textus Receptus.* In the folklore of lower textual criticism the credit for creating the *Textus Receptus* is given to the Elzevir brothers because of their deliberate identification of their 1624 edition with the text handed down through the centuries, which was referred to as the ‘received text.’ But in reality the credit must go to Robert Stephens for his 1550 edition. Table 3 above shows that Henry Stephens (1587), the Elzevir brothers (1624/1633), Stephen Curcellus (1658), John Fell (1675) John Mill (1710), J. J. Wetstein (1751), and Andreas

Birch (1788), all took Stephens's 1550 text, by default, as the basis for their own editions because they each followed the other's printed text.

Robert Stephens was the first to include a critical apparatus alongside the text of Scripture. He had only 15 manuscripts to collate. By the time Wetstein produced his edition in 1751 he had amassed 125 MSS for the Gospels, 66 MSS for the Acts and the Catholic Epistles, 69 MSS for Paul's Epistles, and 30 MSS for the Book of Revelation. Erasmus had no more than eight manuscripts out of which to create his first edition. When one considers the state of the poorly copied manuscripts that he had at his disposal, it is a wonder that he produced the Greek text that he did. One suspects, as in the case of the creation of the CP, that keeping close to the Vulgate text meant that he could not go too far wrong.

III. CONTRIBUTORS TO ELZEVIR'S *TEXTUS RECEPTUS* OF 1633

The statistics in the following classes relate only to the last ten chapters of Matthew's Gospel, which were fully collated for this section.

Classes A-F contain 214 readings that do not support the Majority Text. Classes G-M contain 105 readings that support the Majority Text.

Summary of classes that contributed to the establishment of Elzevir's *Textus Receptus* (1633), showing the sources that Elzevir used.

Classes A-F contain 214 readings that do not support the Majority Text.

- Class A. 61x Erasmus's 1st edition (1516). Not in support of the Majority Text.
Class B. 131x Erasmus's 2nd edition (1519). Not in support of the Majority Text. This figure includes 52 misprints (rough breathing in place of smooth breathing) that were retained in all editions right through to Scholz (1830).
Class C. 2x Erasmus's 3rd edition (1522). Not in support of the Majority Text.
Summary: Erasmus, in these three lists, contributed 194 readings that go back to his first three editions and these became an integral part of Elzevir's TR.
Class D. 17x Robert Stephens (1550). Not in support of the Majority Text.
Class E. 4x Henry Stephens (1583). Not in support of the Majority Text.
Class F. 45x Robert Stephens (1550). Taken from CP. Not in support of the Majority Text.
Summary: Robert Stephens, in these three lists (D-F), contributed 66 readings that go back to his 1550 edition, and these became an integral part of Elzevir's TR.

Classes G-M contain 105 readings that happen to have support from the Majority Text.

- Class G. 1x Erasmus's 2nd edition (1519). In support of the Majority Text.
Class H. 20x Erasmus's 3rd edition (1522). In support of the Majority Text.
Class I. 3x Erasmus's 4th edition (1527). In support of the Majority Text.
Summary: Erasmus, in these three lists, contributed 24 readings that became an integral part of Elzevir's TR, which are supported by the Majority Text.
Class J. 7x Robert Stephens (1550). These seven readings are supported by the Majority Text.
Class K. 1x Henry Stephens (1583). In support of the Majority Text.
Class L. 3x Elzevir (1633). In support of the Majority Text.
Class M. 70x Robert Stephens (1550). Taken from CP. In support of the Majority Text.
Class N. 1x Matthaei (1788), post-Elzevir. In support of the Majority Text.

Class O. No cases. Erasmus's 5th edition (1534).

The characteristic of each of these classes is that once their different readings were introduced into the TR they remained in all editions through to Elzevir, and in many cases through to Scholz (1830). There are the usual individual dissenters over individual readings, as one would expect, but by and large the introduced changes become the base text for the next edition.

The two major dissenters were Arias Montanus (1583) and Joseph Scaliger (1620). Montanus used Robert Stephens's 1550 edition as his base text. Both editors imported many readings from the Complutensian Polyglot (CP) (1514), which are unique to these two editions. The agreement in the number of the CP readings reveals that Scaliger used Montanus as his base text.

As more and more Greek manuscripts came to light, and interest increased in the ancient translations of the New Testament, plus the writings of the Church Fathers, Elzevir's *Textus Receptus* came under pressure to take into account the new evidence. It is worth noting that Elzevir had only 18 differences with Robert Stephens's text, and 11 of the 18 were spelling differences. In effect Elzevir's *Textus Receptus* is the text of Robert Stephens, which throws the origin of the *Textus Receptus* back to 1550.

IV. THE DISPLACEMENT OF THE *TEXTUS RECEPTUS*

From Elzevir to Scholz (1633 to 1830) every edition was based on Elzevir's *Textus Receptus* (as the transmission of the 52 misprints bear witness to).

However, pressure was slowly building up through the critical apparatuses that began to fill up the pages of the latest scholarly editions of the Greek New Testament. This period saw the rise of textual criticism in earnest, which became almost objective in its study of the transmission of sacred and secular texts, and how errors could occur in them. However, there was a reluctance to depart from the 'received text' because it could attract serious allegations of tampering with God's sacred, inspired, revelation to mankind. So while the main text did not reflect the weight of evidence that was slowly accumulating over the centuries in the footnote region, a volcanic eruption was gathering strength under this conservative cap or plug.

It slowly became apparent to textual scholars that the TR was unrepresentative of the textual evidence and it was just a matter of time before some scholar would throw off the shackles that suppressed the evidence and produce a text that accurately reflected the evidence before him.

The accumulation of hundreds of Greek manuscripts, ancient versions, and the works of the early Church Fathers, was like a huge reservoir building up behind the dam that the *Textus Receptus* was creating. We soon reached the comical stage where in a good number of places the

vast majority of the manuscript and versional evidence was against the *Textus Receptus* but the editors dared not interfere with the 'received text.' They were content to leave the Greek text as it was and allow the evidence to pile up against these poorly attested readings of the TR in their footnote apparatuses. A case in point was the addition of εἰ before μὴ in Matthew 19:9. Not a single Greek manuscript could be found to support such an addition in the TR/AV, yet it was retained right through to Scholz's edition in 1830, such was the reverence for the 'received text.' The same reluctance to change applied to the Johannine Comma (1 John 5:7b-8a).

However, beginning with Carl Lachmann (1842) editors got bolder and bolder, and began to challenge the dominant position of the Received Text. The effect of Lachmann's edition was to break through the glass ceiling that inhibited textual scholars from going with the flow of the evidence. From this point onwards the *Textus Receptus* began to lose ground and respect. The result was that every man did what was right in his own eyes, and no two editors after Scholz could agree on what was the original text.

The following two tables illustrate this point.

