The Dating of K^r (alias f^{35}, nee f^{18}) Revisited

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When Hermann von Soden identified K^r and proclaimed it to be a revision of K^x made in the **XII** century, he rendered a considerable disservice to the Truth and to those with an interest in identifying the original wording of the NT Text. This paper argues that if von Soden had really paid attention to the evidence available in his day, he could not have perpetrated such an injustice.

Those familiar with my work know that I have been using f^{18} instead of K^r (equals M^7 in the PA and M^c in Revelation). I have decided to switch to f^{35} for the following reasons: 1) although cursive 18 is generally a purer representative of the texttype than is cursive 35, in the Apocalypse 18 defects to another type, while 35 remains true [both MSS contain the whole NT]; 2) while 18 is dated to the **XIV** century, 35 is dated to the **XI**, thus giving the lie, all by itself, to von Soden's dictum that K^r was created in the **XII** century. Further, if 35 is a copy, not a new creation, then its exemplar had to be older, and so on.

After doing a complete collation of 1,389 MSS that contain the whole *Pericope Adulterae* (there were a few others that certainly contain the pericope but could not be collated because the microfilm was illegible), Maurice Robinson concluded:

> Based upon the collated data, the present writer is forced to reverse his previous assumptions regarding the development and restoration/preservation of the Byzantine Textform in this sense: although textual transmission itself is a process, it appears that, for the most part, the lines of transmission remained separate, with relatively little mixture occurring or becoming perpetuated. . . .
> Certainly, all the types of PA text are distinct, and reflect a long line of transmission and preservation in their separate integrities. . . .
> . . . .
> It thus appears that the Byzantine minuscule MSS preserve lines of transmission which are not only independent but which of necessity had their origin at a time well before the 9th century.[1]

Fair enough. If K^r (M^7) was preserved in its 'separate integrity' during 'a long line of transmission' then it would have to have its origin 'at a time well before the 9th century'. Besides the witness of cursive 35, Robinson's collations demonstrate that cursive 1166 and lectionary 139, both of the **X** century, reflect K^r. If they are copies, not new creations, then their exemplars had to be older, and so on. Without adducing any further evidence, it seems fair to say that K^r must have existed already in the **IX** century, if not the **VIII**.

For years, based on the *Text und Textwert* series, I have insisted that K^r is both ancient and independent. Robinson would seem to agree. "The lack of extensive cross-comparison and correction demonstrated in the extant MSS containing the PA precludes the easy development of any existing form of the PA text from any other form of the PA text during at least the vellum era."[2] "The vellum era"—doesn't that take us back to the **IV** century, at least? As a matter of fact, yes. Consider:

Acts 4:34— τις ην K^r אA (21 B)   [both K^r and K^x are **IV** century]
          τις υπηρχεν K^x P^8D

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[1] "Preliminary Observations regarding the *Pericope Adulterae* based upon Fresh Collations of nearly all Continuous-Text Manuscripts and over One Hundred Lectionaries", presented to the Evangelical Theological Society, Nov., 1998, pp. 12-13. However, I have received the following clarification from Maurice Robinson: "I would request that if my name gets cited in regard to your various K^r or M^7 articles that you make it clear that I do not concur with your assessment of K^r or M^7. This is particularly the case with the "Preliminary Considerations regarding the Pericope Adulterae" article; it should not be used to suggest that I consider the M^7 line or K^r text to be early. This would be quite erroneous, since I hold with virtually all others that K^r/M^7 are indeed late texts that reflect recensional activity beginning generally in the 12th century (perhaps with 11th century base exemplars, but nothing earlier)." [Assuming that he was sincere when he wrote that article, I wonder what new evidence came his way that caused him to change his mind—his language there is certainly plain enough.]

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Acts 15:7— εν υμιν   **K^r** ℵABC,it^{pt}   [both **K^r** and **K^x** are ancient]
εν ημιν   **K^x** (D)lat

Acts 19:3— ειπεν τε   **K^r** B(D)   [both **K^r** and **K^x** are ancient]
ο δε ειπεν   ℵA(P³⁸)bo
ειπεν τε προς αυτους   **K^x** sy^p,sa

Acts 21:8— ηλθομεν   **K^r** ℵAC(B)lat,syr,cop   [**K^r** is older than **K^x**, very ancient]
οι περι τον παυλον ηλθον   **K^x**

Acts 23:20— μελλοντες   [33.1%] **K^r** lat,syr,sa   [**K^r** is independent and very ancient]
μελλοντα   [26.9%] {HF,RP}
μελλοντων   [17.6%]
μελλων   [9.3%] AB,bo
μελλον   [7.5%] {NU} ℵ
μελλοντας   [5.4%]

Rom. 5:1— εχωμεν   [43%] **K^r K^{x(1/3)}** ℵABCD,lat,bo   [did part of **K^x** assimilate to **K^r**?]
εχομεν   [57%] **K^{x(2/3)}**

Rom. 16:6— εις υμας   **K^r** P⁴⁶ℵABC   [**K^r** is independent and very ancient, **II/III** century]
εις ημας   **K^x**
εν υμιν   D

2 Cor. 1:15— προς υμας ελθειν το προτερον   **K^r**   [**K^r** is independent !]
προς υμας ελθειν   ℵ
προτερον προς υμας ελθειν   ABC
προτερον ελθειν προς υμας   D,lat
ελθειν προς υμας το προτερον   **K^x**

2 Cor. 2:17— λοιποι   **K^rK^{x(pt)}** P⁴⁶D,syr   [**K^r** is very ancient, **II/III** century]
πολλοι   **K^{x(pt)}** ℵABC,lat,cop

James 1:23— νομου   **K^r**   [**K^r** is independent][3]
λογου   **K^x** ℵABC

James 2:3— την λαμπραν εσθητα   **K^r**   [**K^r** is independent]
την εσθητα την λαμπραν   **K^x** ℵABC

James 2:4— –– ου   **K^r** ℵABC   [**K^r** is independent and ancient]
και ου   **K^x**

James 2:8— σεαυτον   **K^r** ℵABC   [**K^r** is independent and ancient]
εαυτον   **K^x**

James 2:14— εχει   **K^r**   [**K^r** is independent]
εχη   **K^x** ℵABC

James 3:2— δυναμενος   **K^r** ℵ   [**K^r** is independent and ancient]
δυνατος   **K^x** AB

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[3] For the examples from James I also consulted *Editio Critica Maior*.

James 3:4— ιθυνοντος **K^r** [**K^r** is independent; a rare classical spelling]
 ευθυνοντος **K^x** ℵABC

James 4:11— ο γαρ **K^r** [**K^r** is independent]
 ο — **K^x** ℵAB

James 4:14— ημων **K^r** [**K^r** is independent]
 υμων **K^x** ℵA(P¹⁰⁰B)

James 4:14— επειτα **K^r** [**K^r** is independent]
 επειτα και ℵAB
 επειτα δε και **K^x**

1 Pet. 3:16— καταλαλουσιν **K^r** ