

**THE GREEK TEXT
OF THE NEW TESTAMENT**



by

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THE TEXT OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

I. An Enumeration of the Greek New Testament Manuscripts

We believe that under God's providence a vast fleet of documents have transported the New Testament text across the sea of time. For expert information in this field we turn to Kurt Aland who currently assigns official numbers to newly discovered manuscripts of the Greek New Testament and to Bruce Metzger author of many articles and books concerning the New Testament text.

Kurt Aland, "The Greek New Testament: Its Present and Future Editions," JBL, Vol 87 (1968).

Burce Metzger, The Text of the New Testament. 1968.

How many New Testament manuscripts are there? The 1968 statistic as presented by Kurt Aland is that there are 5, 255 known manuscripts which contain all or part of the Greek New Testament.

- A. **Papyri**. The earliest of these Greek New Testament manuscripts are the papyri, written on an ancient type of writing material made from the fibrous pith of the papyrus plant, which in ancient times grew plentifully along the river Nile.

Eighty-one of these papyri have now been discovered, many of them fragments.

The most important of these papyrus manuscripts are the Chester Beatty Papyri and the Bodmer Papyri. The Chester Beatty Papyri were published in 1933-37 and include Papyrus 45 (Gospels and Acts, c. 225 A. D.), Papyrus 46 (Pauline Epistles, c. 225 A. D.), and Papyrus 47 (Revelation, c. 275 A. D.). The Bodmer Papyri were published in 1956-62. The most important of these are Papyrus 66 (John, c. 200 A. D.), and Papyrus 75 (Luke and John 1:15 c. 200A.D.).

- B. **Uncials**. All the rest of the Greek New Testament manuscripts were of velum (leather), except for a few late ones in which paper was

VI. Future Critical Editions of the Greek New Testament

- A. In the 1968 annual conference of the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas there was a discussion under the direction of Kurt Aland of the principles of a comprehensive critical edition of the Greek New Testament.
- B. The institute for New Testament Textual Research with which Kurt Aland is associated is located in Münster. The Institute is in the process of securing copies of all known Greek New Testament Manuscripts. In 1968 they had photo copies or microfilms of about 80% of known manuscripts.

76	papyri
239	uncials
2385	minuscules
1778	lectionaries

For a total of about 4478 manuscripts, which is more than was even known at the beginning of their work.

- 1. What would be the purpose for the Institute for New Testament Textual Research’s critical edition? K. Aland says: “The striven-for comprehensive critical edition is concerned with ascertaining the original text of the N T , i. e., the text in which the NT writings were put into circulation by the author or a collector (e. g., the Pauline epistles) and with making available all the material necessary for the discovery of this text.”
 - 2. (For a discussion of the Institute’s work to 1968 see the JBL article by Aland, p. 185-6.)
- C. The 26th edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament provides the specialist today working on the NT text with the most helpful critical material. It has about 18 more variant readings per page than The Greek New Testament of the United Bible Societies.
- 1. The purpose of the Nestle-Aland text is different from that of The Greek New Testament of the UBS. The latter is intended for

contain in proper sequence the text of the passages of Scripture appointed to be read at the worship services of the church. These lectionaries are of two kinds, the synaxaria, which begin the year at Easter, and the menologia, which begin the year with the first of September.

Aland puts the number of lectionary manuscripts catalogued in 1968 at 2,143.

SUMMARY

Enumeration of Greek New Testament Manuscripts

	List IV	List VII
Papyri	48	81
Majuscules	208	267
Minuscules	2370	2764
Lectionaries	<u>1609</u>	<u>2143</u>
Total:	4235	5255

List IV compiled in 1954 by von Dobschütz
 List VII compiled in 1967 by K. Aland.

V. Causes of Errors in Textual Transmission

A. R. C. Foster, Introduction and Early Ministry, p. 162.

Textual critics attribute the manuscript errors to the following causes:

1. Momentary inattention of the scribe
2. Diversion of attention from the words to the subject matter
3. Writing from dictation
4. Homoioteleuton (similar ending of sentences or lines)
5. Change of pronunciation
6. Trusting to memory
7. Absence of spaces and punctuation- - these all accidental.
8. To correct a supposed mistake
9. To secure fullness of expression
10. To support a doctrine-- these are intentional.