TABLE 4. 29 EDITIONS COLLATED AGAINST THE PREVIOUS EDITION

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 18:15 TO 28:20 (END)	PRECEDING EDITION					THE NEXT EDITION						
	ADDITIONS	OMISSIONS	REPLACEMENTS	TRANSPPOSITIONS	SUB-TOTAL	NU-FINAL	ROUGH BREATHING	SOFT BREATHING	SIGMA-FINAL	OTHER SPELLINGS	SUB-TOTAL	GRAND TOTAL
1514 COMPLUTENSIAN	21	44	103	12	169	109	—	3	1	53	166	335
1516 ERASMUS	10	7	40	—	57	73	58	—	3	26	160	217
1519 ERASMUS	3	1	15	1	20	—	2	7	—	14	23	43
1522 ERASMUS	—	—	7	—	7	—	3	2	—	6	11	18
1527 ERASMUS	—	1	5	—	6	2	1	1	1	3	8	14
1535 ERASMUS	29	14	43	5	91	19	8	56	1	18	102	193
1534 COLINAEUS SIMON	11	34	42	5	92	17	53	10	—	16	96	188
1547 FROSCHOUIANA	21	8	44	3	76	38	3	1	3	21	66	142
1550 STEPHENS ROBERT	—	—	4	1	5	1	—	—	—	3	4	9
1601 STEPHENS ROBERT	10	5	24	9	48	4	1	1	—	6	12	60
1583 MONTANUS ARIAS	6	14	23	7	50	5	3	5	—	7	20	70
1587 STEPHENS HENRY	3	3	7	2	15	2	3	1	—	6	12	27
1598 BEZA THEODORE	10	10	24	9	53	3	3	3	—	11	20	73
1620 SCALIGER JOSEPH	3	13	23	8	47	4	2	1	—	5	12	59
1633 ELZEVIR B & A	1	2	2	—	5	4	—	—	—	3	7	12
1658 CURCELLUS STEPH.	3	8	9	1	21	6	3	2	—	8	19	40
1658 SCHMIDI ERASMI	7	5	7	1	20	5	3	—	—	11	19	39
1675 FELL JOHN	2	—	—	—	2	1	2	—	—	7	10	12
1710 MILL JOHN	4	11	17	3	35	2	1	—	1	16	20	55
1734 BENGEL ALBERT	12	9	18	3	42	2	4	—	1	18	25	67
1751 WETSTEIN JOHN J.	13	32	22	—	67	1	2	—	—	8	11	78
1777 GRIESBACH J. J.	36	7	21	—	64	2	1	—	—	4	7	71
1788 BIRCH ANDREAS	9	13	32	6	60	4	60	—	1	9	74	134
1788 MATTHAEI C. F.	5	14	14	4	37	3	57	1	1	20	82	119
1830 SCHOLZ I. M.	35	115	133	52	335	117	48	1	6	39	211	546
1842 LACHMANN C.	25	56	49	16	146	4	—	—	—	8	12	158
1854 TREGELLES S. P.	24	69	64	14	171	1	—	—	—	30	31	202
1869 TISCHENDORF C.	49	55	69	15	188	7	1	—	—	14	22	210
1881 WESTCOTT-HORT	56	31	51	15	153	7	1	—	—	32	40	193
	PHONEMIC DIFFERENCES					PHONETIC DIFFERENCES						
CODEX VATICANUS	39	178	189	69	475	13	—	—	—	143	156	631
CODEX SINAITICUS	47	234	206	77	564	8	—	—	—	522	530	1094

VAT. & SIN. WERE COLLATED AGAINST THE MAJORITY TEXT (Kx)

V. THE CONTRIBUTION OF ERASMUS'S THREE MANUSCRIPTS TO HIS TEXT

At this point we should go back in time and trace the influence of the Caesarean Text on the *Textus Receptus*. This influence is the primary reason why the TR was eventually rejected by conservative-evangelical textual scholars. Erasmus handed Froben an actual, handwritten manuscript, dated to the twelfth century, MS 2, in which he inserted his corrections in the margins or between the lines.

The three Greek manuscripts that Erasmus used to establish the text of the four Gospels were MSS 1,³⁵ 2, and 69 (Codex Leicenstrensis). What Erasmus did not know in his day is that his three

³⁵ This MS is in the Universitätsbibliothek, Basel. Shelf no. A.N. IV 2. Von Soden's classification is δ 254 (earlier δ 50). For the background information to each of the f1 MSS, see

manuscripts belonged to different families. Manuscript 69 is a member of Family 13, which is a constituent part of the Caesarean text-type. Manuscript 1 is a member of Family 1, also a member of the Caesarean text-type. Manuscript 2 is a standard Byzantine text.

The Caesarean text split into two branches (f1 and f13), and Erasmus had more representatives of the Caesarean text than he had of the Byzantine text. The Caesarean text by no means represented the majority text that existed in Erasmus's day. It was just unfortunate that what came to hand was a minority text, albeit a type of text that was much closer to the Byzantine text than to the Egyptian text.

What we are seeing today in conservative-evangelical circles is a determined effort to move away from Erasmus's mixed based, eclectic text and toward the purest form of the Byzantine text-type that can be extracted from von Soden's textual apparatuses. Two attempts to do this appeared in 1985 and 2005.³⁶

In this section, I shall plot the way Erasmus moved between his three sources as he struggled to choose between the competing variants in his source documents.

Anderson, *Textual Tradition* chap. 7, and Kirsopp Lake, *Codex 1 of the Gospels and Its Allies* (Cambridge: CUP, 1902).

³⁶ Zane C. Hodges and Arthur L. Farstad (eds), *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text* (2nd ed.; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985), and: Maurice A. Robinson and William G. Pierpont, *The New Testament in the Original Greek according to the Byzantine/Majority Textform* (Atlanta: The Original Word Publishers, 1991).

TABLE 5. THE ECLECTIC MAKEUP OF ERASMUS'S 1516 EDITION FOR MATTHEW 18–28

	MANUSCRIPT 69 (f13)	MANUSCRIPT 1 (f1)	MANUSCRIPT 2 (BYZ)	TOTALS	DISAGREE WITH RP	
ERASMUS 1st EDITION AGREES WITH:	6			6	2	LINE 1
ERASMUS 1st EDITION AGREES WITH:		72		72	48	LINE 2
ERASMUS 1st EDITION AGREES WITH:			164	164	49	LINE 3
ERASMUS 1st EDITION AGREES WITH:	32	32		32	24	LINE 4
ERASMUS 1st EDITION AGREES WITH:		329	329	329	34	LINE 5
ERASMUS 1st EDITION AGREES WITH:	105		105	105	9	LINE 6
ERASMUS 1st EDITION AGREES WITH:	487	487	487	487	9	LINE 7
SUB-TOTALS	630	920	1085		175	LINE 8
ERASMUS 1st EDITION DISAGREES WITH:	623				158	LINE 9
ERASMUS 1st EDITION DISAGREES WITH:		333			82	LINE 10
ERASMUS 1st EDITION DISAGREES WITH:			168		100	LINE 11
GRAND TOTALS	1253	1253	1253		515	LINE 12

Line 1 shows that Erasmus borrowed 6 readings that occur only in MS 69 (family 13, a Caesarean text), among the three manuscripts at his disposal.

Line 2 shows that 72 readings, chosen by Erasmus, occur only in MS 1 (family 1, a Caesarean text).

Line 3 shows that 164 readings occur only in MS 2, which is a mixed (or contaminated) Byzantine manuscript.

Line 4 shows that 32 readings, chosen by Erasmus, occur only in MS 69 and MS 1. Both manuscripts belong to the Caesarean text-type.

