

Greek Text Types
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Ronald J. Gordon, "Comparing Translations," (April 1997, updated February 2004),
<http://www.cob-net.org/compare.htm> :

Byzantine Text: This is the largest family, or localized text-type, comprising about ninety-four percent of all Greek manuscripts. It originates from the empire of the same name which had sheltered its preservation for many centuries until threatened invasions from Ottoman Turks drove eastern Greek scholars towards the Latin Catholic West, taking along their Biblical manuscripts. Translators, especially during the Reformation, began using this new text-type and the Byzantine text became the underlying text for Martin Luther, William Tyndale, and Theodore Beza. Its distinctive, slightly longer and editorially polished readings eventually supplanted the Latin Vulgate, and became the principal text-type of every major non-Catholic translation until the Nineteenth century. Bruce Metzger writes in *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, "*The framers of this text sought to smooth away any harshness of language, to combine two or more divergent readings into one expanded reading, and to harmonize parallel passages.*" *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, Stuttgart: Biblia-Druck GmbH (German Bible Society), 1975, p. xx'."

Alexandrian Text: The second largest group houses about three to four percent of Greek manuscripts and originated in the Christian community of Alexandria, Egypt. (Metzger) - "Characteristics...are brevity and austerity. That is, it is generally shorter than the text of other forms, and it does not exhibit the degree of grammatical and stylistic polishing that is characteristic of the Byzantine..." *Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, (Ibid., p. xvii')

Western Text: This text group originates from the North African city of Carthage and its sister Rome, deriving its name from this area being farther to the "west" of the earliest missionary activities in the regions of Greece, Turkey, Syria, and Judea. (Metzger) - "The chief characteristic of Western readings is fondness for paraphrase. Words, clauses, and even whole sentences are freely changed, omitted, or inserted." *Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, Ibid., p. xviii');

Caesarean Text: This is really a sub-group of Alexandrian manuscripts with a garnish of Western influence. It was the text of Eusebius and Cyril of Jerusalem. Metzger describes it as "characterized by a distinctive mixture of Western readings and Alexandrian readings. One may also observe a certain striving after elegance of expression." *Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, Ibid., p. xx');

Modern scholars are of the opinion that its longer readings are the result of conflating different sources into one. The following chart shows a phrase in John 10:19 which exhibits three different Greek word constructions along with their corresponding manuscript family.

<u>Greek</u>	<u>Translation</u>	<u>Textual Family</u>
SCHISMA OUN	division THEREFORE	WESTERN
SCHISMA PALIN	division AGAIN	ALEXANDRIAN (Modern Translations)
SCHISMA OUN PALIN	division THEREFORE	BYZANTINE (King James Version)
Σχίσμα οὖν παλιν	AGAIN	

Harry Sturz writing in *The Byzantine Text-Type: New Testament Textual Criticism*: "In the John 10:19 passage, while P45 and P75 support the Alexandrian reading, P66, the earliest papyrus, reads SCHISM OUN PALIN."