

The SBL Greek NT: a Comparison with Five Editions

The apparatus to the SBL Greek NT presents the evidence of five different editions in addition to the readings of the SBL GNT text. Those editions and their abbreviations¹ are:

WH = Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek*, vol. 1: *Text*; vol. 2: *Introduction* [and] *Appendix* (Cambridge: Macmillan, 1881).

Treg = Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, *The Greek New Testament, Edited from Ancient Authorities, with their Various Readings in Full, and the Latin Version of Jerome* (London: Bagster; Stewart, 1857–1879).

NIV = the Greek text behind the NIV translation, as presented in Richard J. Goodrich and Albert L. Lukaszewski, *A Reader's Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003).

RP = *The New Testament in the Original Greek: Byzantine Textform 2005*, compiled and arranged by Maurice A. Robinson and William G. Pierpont (Southborough, Mass.: Chilton, 2005).

NA = the NA²⁶⁻²⁷/UBS³⁻⁴ editions, which all print the identical Greek text. (NA is explicitly cited in the apparatus only when it differs from NIV.)

The apparatus documents, in 6,928 variation units, all non-orthographic² differences between the SBL GNT and the texts of the five listed editions.

A comparison of the SBL GNT with each of the five editions represented in the apparatus reveals the following patterns of agreement and difference³:

SBL agrees with NA:	6381	SBL disagrees with NA:	547
SBL agrees with NIV:	6310	SBL disagrees with NIV:	618
SBL agrees with WH:	6047	SBL disagrees with WH:	881
SBL agrees with Treg:	5699	SBL disagrees with Treg:	1229
SBL agrees with RP:	970	SBL disagrees with RP:	5958

A comparison of the SBL GNT with the four editions consulted in the process of compiling the edition (WH Treg NIV RP) reveals 56 differences; if the comparison base is widened to include the five editions represented in the apparatus, the number of differences declines by ten⁴:

SBL] WH Treg RP NIV	56	SBL] WH Treg RP NIV NA	46
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¹ For other abbreviations found in the apparatus, see the “Introduction” to the SBL GNT, pp. xvi-xviii.

² That is, the apparatus does not note differences between the editions that are judged to be solely a matter of orthographic variation, or that involve only elision, crasis, movable v, interchange between first and second aorist verb endings, and so forth; see further the section on “Orthography and Related Matters” in the “Introduction,” pp. xii-xiii.

³ The numbers presented below are based upon a comparison of the corrected electronic version of the apparatus, and thus differ slightly from those published in the printed edition of the edition. For a list of the seven corrections affecting the apparatus, see: <http://www.sblgnt.com/about/corrections/>.

⁴ Cf. “Introduction,” p. xi note 9.

Similar comparisons of each of the other editions against the others reveal the following differences:

SBL WH Treg RP NIV] NA	14
SBL WH Treg RP NA] NIV	43
SBL WH RP NIV NA] Treg	150
SBL Treg RP NIV NA] WH	353
SBL WH Treg NIV NA] RP	4848

Next, a comparison of instances of SBL GNT + one edition vs. the others:

SBL WH] Treg RP NIV NA	82
SBL RP] WH Treg NIV NA	58
SBL Treg] WH RP NIV NA	25
SBL NA] WH Treg RP NIV	10
SBL NIV] WH Treg RP NA	5

Similarly, a comparison of the instances where any two editions agree vs. SBL GNT + the other three editions:

SBL WH Treg RP] NIV NA	60	SBL WH RP NIV] Treg NA	0
SBL WH Treg NIV] RP NA	26	SBL Treg RP NIV] WH NA	12
SBL WH Treg NA] RP NIV	47	SBL Treg RP NA] WH NIV	15
SBL WH RP NA] Treg NIV	8	SBL Treg NIV NA] WH RP	57
SBL WH NIV NA] Treg RP	603	SBL RP NIV NA] WH Treg	158

Finally (though I'm not sure it's of much value), a comparison of the instances where SBL GNT + two editions agree vs. the other three:

SBL WH Treg] RP NIV NA	122	SBL Treg NIV] WH RP NA	1
SBL WH RP] Treg NIV NA	8	SBL Treg NA] WH RP NIV	3
SBL WH NIV] Treg RP NA	12	SBL RP NIV] WH Treg NA	10
SBL WH NA] Treg RP NIV	17	SBL RP NA] WH Treg NIV	8
SBL Treg RP] WH NIV NA	66	SBL NIV NA] WH Treg RP	54

In analyzing these data, please keep in mind that they represent only part of the overall picture; they do not take into account, e.g., instances where a variation-unit involves three or more variant readings. Nor do they take into account the type, character, or quality of the places where the various editions differ. In short, they offer an introduction to, but not a full picture of, the nature of the differences between the SBL GNT and the five other editions.