Two principles which higher critics emphasize in attempting to restore the text:

1. The shorter reading is to be preferred over the longer
2. The more difficult is to be preferred over the easier.

B. See also McGarvey, Evidences of Christianity, p. 19-24.

C. Causes of Error in the Transmission of the Text of the N. T.
Metzger, The Text of the New Testament, p. 186-206.

1. Unintentional Changes
 - a. Errors arising from faulty eyesight.
 - 1) Scribe had difficulty distinguishing between Greek letter, especially when previous copyist had not written with care.
 - 2) Errors made when two lines ended alike and one complete line was omitted. (homoeotelution)

H. After Gregory's death in World War I, the task of registering newly discovered manuscripts was taken over by von Dobschuetz.

I. At present this responsibility rests with Kurt Aland, and as previously stated, in 1968 he listed the present number of Greek New Testament manuscripts at 5,255.

During the 1920's and 30's another type of New Testament text was discerned as having circulated in Egypt, namely, the Caesarean text. Streeter gave it this name because he believed that Origen used this type of text in Caesarea after he had fled there from Alexandria in A.D. 231.

1. In 1928 Kirsopp Lake brought out the possibility that the Caesarean text was an Egyptian text. In 1933-37 with the publication of the Chester Beatty Papyri, F. G. Kenyon found Mark to be Caesarean. This discovery provided another link binding the Caesarean text to Egypt.

(In Acts, Pauline Epistles, and Revelation, the Beatty papyria are usually considered as Alexandrian text-type.)

2. The Caesarean text occurs in certain late manuscripts, Theta 113 28 565 700 in places where these do not agree with the Byzantine text.

The Caesarean text is found in **W** from Mark 6 to end of that gospel.

	Gospels	Acts	Catholic Epistles	Paul-Hebrews	Revelation
Alexandrian	<p>ε¹ ρ¹ π¹ φ¹ ψ¹ π¹ ρ¹</p> <p>ε¹ ρ¹ φ¹ π¹ ρ¹</p> <p>8 A B C L Q T W-Luke 1 John 8 12 / Z Δ E + 054 059 060 0162</p> <p>220 33 164 215 378 579 718 850 892 1241 (1942 Mark)</p> <p>Boh (Sah) Ath Cyr Alex (Or)</p>	<p>ε¹ ρ¹ π¹</p> <p>8 A B C + 048 076 096</p> <p>6 33 81 194 326 1175</p> <p>Boh (Sah) Ath Cyr Alex Clem-Alex? (Or)</p>	<p>ε¹ ρ¹ π¹</p> <p>8 A B C P + 048 056 0142 0156</p> <p>33 81 104 323 326 424 1175 1739 2248</p> <p>Boh (Sah) Ath Cyr Alex Clem Alex? (Or)</p>	<p>ε¹ ρ¹ π¹ φ¹ ψ¹ π¹ ρ¹</p> <p>8 A B C H I L M P Ps 045 081 088 0220</p> <p>6 33 81 104 326 424 1175 1739 1908</p> <p>Boh (Sah)</p>	<p>ε¹ ρ¹ π¹</p> <p>10331 0808 8 A C P 0207 0109</p> <p>61 59 94 241 254 1006 1175 1611 1841 1852 2340 2953 2344 2351</p>
Caesarean	<p>ε¹ ρ¹ π¹</p> <p>θ (W-Mark 5 ff.) N O Z Q Fam 1 Fam 13 28 565 700 7071 1604</p> <p>Geo Arm. Pal-Syr Eas Cyr-Jer (Or)</p>	<p>ε¹ ρ¹ π¹</p> <p>ε¹ ζ¹</p> <p>(Text type not determined in the remainder of the New Testament)</p> <p>Cyr-Jer?²</p>			
Western	<p>ε¹ ρ¹ π¹</p> <p>D (W-Mark 1: 59) 0171</p> <p>It, especially k e Sin-Syr Cyr-Syr Tert Jr Clem Alex Cyp (Aug)</p>	<p>ε¹ ρ¹ π¹</p> <p>D E 066 257 440 614 913 1108 1245 1518 1611 1739 2138 2298</p> <p>It Hark-Syr mg</p>	<p>ε¹ ρ¹ π¹</p> <p>D E</p> <p>It Hark Syr mg It Tert Cyp Aug Eph</p>	<p>ε¹ ρ¹ π¹ φ¹ ψ¹ π¹ ρ¹</p> <p>D E F G 88 181 915 917 1836 1898 1912</p> <p>It²</p>	
Byzantine	<p>A B E F G H K M S U V (W-Mark-Luke 8 12 ff.) Y C 1 1 17</p> <p>Most minuscules Goth Later versions Later Fathers</p>	<p>H L S P</p> <p>Goth Later versions Later Fathers</p>	<p>H K L S 42 398</p> <p>Most other minis- cules Goth Later ver- sions Later Fathers</p>	<p>K L</p> <p>Most other minis- cules Goth Later ver- sions Later Fathers</p>	<p>048 82 93 429 469 608 920 2048</p> <p>Most other mi- nuscules Goth Later ver- sions Later Fathers</p>