Line 5 shows that 329 readings, chosen by Erasmus, occur in MS 1 and MS 2. So he could have used either a Caesarean or a Byzantine manuscript for his chosen text.

Line 6 shows that 105 readings are common to MS 69 and MS 2, so that Erasmus could have chosen either a Caesarean or a Byzantine manuscript as his preferred text.

Line 7 shows that 487 readings are common to MSS 69, 1, and 2, so that Erasmus could have chosen any of them to create the text of his first edition.

The Totals column indicates that there were 1253 readings in Erasmus's first edition which were to form the first *textus receptus* edition of the Greek New Testament, and these 1253 were to be challenged and changed in the course of the next 400 years of textual studies. The vast bulk of his text was never in dispute.

The column headed "Disagree with RP" shows that at the beginning of the 400-year long history of the *textus receptus*, it contained 175 differences with the Majority Text (RP). For example, Line 4 shows that out of the 32 readings found only in Caesarean manuscripts, 24 of them disagree with the Majority Text (RP). Line 9 gives the total of 158 cases where Erasmus rejected the Majority Text readings which were contained in MS 69. The same applies to Lines 10 and 11. Erasmus unknowingly rejected a grand total of 515 Byzantine readings in Matthew 18–28. It was to take another 500 years before the majority readings of the majority of extant manuscripts was to result in the Majority Text of Hodges & Farstad and Robinson & Pierpont.

Line 8 shows that MS 2 could have provided Erasmus with 1085 Byzantine readings; the two Caesarean manuscripts (69 and 1) clearly provided another 110 readings (lines 1, 2, 4 [6+72+32 = 110]), and the other 58 (1253 – [1085+110] = 58) would have been his own contributions.

Given the paucity of manuscripts at his disposal, Erasmus had to resort to a 'pick-and-mix' approach, or in modern parlance, adopt an eclectic policy. Lines 1, 2, and 4, show that Erasmus preferred 110 Caesarean readings in preference to the Byzantine readings of MS 2. So Erasmus's *textus receptus* was a mixture of Caesarean and Byzantine readings: it was a 'reasoned eclectic' text, and thus it is on a par with the Nestle-Aland approach to lower textual criticism, which in turn is based on the findings of Lobegott Friedrich Constantin von Tischendorf (1815–1874).

The following table shows just how close all existing texts, and text-types, are to the original text of the Gospels. This table was collated against the text of Matthew 18:15 to 28:20 (end).

TABLE 6. 33 EDITIONS COLLATED AGAINST THE MAJORITY TEXT

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 18:15 TO 28:20	PHONEMIC DIFFERENCES	PHONETIC DIFFERENCES	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE	
2005 ROBINSON-PIERPONT	100 %	100 %	100 %	
NESTLE-ALAND 27TH ED.	95.41	99.46	94.88	
CODEX VATICANUS	94.06	98.05	92.11	
CODEX SINAITICUS	92.95	93.37	86.32	
CODEX LEICESTRENSIS	96.12	97.55	93.68	
1514 COMPLUTENSIAN	99.37	98.30	97.68	PERIOD 1
1516 ERASMUS	98.11	99.04	97.15	
1519 ERASMUS	98.44	97.70	96.14	
1522 ERASMUS	98.52	97.80	96.32	
1527 ERASMUS	98.60	97.89	96.49	PERIOD 2
1534 ERASMUS	98.60	97.84	96.44	
1534 COLINAEUS SIMON	98.69	98.32	97.01	
1547 FROSCHOUIANA	98.57	97.85	96.42	
1550 STEPHENS ROBERT	99.29	97.48	96.77	PERIOD 3
1551 STEPHENS ROBERT	99.24	97.44	96.68	
1583 MONTANUS ARIAS	99.10	97.44	96.54	
1587 STEPHENS HENRY	99.19	97.45	96.64	
1598 BEZA THEODORE	99.11	97.35	96.46	
1620 SCALIGER JOSEPH	99.15	97.49	96.64	
1633 ELZEVIR B & A	99.26	97.42	96.69	
1658 CURCELLUS STEPH.	99.25	97.49	96.74	
1658 SCHMIDI ERASMI	99.04	97.34	96.37	
1675 FELL JOHN	99.24	97.41	96.65	
1710 MILL JOHN	99.26	97.44	96.70	
1734 BENDEL ALBERT	99.58	97.64	97.21	
1751 WETSTEIN JOHN J.	99.21	97.44	96.65	PERIOD 4
1777 GRIESBACH J. J.	98.95	97.48	96.44	
1788 BIRCH ANDREAS	99.26	97.46	96.72	
1788 MATTHAEI C. F.	99.78	98.19	97.96	
1830 SCHOLZ I. M.	99.44	97.48	96.89	
1842 LACHMANN C.	95.51	99.46	94.97	
1854 TREGELLES S. P.	95.46	99.42	94.89	
1869 TISCHENDORF C.	95.20	99.19	94.39	
1881 WESTCOTT-HORT	94.35	99.00	93.35	

1% REPRESENTS 80 DIFFERENCES

FOR THE WHOLE OF THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW
 ERASMUS'S FIRST EDITION IS 98.62% IN AGREEMENT WITH THE MAJORITY TEXT
 THE COMPLUTENSIAN TEXT IS 99.44% IN AGREEMENT WITH THE MAJORITY TEXT

Even when we take the text with the lowest percentage of agreement with the Majority (Universal) Text, only Codex Sinaiticus falls below the 90 per cent mark. Now if every extant manuscript of any portion of the Greek New Testament canon has a 90 per cent rating then by comparing every one of the 5,500 extant manuscripts it is possible to produce a text as close to the original writing as we see in the Hebrew canon.

VI. ERASMUS'S USE OF MANUSCRIPT 1

In addition to the data given above, MS 1 has a large number of readings which are not found in any of the 33 editions collated for this article. The results can be summarised as follows. All the statistics relate only to Matthew 18–28, and are collated against Erasmus's 1516 edition.

ADDITIONS:	23
OMISSIONS:	24
REPLACEMENTS:	29
TRANSPOSITIONS:	6
SPELLING—iota subscript:	89 (the use of iota subscript is not found in MS 2 or MS 69)
SPELLING-final Nu:	2
SPELLING-miscellaneous:	13
GRAND TOTAL:	186 (of which 82 are phonemic)

Erasmus passed over these 186 differences, plus the 333 given in Line 10 of Table 5 above, making a total of 519 rejected readings. The statistics of Table 5, line 8, show that of the two Caesarean manuscripts that Erasmus consulted, MS 1 was preferred by him. Erasmus could have consulted MS 69 when he was in England between 1511-1514, when he was preparing his new Latin translation. He obviously did not think much of it as line 1 shows.

VII. ERASMUS'S USE OF MANUSCRIPT 2

In addition to the data given in Table 5 above, MS 2 has a large number of readings, mainly involving spellings, which are not found in any of the 33 editions collated for this paper. The results can be summarised in the following table. All the statistics relate to Matthew 18–28.

