

*Abstract*

This paper is based on a public lecture delivered in the Minster in Basle in 2016 and, as such, concentrates on the personalities responsible for the 1516 bi-lingual (Greek-Latin) *Novum Testamentum* edited by Desiderius Erasmus and published by Johannes Froben in Basle. Erasmus' motive in undertaking his work is argued to be his publicizing of his own translation of the Latin New Testament which was intended to supersede Jerome's Latin Vulgate text and to allow scholars to see a Greek text printed in parallel to that new translation into Latin (the ecclesiastically approved *lingua franca* of the Christian Scriptures). This was the first Greek New Testament printed and published. An excursus lists the manuscripts available to Erasmus in Basle during his preparation of the 1516 edition as well as the four later editions edited by him. The article covers the manuscript heritage of the Greek New Testament up to the invention of printing and a description of Erasmus' editions and their influence; then follows a survey of other major printed editions, most of which followed Erasmus' lead. In a final section there is a discussion of recent electronic and technological approaches to analyzing today's huge number of extant Greek manuscripts and their inter-relationships.

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