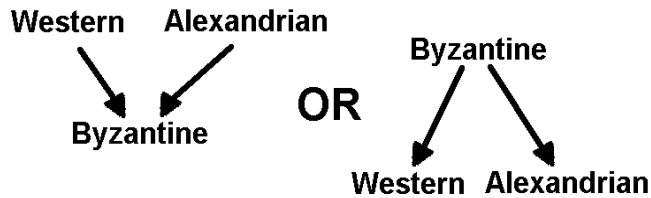
From J. Harold Greenlee, *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*, pp. 117-18. Used by permission.

succeed.

(K. Aland in 1957 speaking to the Congress of New Testament Scholars in Oxford, made remarks regarding the critical apparatuses of all Greek editions so far, including the one of von Soden specifically, said that 77% (seventy-seven percent) of all manuscripts remain unused. He continued to say, "It is likely that the majority of them belong to a late stratum immediately preceding the *textus receptus*, but apart from the fact that this has in general been taken granted and not really proved, a closer investigation shows that 735 of these cursives which have not been used in the editions of the last hundred years were written earlier than the 12th century. (K. Aland, JBL, 1968, p. 183).

- G. In 1935 and 1940, S. C. Legg published critical editions of Mark and Matthew but inaccuracies have also been found in his presentation of evidence.
- H. In 1949 an international committee was formed of British and American scholars which has been working on a critical edition of Luke. In 1967 some six verses had been produced by this "International Project to Establish a new Critical Apparatus of the New Testament." (Aland, p. 183).
- I. In the 1968 annual conference of the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas there was to be a discussion under the direction of Kurt Aland of the principles of a comprehensive critical edition. To avoid any semblance of competition with the International Project their work does not plan to start with the gospels but probably with the Pauline epistles.

WHICH?



c. We do at this time give Streeter's Theory of Local Texts.

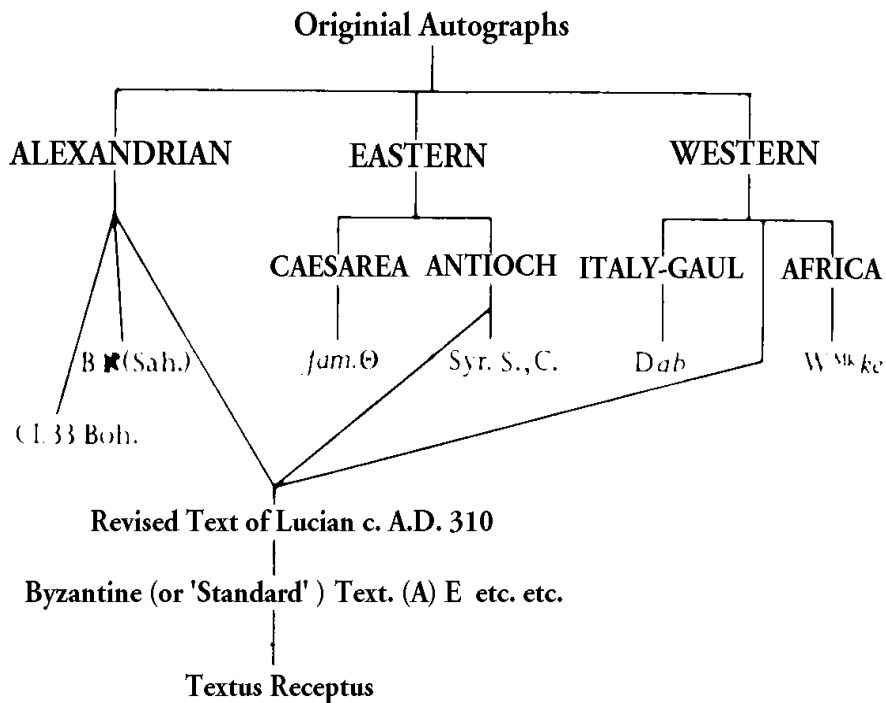


FIG. 3. Stemma Illustrating Streeter's Theory of Local Texts (from B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, p. 26)

Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 171.