Column 3 below gives the total corrections made to MS 2 (presumably by Erasmus or his proof-readers). Column 4 gives the total corrections made to the text of MS 2 which were taken up by Erasmus in his 1516 edition. Column 5 gives the total corrections made to the text of MS 2 which were not taken up by Erasmus in his 1516 edition.

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	IN 1516 COLUMN 4	NOT IN 1516 COLUMN 5
VOWEL CHANGES				
a äÄ w	(sort code: 01)	total: 1	-	1
ai äÄ e	(sort code: 02)	total: 25	23	2
ai äÄ h	(sort code: 03)	total: 1	1	-
ai äÄ ei	(sort code: 04)	total: 4	4	-
e äÄ i	(sort code: 05)	total: 1	1	-
e äÄ o	(sort code: 06)	total: 2	-	2
e äÄ ai	(sort code: 07)	total: 59	47	12
e äÄ h	(sort code: 08)	total: 1	1	-
ei äÄ e	(sort code: 09)	total: 1	1	-
ei äÄ h	(sort code: 10)	total: 37	32	5
ei äÄ i	(sort code: 11)	total: 15	10	5
ei äÄ oi	(sort code: 12)	total: 1	1	-
h äÄ e	(sort code: 13)	total: 1	1	-
h äÄ i	(sort code: 14)	total: 27	20	7
h äÄ ei	(sort code: 15)	total: 24	18	6
h äÄ oi	(sort code: 16)	total: 1	1	-
i äÄ e	(sort code: 17)	total: 1	-	1
i äÄ h	(sort code: 18)	total: 69	57	12
i äÄ ei	(sort code: 19)	total: 2	-	2
i äÄ oi	(sort code: 20)	total: 1	-	1
ia äÄ h	(sort code: 21)	total: 1	-	1
ia äÄ eia	(sort code: 22)	total: 2	2	-
o äÄ u	(sort code: 23)	total: 1	-	1
o äÄ w	(sort code: 24)	total: 56	41	15
o äÄ eo	(sort code: 25)	total: 1	-	1
oi äÄ h	(sort code: 26)	total: 1	1	-
oi äÄ o	(sort code: 27)	total: 1	1	-
oi äÄ u	(sort code: 28)	total: 1	-	1
u äÄ oi	(sort code: 29)	total: 2	1	1
w äÄ o	(sort code: 30)	total: 38	29	9
		<u>378</u>	<u>293</u>	<u>85</u>
CONSONANTS				
g äÄ gg	(sort code: 40)	total: 1	-	1
gg äÄ g	(sort code: 41)	total: 1	1	-
ll äÄ l	(sort code: 42)	total: 2	-	2
M äÄ m	(sort code: 43)	total: 1	-	1
nn äÄ n	(sort code: 44)	total: 3	2	1
q äÄ t	(sort code: 45)	total: 1	-	1
		<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>
BREATHINGS				
a{u äÄ a[u	(sort code: 46)	total: 2	-	2
ADDITIONS				
		total: 4	2	2
OMISSIONS				
		total: 18	8	10
REPLACEMENTS				
		total: 14	7	7
		<u>38</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>21</u>
<hr/>				
GRAND TOTALS (36 are phonemic):		425 (100%)	313 (73.6%)	112 (26.4%)

A comparison of MS 2 with Erasmus's 1516 edition revealed a further 167 cases which must be added to the above totals. They are as follows:

There are 167 differences between MS 2 and Erasmus's 1st edition. In 133 cases Erasmus did not correct MS 2, yet he produced a different Greek text in each of these places. He did insert 26 corrections in the margin (or between the lines) of MS 2 and these were followed by his printer. He inserted 8 other corrections but these were not followed by his printer. It would appear that

the printer followed MS 2 to the letter, but at the proof-reading stage, Erasmus made hundreds of corrections before his 1st edition was published.

The cumulative totals are as follows:

- 425+133 = 558 differences between the original (uncorrected) text of MS 2 and Erasmus's 1516 edition.
- 313+26 = 339 corrections in MS 2 which were accepted by Erasmus (1516).
- 112+8 = 120 corrections in MS 2 which were not printed in Erasmus's first edition (1516), yet Erasmus made these corrections.

That Froben used MS 2 itself to prepare Erasmus's first edition is beyond dispute, because the folio numbers of the first printed text match Froben's numbers in the margins of MS 2.

If one adds together the two totals where Erasmus's 1516 edition differs from the text of MS 2, namely the 133 cases where Erasmus did not physically correct the text of MS 2, and yet he did not accept the text of MS 2 as it stood, and the 120 cases where the text of MS 2 was corrected, but which Erasmus did not accept, these come to 253 cases. And this happened over a space of just ten chapters of Matthew's Gospel (18:15–28:20). This means that, on average, the printer departed from Erasmus's edited form of MS 2, twenty-five times per chapter.

One possible explanation for this situation is that when Froben printed the first sheets these were proofread by Erasmus, who then put his final corrections *on these sheets*, and handed them back to Froben. If this is the solution, then it means that we do not have a complete record in MS 2 itself of all the corrections that Erasmus made to its text. Another explanation is the note by Caspar René Gregory that MS 1 was used by Johannes Oecolampadius and Nikolaus Gerbel to correct the first edition of Erasmus's Greek New Testament.³⁷

When one considers the high density of differences between the original text of Manuscript 2 and Erasmus's first edition, namely, 558 differences in ten chapters of Matthew's Gospel, or 55 differences per chapter, it is a wonder that Erasmus chose it as the printer's copy. There are a grand total of 425 readings in MS 2 that are not found in the other 33 editions collated for this paper. They are found only in MS 2. Of the grand total of 425, 89% of them are phonetic, and 11% are phonemic.

An examination of the 18 omissions in MS 2, especially the *homoioteleuthon* errors, suggest that MS 2 was copied from an exemplar that had 20-22 letters per line.

The collations made for the purpose of this article took into account all misprints and the most insignificant spelling differences, such as the moveable Nu and moveable Sigma, occasionally

³⁷ Caspar René Gregory, *Textkritik des Neuen Testaments* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1900-1909), I.127.

even noting differences in the breathing for Matthew 18:15–28:20. The object was to capture the evidence of dependence of one printer on the previous printer's edition, for it appears that printers used hand-corrected editions of previously printed editions to produce the next edition. In so doing they invariably reproduce the spelling errors of the printed edition they are using as printer's copy, if the errors have not been hand corrected by the editor.

