



Glossary of Translation Terms

Old Latin: *The Old Latin translation was undertaken considerably before that of the Latin Vulgate so closely associated with Jerome (c. 342-420). The Old Testament was translated from the Septuagint, the New was one of the earliest translations of the Greek (quoted by Tertullian [d. c. 220] and Cyprian [d. c. 258]). It is available only in fragments today.*

Providential Preservation: *See Westminster Confession of Faith, 1:8 – ‘The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authenticable (Matthew 5:18)...’ As taught in Psalm 117:2 and Matthew 24:35, etc., God has preserved His Word through the ages. The professing people of God under the Old and New Testaments have been His instruments in its preservation (Psalm 147:19,20; Romans 3:2).*

Received Text: *The Byzantine text was the text underlying the earliest printed editions of the New Testament. The various editions of the Received Text, or Textus Receptus, of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries represented (with a few very minor differences) the Byzantine Text-type. Erasmus edited five editions of the New Testament text from 1516 to 1535, and others were produced by Estienne (the Latin form of his name is Stephanus), Beza, and Bonaventure and Abraham Elzevir. The phrase ‘received Text’ comes from the Preface to Elzevirs’ second edition (1633). This title has been used over the centuries to classify all the printed editions of the Greek text of the same provenance.*

Textus Receptus: *See Received Text.*

Translations: *The rendering of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures in other languages which, when accurate, are to be received as the Word of God.*

Ancient Versions: *For example, the Septuagint, Peshitta, Coptic (Sahidic or Thebaic, and Bohairic), Ethiopic, Old Latin (Vetus Itala), and Vulgate, produced in the first few centuries of the Christian era.*

Apographs: *Copies of the original and inspired manuscripts. FirstBible International (following the Traditional Text of the Protestant Church) regards the Masoretic Hebrew and Greek Received texts as the best representatives of the Autographs.*

Autographs: *The original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts written by the inspired writers, which are now unavailable.*

Byzantine: *The Byzantine era is 312-1453 A.D. The texts produced by Erasmus, Beza, etc., which in time became known as forms of the Received Text, were to a very great extent derived from the Byzantine family.*

Complutensian Polyglot: *The Polyglot Bible, conceived in 1502, by Francisco Ximenes de Cisneros (1437-1517) and produced at Alcala (Latin: Complutum) in Spain, was an edition in which the Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin Vulgate texts appeared side by side. The fifth of the six volumes contained the text of the New Testament in Greek, and a Greek glossary with Latin equivalents. This was printed in 1514 (as the first printed Greek New Testament), but the Polyglot was not actually published until 1520, and then not generally circulated until 1522.*

Critical texts: *Texts constructed without adequate regard to the historical place given to manuscripts and particular readings within the church and relying on a few old, but nevertheless unrepresentative, manuscripts and readings which have lain in obscurity for many centuries. Critical texts are such as the Westcott/Hort or Nestle/Aland texts, both of which rely heavily upon Codex Sinaiticus, Aleph -01 (4th cent.) and Codex Vaticanus, B-03 (4th cent.).*

Dynamic equivalence: *The principle of translation that attempts to recreate on the reader of the receptor language the impact the original text had on the original recipients, without being bound literally to reproduce the words as nearly as possible. The translator then assumes the role of interpreter, to determine the thought intended in the original. (This often results in an interpretative paraphrase that has little or no relationship to the original language text.) While all translations may need to employ dynamic equivalence to a limited extent, FirstBible International rejects the extensive and unnecessary use of this method of translation.*