A. Western family.

Some scholars believe the Western text actually originated in the East and was taken to Rome almost immediately and adopted by the Christian community in that city as its official text. From Rome the use of the Western text spread to all parts of the civilized world. The prestige of the Rome church secured a favorable reception for it everywhere. Souter says of it, "The universal diffusion of the Western text can best be explained by the view that it circulated from Rome, the capital and centre of all things." (Souter, *The Text and Canon of the New Testament*, p. 124.)

1. The Western text or family consists of those New Testament documents which contain that form of text found in the writings of the Western Church Fathers, especially Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Cyprian.
2. A number of Greek manuscripts contain this text, of which the most important are **D** and **D2**.
3. Three other important witnesses to the Western text are the Old Latin version, the Diatessaron of Tatian, and the Curetonian and Sinaitic Syriac manuscripts.
4. A leading characteristic of the Western text is that in some places it is longer, containing readings which are not found in the Alexandrian or Byzantine texts.

B. Alexandrian family.

Since the early days of New Testament textual criticism there has been a difference of opinion regarding the relationship of the Alexandrian text and the Western text. Some critics have believed that the Western text was earlier and that the Alexandrian text came into being as a refinement of the primitive Western text. Among those who have thought this are: Griesbach (1796); Hug (1808); Burkitt (1899); A. C. Clark (1914); Sanders (1926); Lake (1928); Glaue (1944); and Black (1954).

THE GREEK TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

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used.

The oldest of the velum manuscripts are written in uncial (capital) letters. These uncial manuscripts now number 267.

The three oldest complete (or nearly complete) uncial manuscripts are **B** (Codex Vaticanus), **Aleph** or **!** (Codex Sinaiticus), and **A** (Codex Alexandrinus).

1. **Codex B** was written about the middle of the 4th century and is the property of the Vatican Library at Rome. It is not known when it arrived there but it must have been before 1475 since it is mentioned in a catalogue of the library made that year.
 2. **Codex !** was discovered by Tischendorf in 1859 at the Monastery of St. Catherine at the foot of Mt. Sinai. Tischendorf persuaded the monks to give it as a present (receiving in return money and favors) to the Czar of Russia. In 1933 it was purchased from the Russian government by the Trustees of the British Museum. It is generally considered by scholars to have been written in the second half of the 4th century.
 3. **Codex A** was for many years regarded as the oldest extant New Testament manuscript. It was given to the King of England in 1627 by Cyril Lucar, patriarch of Constantinople, and is now kept in the British Museum. Scholars date it from the first half of the 5th century.
 4. Other important uncial manuscripts are **W** (Gospels, 4th or 5th century), **D** (Gospels and Acts, 5th or 6th century), and **D2** (Pauline Epistles, 6th century).
- C. **Minuscules.** About the beginning of the 9th century minuscule (small letter) handwriting began to be used for the production of books. Thus all the later New Testament manuscripts are minuscules. According to Aland, 2,764 minuscules have been catalogued. These date from the 9th to the 16th century.
- D. **Lectionaries.** Another important class of Greek New Testament manuscripts are the lectionaries. These are service books which

use by translators, the former to provide more significant variant readings for critical study.

2. Both editorial committees are now the same and future editions of these two Greek texts will be identical in textual rendering with a number of small difference, such as in paragraphing, in the orthography, in the use of capital or small letters, etc.
- D. It will now be observed that the title page of The Greek New Testament of the ABS or UBS (United Bible Societies) carries the notice that it is done “in cooperation with the Institute for New Testament Textual Research.”
- E. Another change is the addition of Carlo M. Martini to the editorial staff. He is professor of New Testament Textual Criticism at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome and all future editions of The Greek New Testament will be under the patronage of both the International Bible Societies and the Pontifical Biblical Institute.