VIII. THE RISE OF THE MAJORITY TEXT

What Hodges & Farstad, and Robinson & Pierpont, did, was to purge Erasmus's *textus receptus* of its Caesarean readings (though they did not identify them as such), as these did not represent the best supported reading in the vast majority of the 900+ manuscripts available to von Soden when he drew up his textual apparatuses, and which became the source for extracting the Koine or the Majority Byzantine text. It was this admixture of Caesarean and Byzantine readings that was eventually to undermine and discredit the *Textus Receptus*, which was to dominate textual studies up until 1830, when C. Lachmann abandoned it for another text-type, namely, the local text of Egypt, which was to form the foundation of the text of Westcott & Hort, leading to the present Nestle-Aland text.³⁸ It should be remembered that the 175 departures (see Table 5, Line 8

³⁸ It should be borne in mind when using the UBS Greek text, that the Byzantine text is represented by a minority sub-group of the 5,500 Byzantine manuscripts and lectionaries, namely, the uncial MSS. The MSS are: EFGHKLNOPQS 046 (see UBS 3rd ed. p. 10*). MSS EFGH belong to von Soden's minority group Ki (which consisted of just 8 MSS). Consequently the witnesses of the bulk of the Byz MSS (namely, Kx [= 550 MSS], Kr [= 221 MSS], and K1 [= 64 MSS]) are not represented either in the UBS4 or the NA 28th editions. The Gothic M in NA27 does not refer to the Byzantine text-type (as it does in H-F), but serves a different purpose, see the Introduction p. 55* (p. 59* in NA28). One must still rely on von Soden's apparatus to evaluate the witness of the vast majority of MSS of the NT. The voice of the majority text has been effectively silenced, misrepresented, or marginalised in modern critical apparatuses, which does a disservice to textual studies, where *all* the evidence should be adequately presented to the reader to consider, such as von Soden did in the case of the Koine evidence, which H-F have converted into an easily understood format in their apparatus. The Byzantine lectionary MSS have been found to contain a text-type dating before the time of Constantine (fourth century) and, claims Birdsall, these have 'been transmitted with little or no change up to the time of the fall of the Byzantine empire,' see J. Neville Birdsall, "The New Testament Text" in *The Cambridge History of the Bible. Volume 1. From the Beginnings to Jerome* (Cambridge: University Press, 1970), p. 323.

above) from the RP text is just from a sample of ten chapters of the 89 chapters of the four Gospels. At this rate of departure, the gulf between the *textus receptus* of Erasmus and the *Textus Receptus* of Robinson-Pierpont would be about 1,600 differences. The Caesarean text-type does not exist outside the Gospels.³⁹

The vision of Hodges & Farstad, and Robinson & Pierpont was to produce the purest form of the Byzantine text-type, stripped of the Caesarean readings that had contaminated Erasmus's *textus receptus*. Erasmus was understandably ignorant of text-types.

The final goal of recovering the purest form of the Majority Text is within sight. At the moment, the text of Robinson & Pierpont is disfigured with marginal notes identifying scores of uncertain readings in the Majority Text. The text of Hodges & Farstad shows 784 cases where the Koine text is evenly split. It is disconcerting to find that out of the 550 MSS of the Kx text that von Soden had he selected out of these just 170 (as his ratios show) to determine what the Kx text was to be. He selected out of the 220 MSS of Kr just 36 (as his ratio totals indicate). He selected just 8 MSS out of the 64 that he had of K1. It was through these samples that von Soden determined what was the text of Kx, Kr, and K1. To identify Kx manuscripts von Soden used Matthew 21-22; Mark 10-11; Luke 7-8, and John 6-7, as his test passages.⁴⁰ However, sampling is not the way to determine the texts of these important constituent parts of the Koine text. The text of each of these constituent parts must not be left to incomplete collation. Rather, every single manuscript that has been providentially preserved must contribute to putting beyond doubt what the original text of Kx was, what the original text of Kr was, and what the original text of K1 was. It would be surprising if the largest grouping of Kx manuscripts, numbering 734 manuscripts out of the 1385 MSS profiled in Wisse's study,⁴¹ should not contain a few sub-groups, given that all manuscripts, of all text-types, are descended from a single source of writing, and *all* are subject to human errors.

³⁹ However, see D. Parker, *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and their Texts* (Cambridge: University Press, 2008), p. 174, for a possible Caesarean text of 1 Peter and 1-3 John.

⁴⁰ Hermann Freiherr von Soden, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt hergestellt auf Grund ihrer Textgeschichte I. Teil: Untersuchungen. I. Abteilung: Die Textzeugen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1911), I/2, 775.

⁴¹ Frededrik Wisse, *The Profile Method for Classifying and Evaluating Manuscript Evidence in Studies and Documents*, Irving Alan Sparks, ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982).

The conservative-evangelical scholar cannot be content with such a state of uncertainty. Why not go the whole way and collate every single available manuscript of all three sub-groups? The pain is worth the gain. James Price wrote:

Not all of the Byzantine manuscripts have been examined, collated, and tabulated. . . . Instead, the Byzantine text has been determined by a sampling process, making use of a relatively small representative group of Byzantine manuscripts—either the representative group used by Aland and his colleagues, or by the groups assembled by von Soden used by Hodges, Pickering, and Robinson. A text tradition whose readings have been determined by statistical sampling always has some remaining degree of uncertainty.⁴²

The last frontier to achieving the goal of the purest form of the Majority Text is for every extant manuscript of every text-type to be computerised digitally. Only in this way will we be able to identify all the text families in every text-type, and from this data we will be able to remove the marginal doubts in the RP text to a state close to what has been achieved for the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, where we have only a relatively small number of Qere/Ketib readings to contend with. Once the text of the Majority Text has been finally settled, then a faithful English Translation can be made to replace the NKJV which is based on the 1894/1902 *Textus Receptus* edited by F. H. A. Scrivener.

1. *The danger of a small base.* Critical texts based on a small number of manuscripts are in danger of disenfranchising the majority of witnesses to the original text. An eclectic text, by its very nature, assumes that the original text has disintegrated so badly in places that no one text, or text-type, can be relied upon to convey the original wording of the Gospels. The current thinking is that the original text has to be put back together again (like Humpty Dumpty) by the skill of man. Thus we have as many 'original texts' as we have textual scholars. Each editor did, and still does, what is right in his own eyes, always claiming, of course, to be 'scientific' in his method. The mistake that Erasmus made was to extract his final text of the Gospels from an extremely small base of three manuscripts, two of which represented the Caesarean text-type, and one represented the Byzantine text. The mistake that Westcott and Hort made was to extract their text of the Gospels from an extremely small base of two local, Egyptian manuscripts, neither of which was in actual use in any living congregation when found. It was a discarded text. Indeed,

⁴² Price, *King James Onlyism* 246; see also Gordon D. Fee, "Modern Textual Criticism and the Revival of the Textus Receptus," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 21 (1978) 119-33, esp. p. 21.

Vaticanus had been discarded twice, and on both occasions bookworms had eaten through the front and back of the manuscript. Sinaiticus was rescued halfway from being burnt.

Westcott and Hort chose these two discarded manuscripts on which to erect their Greek New Testament. Wilbur Pickering chose a sub-group of the Majority Text, Family 35, on which to erect his Greek New Testament.⁴³ We have noted that Erasmus had only three manuscripts to erect his text of the Gospels. The danger of restricting one's vision to two or three manuscripts is on a par with the World War II victory parade through London, where all the mothers, wives and daughters of the returning soldiers lined the streets of London to cheer on their returning, victorious soldiers. The scene switches to a group of such female admirers and as soldiers they recognise come along, marching with heads held high, arms swinging in perfect unison to the sound of a drum beat, they wave and cheer and throw flowers at them. Then one woman, seeing her husband, Johnny, marching smartly along, turns to her female companions and shouts, "Look! they are all out of step with my Johnny." Now, is it likely that they are all out of step with her Johnny, or is it possible that her Johnny is out of step with the rest of the army?