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'Ecclesiastically transmitted': Scripture adopted (i.e. recognized and acknowledged) and preserved by the church as the true and authentic text, as was the Hebrew Old Testament text used in the synagogues of our Lord's time (and later preserved by the Masoretes) and the Greek New Testament text, acknowledged by the Greek Church throughout the Byzantine period (312-1453 AD), and long after, and preserved in the overwhelming majority of existing Greek manuscripts. The printed editions of the Greek text, commencing with Erasmus in 1516, although based on a relatively small group of available manuscripts, have been found faithfully to reflect the great majority of these manuscripts. Erasmus' first edition included, in a few cases, readings from the Latin Vulgate. This was largely due to the fact that some of the Greek manuscripts available to him were incomplete (e.g. his manuscript of Revelation was missing its last six verses). In Erasmus' fourth edition in 1527, however, he made use of the Complutensian Polyglot which contained an edition of the Greek text based on a number of other Greek manuscripts and, in the light of the Complutensian, his Greek New Testament was thoroughly revised. However, a few readings taken from the Latin, for which there are now no extant Greek manuscripts, have always been included in the various printed editions of the Received Text.

Eclectic: By definition, 'selecting what is considered best from various sources,' but in practice, it usually means heavy dependence on Aleph and B. The differences between the critical texts and the Eclectic texts are based very largely on nothing more than the editor's subjective considerations.

Extant Copies: Copies of the Greek manuscripts that have survived until the present time. Although the extant copies are of various ages, completeness and accuracy, the great majority of them (over 90%) agree with the traditional form of the New Testament found in the printed editions of the Received Text.

Formal equivalence: The Principle of translation that accepts every word of Holy Scripture as being of divine origin and therefore takes into account every word in the original language to ensure that as far as possible the grammar, the form, the vocabulary and the syntax of the Hebrew and Greek are followed in the translation ('As literal as possible, as free as necessary'). FirstBible believes this is the only acceptable method of translation.

Infallible/Inerrant: The word 'infallible' means 'not liable to prove false, erroneous, or mistaken,' while 'inerrant' means 'free from error' or 'unerring.' Historically, Protestant

theologians have used the former term to affirm that Scripture is absolutely truthful and trustworthy. The words apply, in the first instance, to the Autographs, and then to the true Text providentially preserved within the Masoretic Hebrew and Greek received Texts. In modern usage the terms are often used interchangeably, both declaring that God's written Word is wholly and completely true.

Inspired: The Greek is *theopneustos*, 'breathed out from God' (2 Timothy 3:16). Scripture is of Divine origin and authorship, the product of the Divine breath. Inspiration is 'plenary' (from the Latin, *plenus*, meaning 'full'), which signifies that inspiration is complete and entire, so that the Scripture as a whole is the Word of God ('all scripture'). Inspiration is also 'verbal' (from the Latin, *verbum*, meaning 'word'), which signifies that the very words of Scripture are God-given, ensuring that His Truth has been correctly and properly communicated. 'I...will put my words in his mouth.' (Deuteronomy 18:18; cf. 2 Samuel 23:1,2) 'And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.' (Revelation 21:5; cf. Jeremiah 30:2)

Majority Text: A text based on the majority of manuscript witnesses. The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text, edited by Zane C. Hodges and Arthur L. Farstad (1982), is a modern example of the Majority Text. Although close to the Received Text, there are a number of differences and some of these are significant (e.g. John 7:53-8:11; Acts 8:36,37). Furthermore, as no detailed collation of all surviving manuscripts has taken place, the exact majority text cannot yet be determined; and even if one day that became possible, the resultant text could only be provisional and tentative, because the discovery of further manuscripts might change minority readings to majority readings, or vice versa. The doctrine of providential preservation, however, teaches that the church is - and always has been - in possession of the true text of Scripture.

Manuscripts: Originally written on papyrus or vellum. The Greek manuscripts are divided into those known as Uncials, written in capital letters, and Minuscules or Cursives, written in small, joined handwriting.

Masoretic: From the Hebrew, *masorah*, transmission. The Masoretes (Jewish scholars and scribes) were active from 500 AD (some think much earlier) to about 1000 AD and it was their purpose to hand on the Hebrew Text of the Old Testament as they had received it. One Masoretic text was edited by Jacob ben Chayyim for the second rabbinic Bible published by Daniel Bomberg in Venice in 1524-25. This is the text underlying the Authorized Version.

**"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth:
it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I
please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." ISAIAH 55:11**