The End

II. Cataloguing the New Testament Manuscripts

- A. Among the very first tasks of New Testament textual criticism involve the discovery and cataloguing of the Greek manuscripts. As early as 1550 the scholarly printer Stephanus began to do this. He placed in the margin of his third printed edition of the Greek text variant readings taken from 15 manuscripts, which he indicated by Greek numbers. One of these manuscripts was Δ and another Λ, and most of the rest have been identified with minuscule manuscripts in the Royal (National) Library at Paris.
- B. In 1657 the English scholar Brian Walton included in the 6th volume of his great Polyglot Bible the variant readings of Stephanus and also those of 15 other manuscripts. These were listed along with the libraries in which they were kept.
- C. In 1707 John Mill published his monumental edition of the New Testament in which almost all the available evidence of the Greek manuscripts and the early versions was presented. Mill made use of 82 Greek New Testament manuscripts in his epoch making work.
- D. The modern system of cataloguing the New Testament manuscripts was introduced by J. J. Wettstein in his two volume edition of the New Testament, published at Amsterdam in 1751-52. He designated the uncial manuscripts by capital letters and the minuscule manuscripts by Arabic numerals. Wettstein catalogued about 125 Greek New Testament manuscripts. (Parvis, New Testament Manuscript Studies, p. 6).
- E. The 19th century has seen a tremendous speed-up of Greek New Testament manuscript cataloguing. During the years 1820-36 J. M. A. Scholz listed 616 manuscripts which had not previously been known.
- F. In the four editions of his Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament (1861-94) F. H. A. Scrivener extended the catalogue to almost 3,000 manuscripts.
- G. Between the years 1884 and 1912 C. R. Gregory enlarged this list.

- 3) Sometimes the eye would pick up the same words or group of words a second time causing them to be repeated.
- b. Errors arising from faulty hearing.
- c. Errors of the mind.
- 1) Substitution of synonyms
 - 2) Variations in the sequence of words
 - 3) Transposition of letters within a word
 - 4) Assimilation of the wording of one passage to the slightly different wording form in a parallel passage.
- d. Errors of Judgment
2. Intentional Changes
- a. Changes involving spelling and grammar
 - b. Harmonistic corruptions
 - c. Addition of natural complements and similar adjuncts
 - d. Cleaning up historical and geographical difficulties
 - e. Conflation of readings
 - f. Alterations made because of doctrinal considerations.
 - g. Addition of miscellaneous details

III. Collating the New Testament Manuscripts

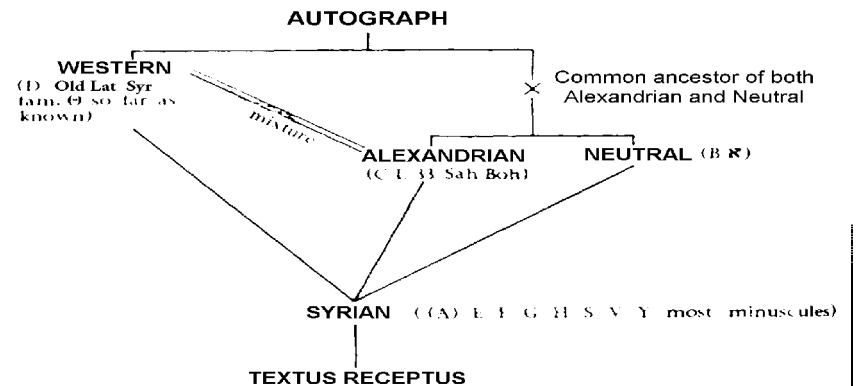
- A. After a manuscript is discovered and catalogued, it must be studied and any difference between it and a well known printed text be published. Usually this is done by collating (comparing) the manuscript to a printed text and noting the variant readings from the printed text. If the work is accurate and complete when one reads the printed text noting the variant readings he will have perfectly reconstructed the text of the manuscript.
- B. Unfortunately, however, the collations of the earlier New Testament scholars were not very reliable. It was not considered necessary by them to record every variant reading of the manuscript that was being examined.
- C. It was not until the 19th century that scholars began to aim at accuracy and completeness in the collation and New Testament manuscripts. The most famous of these 19th century publishers and collators of the New Testament was C. Tischendorf. The 8th edition of his Greek New Testament (1869) is still considered a gold mine of information concerning the readings of the New Testament documents and indispensable to the student who desires to examine these matters for himself. Other eminent 19th century investigators of New Testament manuscripts were S. P. Tregelles and F. H. A. Scrivener.
- D. During the 20th century there have been many others who have taken part in the work of collating New Testament manuscripts. Included among these are C. R. Gregory, K. Lake, H.C. Hoskier and many contemporary scholars.
- E. One of the goals of 20th century scholars is the production of a comprehensive critical edition of the Greek New Testament to take the place of Tischendorf's 8th edition. But such is a staggering work.
- F. Von Soden in his monumental edition (1902-10) attempted to supply this need but many contemporary scholars would judge he did not