Among the 5,000 or more manuscripts, lectionaries, and versions that make up the army of textual evidence, there will always be a 'Johnny' who is out of step with the rest. Do we latch on to that single manuscript and say that it is the only one in step with the original text, or do we look at the big picture and ask how the entire army got out of step with Johnny? The most likely solution is that Johnny is out of step with his army than that they are out of step with him.

This analogy sums up the danger of ignoring the weight of evidence that is there, even in the most corrupted manuscripts, that can point to the original words. The universal text that was and is followed by the living Church of Christ constitutes the 'army' of evidence. Minorities within that vast army of evidence must not be singled out with the deliberate intent to promote them to the rank of being the only ones to be 'in step' with the original text. The 'beat' to follow is the one of the whole army, not individuals, or minority groups within that army, such as the Egyptian, Caesarean, or Western Texts. These are minority, dead texts, that are out of step with the bulk of the evidence.

It is fair to say that from the moment the original texts became known, Christians all over the known world would have clamoured to have their own copy of these original documents, and

⁴³ Pickering carefully selected 23 MSS out of hundreds, if not thousands of Byzantine manuscripts, that he found agreed almost word for word, and he decided that the text of these 23 MSS contained a perfect copy of the original writings of the Gospels. He called this text f35. His MSS belong to von Soden's Kr-text. See Wilbur N. Pickering, *The Greek New Testament According to Family 35* (Printed in Lexington, KY, USA: 9 February 2014), p. 56 note 9.

once they had them they would value them as extremely prized possessions, and would lovingly treat them as infallible and authoritative guides to what the Lord Jesus said and did. With majority comes authority. Exact copies would have been made as and when their own copies started to become worn out or damaged. The Holy Spirit did not superintend the copying of any copy such that He preserved the copyist from making a single clerical error, nor did He preserve the original writings for all time. Clerical errors would occur despite the most stringent safeguards to avoid such blemishes, because God handed over the copying of His Word to fallible, human beings, not to angels or archangels. *But there is safety in numbers.* The more copies that were made of the original texts, the less chance there was that a single word would be lost, because it would take every copyist in the world to make the same clerical error in the exact same place to lose a single word of the original text. Mathematically, if fifty errors occurred randomly while copying out by hand ten, identical photocopies of any work, secular or sacred, consisting of one thousand words, it would still be possible to produce an exact copy of the original without the loss of a single word—despite there being fifty copying mistakes in each of the ten transcriptions—by the simple expedient of comparing all ten imperfect handwritten copies, assuming that the original ten photocopies were destroyed immediately a hand-copy was made of each of them. Thus out of ten fallible, hand-copied copies, can come one *perfect* error-free copy. Consequently, by carefully collating all the imperfect and badly copied transcriptions of a known text-type, it is possible to recover the *perfect* error-free copy of the original, because the chances of every known copy making the same error in the same place is virtually impossible.

Hort placed a glass ceiling over all future textual studies when he placed the existence of the Byzantine/Syrian Text before what we now know as the Egyptian and Caesarean text-types. The suggestion here is that the Byzantine text-type predates all other text-types and should be considered to underlie and underpin all other text-types. It is the foundation stone that makes sense of all other text-types for they are all in one way or another descendants of the Universal (Byzantine) Text. It is the stone that the builders rejected, the cornerstone that Hort despised, and he is still alive today, yoking the cart of textual criticism to his twin cows, Vaticanus and Sinaiticus. J. N. Neville noted, 'It [Byzantine Text] has attracted little analytical attention apart from the work of von Soden, who examined it in some detail on the assumption that it was a major text-type directly descended from the original.'⁴⁴

The origin of the Caesarean text is still open to debate.

⁴⁴ J. Neville Birdsall, "The New Testament Text" 319.

The AV/JKV has been fiercely defended by evangelicals since Hort's day. Few realise that in four or five passages in Romans and Galatians Erasmus assimilated his Greek to the Vulgate.⁴⁵ James D. Price has noted over 1,500 places in the *Textus Receptus* where the Greek text differs from the Majority (Byzantine) Text. He has listed 253 of these which directly affect the sense. The breakdown of this figure is: Gospels 63x, Acts 27x, Pauline (inc. Hebrews) 37x, Catholic Epistles 20x, Revelation 106x. Of these 253 differences, 97 are additions in the TR (37 of them in the Book of Revelation).⁴⁶ In the same work, J. D. Price lists 82 places in the OT where the AV has not followed the Hebrew text. It follows the Vulgate alone 14 times, the Septuagint alone 11x, the agreement of LXX and Vulgate 43x, plus other cases (Appendix 1-1). In another place he gives a further list of 146 cases where the AV rejected the Hebrew text in favour of other versions. Here again, the AV follows the Vulgate alone 20x, the Septuagint alone 8x, the agreement of LXX and Vulgate 17x, the agreement of Targum and Vulgate 11x, plus other cases (see Appendix 1-2). These 228 cases where the AV has deviated from the Hebrew text are a blot on its reputation of being a 'faithful' translation. Even the New Testament shows the influence of the Latin Vulgate in a handful of places.⁴⁷ In Mark 7:3 AV 'off' is from the Vulgate *crebro*; Jn 10:16 'fold' from *ovile*; John 11:19 'to Martha' from *ad Martham*; Acts 19:20 'the word of God' from *verbum Dei*; Ephesians 2:1 'dead in trespasses and sins' from *mortui in delictis et peccatis vestris*; Ephesians 4:18 'blindness of their heart' *caecitatem cordis ipsorum*; 2 Timothy 1:18 'he ministered unto me' from *ministravit mihi*; Romans 9:19 'hath resisted' from *restitit*; Acts 8:11 'because . . . he had bewitched' from *quod . . . dementasset eos*; and 2 Timothy 4:15 'he hath withstood' from *restitit*. Knowledge of the deficiencies of the AV/KJV is the first step to its replacement, and that replacement should start with a replacement of its underlying Greek text with the Majority Text.⁴⁸

Erasmus was condemned for his Greek-Latin New Testament by Supelveda who informed him that the Greek manuscripts he had followed in the NT were thoroughly corrupt, and he sent

⁴⁵ C. R. Gregory, *Textkritik des Neuen Testaments* (1909), p. 927. The AV follows the Vulgate at Acts 19:20 and Heb 10:23.

⁴⁶ Price, *King James Onlyism* Appendix H.

⁴⁷ I am grateful to Dr Graham Thomason (Tadworth, Surrey) for these examples.

⁴⁸ Daniel B. Wallace claims there are 1,838 differences between the 1st edition of Hodges and Farstad's Majority Text and the TR (Oxford 1825 ed.), "The Majority Text Theory: History, Methods, and Critique," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, ed. by Bart D. Ehrman and Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1995), pp. 297-320, esp. notes 28, 45.

him a list of 365 places where Codex Vaticanus was in agreement with Jerome's Vulgate (Letters, X, 307).⁴⁹ Erasmus replied that he understood that at the union of the Greek and Roman churches at Florence it was agreed that the Greeks should alter their Greek Scriptures to bring them into line with the Vulgate, and he believed that Codex Vaticanus had been revised to agree with the Vulgate (Letters, X, 355). This allowed him to dismiss Supelveda's list as irrelevant. Supelveda was, at this time, working with Cardinal Cajetan on a revised text of the Greek NT, so that he knew the true state of his Greek manuscripts. He became aware that while he could list 365 places where Vaticanus and the Vulgate agreed, he knew of just as many places where they disagreed, and where the Vulgate, in fact, supported Erasmus's new, Greek text.⁵⁰

This paper started out as a collation of MS 69 with Erasmus's first edition for the last ten chapters of Matthew's Gospel, and ended up by collating 33 editions. As a pilot study, it has exposed the eclectic nature of Erasmus's first Greek text, and it has shown that this mixed text then became the foundation for the texts of Robert Stephens, the Elzevir brothers, and then Beza's text, which may have been used by the translators of the Authorized Version.

In the good providence of God, thousands of manuscripts have been preserved, which were unknown to earlier editors, who would have made diligent use of them in their search for the text that came closest to the original texts, which was ever the goal they all endeavoured to reach. The history of the *textus receptus* has been one of continual refinement. It is in this same quest for the purest form of the original text that the researches of Hodges & Farstad and Robinson & Pierpont should be seen. While the labours of these scholars has produced a purer form of the majority text in use by the Church of Christ throughout the ages, and they have purged the *textus receptus* of the contamination of competing text-types in the Gospels, the 784 major splits identified by Hodges & Farstad in the Byzantine witnesses, plus the 480 sizeable splits (noted in the footnotes

⁴⁹ D. Erasmus., *Opus Epistolarum*, ed. P. S. Allen. 12 vols. (Oxford, 1906-58).

⁵⁰ It is very likely that it was Supelveda who inserted the 842 double dots (called umlauts) in the margins of Codex Vaticanus (MS B) to mark all those places where Erasmus's Latin text differed from the Vulgate, because the Vulgate in all these places translated the Greek text of Vaticanus, and not Erasmus's new Greek text. Supelveda studiously avoided placing any umlauts in the margins of Vaticanus where the Vulgate was a translation of Erasmus's Greek text, of which there are scores of cases! The umlauts, therefore, are collation marks, and were inserted about 1530-33 into the margins of Codex Vaticanus by Supelveda. They are, consequently, useless, for text-critical purposes.

of H-F text) within the Byzantine textual transmission of the original texts is still a deep cause for concern among those who desire to achieve the status that the Hebrew text enjoys.⁵¹

Just as the editions of Erasmus paved the way for nearly a century of textual preparation leading to the publication of the King James Bible,⁵² so the current editions of the Majority Text continue that work and reflect a refining process in the providential preservation of the Word of God. In Beza's day the same 5,500 manuscripts we have today were out of his reach otherwise he would have used them, and completed the work of refinement that Hodges & Farstad, and Robinson & Pierpont have done so far. The process of comparing the same text-type was the same for Beza as it was for his modern successors. The only difference was time. The process had been on-going. One has to ask, Is it possible that the Holy Spirit completed His 'refining process'

⁵¹ Robinson & Pierpont's text contains 650 alternative Byzantine variants in the margin. The total is made up as follows: Gospels 188x (Mt 40, Mk 50, Lk 45, Jn 53); Acts 70x; Catholic Epistles 13x; Pauline Epistles 49x; and Revelation 330x.

⁵² In 1881 Scrivener revised Beza's edition of 1598 to bring it into line with the English text of the Authorised Version. This is not the way to establish the text of the original, inspired words of Scripture. Frederick H. A. Scrivener, *Scrivener's Annotated Greek New Testament* (Collingswood, New Jersey: Dean Burgeon Society Press, 1999). But Scrivener was careful to note, "the Authorised Version was not a translation of any one Greek text then in existence, and no Greek text intended to reproduce in any way the original of the Authorised Version has ever been printed" (Preface, vii). While Scrivener accepted that the Greek text that came closest to the AV was Beza's 1598 edition, he noted that it is in places "at variance with Beza's text." The AV is a mixture of previous English versions which were based on Erasmus's imperfect editions. Scrivener adopted the plan that where the AV was not supported by Beza's Greek text, if there was another printed Greek edition known to support the AV translation then Scrivener adopted it and placed an asterisk against Beza's rejected Greek text. There are 190 such asterisked places in Scrivener's text. So, even as late as 1881, the 'refining process' of the Holy Spirit was still in operation, in the opinion of some King James Only advocates. Scrivener concluded that at times the AV translators did not follow any known Greek text, and in these cases "it exactly follows the Latin Vulgate" (Preface, ix). It is hard to discern the guiding hand of God in these places, or in the long march to produce Scrivener's Received Text (which is the latest Spirit's edition, according to some). Cf. F. H. A. Scrivener, *Six Lectures on the Text of the New Testament and the Ancient Manuscripts which contain it* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, and Co./London: George Bell and Sons, 1875).

when the King James Version was published in 1611, and therefore He rested from His labours in that year? For many 'King James Only' scholars, the age of textual criticism ended in 1611, and the age of the preservation of the KJV began in 1611.⁵³ Some regard the work of preserving the AV as the only work left for the Holy Spirit to do, and any attempt to undermine Scrivener's reconstructed Greek text of the AV, or any attempt to translate a different—but purer form of the Majority Greek—text is tantamount to a denial of the inspiration and preservation of the Word of God. The maxim 'translation is treason' is levelled against any revision of the AV. But wasn't Erasmus's second edition considered to be 'the inspired and preserved Word of God' for Luther and the other reformers? So why change it? Wasn't Beza's last edition considered to be 'the inspired and preserved Word of God' for his generation? So why change it? But Scrivener has altered it in 190 places!

If the direct intervention of the Holy Spirit is claimed to have preserved the Greek text behind the TR in a near perfect condition from the moment He inspired the original writers to write the New Testament Scriptures, then what are to make of the fact that in the last ten chapters of Matthew's Gospel the Holy Spirit inspired and guided Beza in 1598 to make 34 alterations to the text that He inspired and guided Stephens to arrive at in 1550, but then the same Spirit inspired and guided Elzevir in 1633 to reverse 24 of the 34 changes that Beza had made, and revert to the text that He inspired and guided Stephens to make in 1550! What one editor omits, another admits! But can the Holy Spirit really be credited with these chaotic changes to His original writings?

It is only now that the 5,500 witnesses can come forward individually and put beyond dispute what was the text that was originally written by the inspired writers of the NT Scriptures.

The future lies with the Majority Text but only if it is seen as part of the on-going refining process that a complete collation of every manuscript and version will bring. In the meantime, the fresh, 'brown bread' of the Universal (Byzantine) Text is to be preferred to the out-of-date 'crust' of the *Textus Receptus*. The future is bright because it belongs to the next generation of conservative-evangelical textual scholars who are single-minded in their goal to make the present printed editions of the Majority Text out of date in their lifetime, as they in their turn are superseded by a more refined-tuning of the text of the living Word of God, until every jot and tittle of evidence has been harnessed to the supreme end of recovering the purest form of the living oracles of God.

⁵³ See James R. White, *The King James Only Controversy* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publications, 1995), pp. 1-7.