	Alexandria	Antioch	Caesarea	Italy and Gaul	Carthage
Primary Authority	B	Syr. S.	Θ 565 ^{Mt}	D	κ ^{Mt} μ ^{Lk}
Secondary do.	Ν I. Sah. Boh.	Syr. C.	1 & c. 13 & c. 28 700 (W ^{Mt}) Old Georgian	b a	(W ^{Mt}) e
Tertiary do.	C, 33, W ^{Lk} Jn. Δ ^{Mt} Ψ ^{Mt} Frag.: T ^{Lk} Jn. Z ^{Mt} Ξ ^{Lk} .	Syr. Pesh. (Arm.)	1424 & c. 544 N-Σ-O Φ 157	ff ² κ ^{Mt} i r c ^{Mt} Jn. Frag.: n (cf. a)	ε ^{Mt} λ ^{Lk} .
Supplementary	579 ^{Mt} λ ^{Lk} Jn. 892 1241 X	Syr. Hcl. Syr. Hier.	U A 1071 1604 Old Arm.	ff, g, l, q (?) f	m
Patristic	Origen A.D. 230 Cyril Alex. 430		Origen A.D. 240 Eusebius 325	Tatian 170 Irenaeus 185	Cyprian 250

1 & c. = 1-22-118-131-508-872^{Mt}-1278-1582-2193. 13 & c. = 13-69-124-230-346-643-786-826-828-983-1689-1709.
1424 & c. = 28 MSS., including M, cited by Soden as I^o. Byzantine Text: S V U; E F G H; (A, K Π, Y); (T); (W^{Mt}).
Mixed Frags. P Q R^{Lk}. N.B.—1 & c. = fam. 1 = Bod. I^o; 13 & c. = fam. 13 = Sod. I^o, Sod. I^o misleadingly includes D with Θ, 28, 544, 565, 700.

FIG. 4. Chart of Witnesses and the Local Texts
(from B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, p. 108)

Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 172.



Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, 1964, p. 134.

IV. Families of New Testament Documents

For many years New Testament manuscripts have been grouped by scholars into “text-types” or “families” and further divided into subgroups of types. While some worked vigorously to establish “family” relationships between certain texts, others like Tischendorf never yielded to the current reverence for groups of manuscripts. He had no confidence in the accuracy of groupings, but rather relied on the internal evidence of readings for the reconstruction of his text. (Colwell, Studies in the Methodology in Textual Criticism of the New Testament, p. 5.)

Colwell points out that textual critics who work too long in one family often end with championing a “best manuscript” or even a “best text-type.”

Colwell himself believes there should be a new and clearer definition for “text-types” and grouping of manuscripts. He believes they should be classified according to external evidences, that the definition should speak of a group of manuscripts and not be a definition of a list of readings.

There are at least three and sometimes four family divisions of texts recognized currently. One confusing area has been the nomenclature of these groups. The following chart is from information given by Colwell, p. 1., Studies in the Methodology...

Text-Type Nomenclature

Codex exemplar	Kenyon	Hort	von Soden	Lagrange, Lake & Streeter
A, Alexandrinus	Alpha	Syrian	Kappa	A
B, Vaticanus	Beta	Neutral or Alexandria	Eta	B
D, Bezae	Delta	Western	Iota (part)	D
Θ	Gamma		- - -	C, Caesarean

3. Codices W and A, papyri and early versions indicate the Byzantine readings are without doubt very early.

When the Chester Beatty Papyri were published it was found that these early 3rd century fragments agreed surprisingly often with the Byzantine text against all other text-types. Though these are generally considered in the Alexandrian family. A number of readings often discarded as “late” were found to be indeed early.

Metzger lists 23 instances of the agreements of Papyri 45, 46, and 66 with the Byzantine text against all other text-types.

4. The Westcott-Hort theory bore down heavily on the idea that the Byzantine text was an official text. But Kenyon observed that there is no historical evidence that the traditional text was created by a council or conference of ancient scholars. We know the names of several revisers of the Septuagint and the Vulgate and it would be strange if historians and church writers have omitted all references to such an event as the deliberate revision of the New Testament in its original Greek.
5. In recent years more Greek scholars are coming to recognize the superiority of the Byzantine readings over other texts in certain places. For example, in John there are no less than 13 places where the Greek text of the American Bible Society (c. 1966) has changed readings back to that of the traditional text. (Zane C. Hodges, A Defense of the Majority-Text, p. 14.)
6. A serious question is raised, why are there so few manuscripts of the Byzantine text earlier than the 10th century? There must have been many thousands of manuscripts in the great days of Byzantine prosperity between the 4th and 10th centuries!

Lake has come to the conclusion that like the scribes of the O. T. during this same period, the N. T. scribes destroyed their exemplars when they copied the scriptures.

D. Caesarean family.

Other critics have regarded the Alexandrian text as prior and have considered the Western text a corruption of the purer Alexandrian text-form. Some of these who have held this view are: Tischendorf (1868); Westcott and Hort (1881); B. Weiss (1899); Ropes (1926); Lagrange (1935); and Metzger (1964). It would probably be safe to say that the majority of popular writers today are following the Westcott and Hort theory with some adaptation.

1. The Alexandrian family consists of those New Testament documents which contain that form of text which was used by Origen in his writings while he lived in Alexandria and by other church fathers who likewise lived in Alexandria.
2. This family includes Papyri 46, 47, 66, 75, Codices **B** and **!** and about 25 other Greek New Testament manuscripts.
3. The Coptic versions also belong to the Alexandrian family of texts.
4. Westcott and Hort (1881) distinguished between the text of **B** and the text of other Alexandrian documents. They called **B** text Neutral, thus indicating their belief that it was a remarkably pure text which had not been contaminated by the errors of either the Western or Alexandrian texts. Many subsequent scholars have denied the validity of this distinction.
 - a. John Burgon took the opposite view of **B** and expressing "We suspect that these two manuscripts are indebted for their preservation solely to their ascertained evil character." (Burgon, The Last Twelve Verses of Mark, p. 23.)
 - b. Burgon's view in substance is that had **B** and **!** been good copies we would have multiple copies of them. But the fact they were discarded to archives and unused indicated the church rejected them and did not read or copy them.

C. Byzantine family.

The Byzantine family includes all those New Testament documents

which contain the traditional text. The vast majority of the Greek New Testament manuscripts belong to this family, including **A** in the gospels and **W** in Matthew and the last 2/3 of Luke. The Peshitta Syriac version and Gothic version also belong to the Byzantine family of documents. The quotations of Chrysostom and the other fathers of Antioch and Asia Minor seem generally to agree with the traditional Byzantine family.

1. Most critics regard the Byzantine text found in the majority of manuscripts as a late invention. They believe, as put forth strongly by Westcott and Hort, that the Byzantine text was an edited text made probably at Antioch c. A.D. 350 and that through ecclesiastical authority this text was imposed upon the church and became the text found in the vast majority of Greek New Testament manuscripts.
2. Those following the Westcott-Hort theory maintain that editors deliberately created the Byzantine text by selecting readings (words, phrases, and sentences) from various texts already in existence and then combining these readings in such a way as to form an altogether new text.
 - a. Westcott-Hort put forth "proof" for their position that the Byzantine text was a "work of attempted criticism performed deliberately by editors and not merely by scribes" by listing 8 passages in the gospels which contained "conflate readings" from the Western and Alexandrian text. (Mark 6:33; 6:26; 9:38; 9:49; Luke 9:10; 11:54; 12:18; and 24:53.)
 - b. However, it is just as easy to believe that the Byzantine reading is the original and that the other texts have omitted parts of it as to suppose that the Byzantine (traditional) reading represents a later combination of the other two readings.