The tools to begin this work have been forged already. The debt owed to Reuben Swanson (1918-2009) is incalculable when it comes to opening up to the public the treasures that lie dormant in the 5,500 manuscripts that still have to be processed and put into the public domain for all to exercise their right to examine. His series of pilot studies on the Gospels and many of Paul's Epistles has put the knowledge of manuscripts within easy reach of all who have a concern to achieve the maximum certainty when handling the inspired Scriptures as these left the hands of the inspired writers. The initials MT should stand for 'maximum trustworthiness' as much as for the purest form of the Majority Text. The sterling work of Reuben Swanson will forever be associated with a new age of investigation into the transmission of the original writings. Without his work, the present work would never have been attempted.

The answer to the question in the title of this paper is that the text of the *Textus Receptus* has been diligently compared to the RP standard and found to be unrepresentative of the Byzantine Text. Worst than that, its text has been found to rest on two competing text-types, Caesarean and Byzantine. It is a mixed, eclectic text. Consequently, its days are numbered, and the scholar who did most to expose its deficiencies was James D. Price.

As long ago as 1945 Bruce M. Metzger made the telling observation, "If one hundred people today were to transcribe independently from a common text, how often would they agree fortuitously in their errors?"⁵⁴ The vast majority of errors would all make sense to the one hundred transcribers, but it would be foolish to start grouping the errors according to categories or text-types, or genealogies. The vast majority of errors are human, and if human, then they will be repeated. Bruce Metzger recognised that,

... if it is licit to employ all variants in determining consanguinity, the full possibilities of the method have been largely neglected. The proper method of determining the relation of a hitherto unknown manuscript to the Neutral, Western, 'Caesarean,' and Byzantine families is not merely to count how many of its variants from the *Textus Receptus* (or

⁵⁴ Bruce M. Metzger, "The Caesarean Text of the Gospels," *JBL* 64 (1945) 457-89, esp. p. 489.

This article traces the research into f13 (first identified in 1868). This family includes nineteen MSS and several ancient versions. The name 'Caesarean' was given to this text-type by B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels*. Family 1 and Family 13 have been identified using Lachmann's maxim, 'Community of error is the sole ground of relationship,' or Lake's version, 'Community of error implies unity of origin' (K. Lake, *Codex 1 of the Gospels* xxiii). It would be more accurate to reword this maxim as, 'Agreement in disagreement with the Universal (Byzantine) Text is the sole criterion to identify deviant groups and their sub-groups.'

from any other given norm) agree with B, a, D, Θ, W, etc. Such a procedure is indeed necessary and not uninformative, but the only really satisfactory method is to reconstruct the text of each of the major families and to determine precisely what proportion of variants from the *Textus Receptus* in such a reconstructed text is also present in the manuscript to be analysed.

The call to reconstruct the exact wording of the four text-types, namely, Byzantine, Caesarean, Western, and Egyptian, is the way forward. In the case of the Byzantine text-type, it is now universally recognised that the *Textus Receptus* does not represent the Byzantine text-type as faithfully as some think. The true Byzantine Text has now been brought closer with the publication of the Majority Text of Robinson & Pierpont. Thus in any future critical apparatus, it would be sufficient to quote 'RP' as the nearest representative of the Byzantine text-type that is presently available today.

Does the *Textus Receptus* still have a future? The short answer is No. This paper has shown that the *Textus Receptus* came close to representing the Caesarean text-type, because two of its three founding manuscripts did not represent the Byzantine text-type. It is time to put the *Textus Receptus* away in a museum of literary curiosities. That is not to deny the good that the TR did in turning the Reformers away from a workable Latin translation to discover and delight in the teaching of Jesus and his Apostles through the original Greek oracles. It is time to move on and replace the TR with the MT, which is a more sure foundation on which to build Christ's Church, and rediscover Christ's doctrines in all its nuances. The abbreviation 'MT' should stand not just for the 'Majority (Universal) Text,' but also for a 'More Truthful,' and a 'More Trustworthy' replica of the original oracles that the Holy Spirit caused to be written for the benefit of Christ's universal Church. This article has shown that the Universal Text that lies at the core of the Egyptian and the Caesarean versions is the text despised and rejected by men—the Byzantine Text.

END OF 500TH ANNIVERSARY ARTICLE

James R. White, *The King James Only Controversy: Can You Trust Modern Translations?* [Bloomington, Minnesota: Bethany House Publishers, 2009]).

See p. 237 where the AV followed a conjectural reading in Rev 16:5 put forward by Beza which changed 'the Holy One,' into "it shall be," with no Greek text to support it!!

See p. 105 n. 39. Eduardus Reuss, in *Bibliotheca Novi Testamenti Graeci* (1872), listed 38 differences between Stephanus's 4th edition and Beza's final work (143-44). Stephanus died in 1559 and Beza in 1605.

THIS IS A CLEAR CASE OF BLUNDER IN THE AV. I have this book in my possession.

I looked up the words (a) κρεισσον and (b) κρειπτον because RP reads (a) three times, at 1 Cor 7:9; Phil 1:23; and Heb 6:9, and RP reads (b) on the other sixteen occasions. The inconsistency is caused by RP's total dependence on the apparatus of von Soden. However, von Soden gives no apparatus for 11 out of the 19 occurrences, which means that RP is at the mercy of von Soden's judgment and must follow his printed text. Only on one occasion does he give the reading of K (at 1 COR 11:17).

I also noted that at Heb 12:21 von Soden gives Μωυσης as his printed text and the apparatus does not give the reading of the Koine MSS, hence the assumption is that the K-text reads Μωυσης. However, Μωυσης is the Egyptian spelling. If Apollos came from Alexandria (Egypt) this would explain the use of this spelling. I need to check all the occurrences of 'Moses' in Paul's writings to see how consistent he is in his spelling of Moses's name.

Charles C. Ryrie, "Oddities in the King James Bible," *Criswell Theological Review* 10 (2012) 67-72. Misprints occurred in the first edition. In the Psalms, "princes have persecuted me," was printed as "printers have persecuted me." Also the following: "The unrighteous shall inherit the earth." "He who has an ear to ear." "If you don't hate your father and mother and your own life." In another edition the misprint read "If you don't hate your father and mother and your own wife"! Other blunders had Judas, not Jesus go into Gethsemane (Mt 26:36). Phillip, not Peter, will deny Jesus. "These are murmurers," was printed in Jude as "These are murderers." In Revelation, "there was no more sea," was printed as "there was more sea.

Jerry H. Bentley, "Erasmus' Annotations in Novum Testamentum and the Textual Criticism of the Gospels," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 67 (1976) 33-53.

J. Tim Gallagher, "A Study of Von Soden's H-Text in the Catholic Epistles," *AUSS* 8 (1970) 97-119.

James R. Royse, "Von Soden's Accuracy," *JTS* 30 (19079) 166-71.

James H. Ropes, "Review of Hermann von Soden 'Griechisches Neues Testaments'," *HTR* 7 (1914) 278-80.

Herman C. Hoskier, "Von Soden's Text of the New Testament," *JTS* 15 (1914) 307-26.

C. D. Dicks, "The Matthean Text of Chrysostom in his Homilies on Matthew," *JBL* 67 (1948)
365-76.

Jacob Geerlings and Silva New, "Chrysostom's Text of the Gospel of Mark," *HTR* 24 (1931)
121-42.

DRAFT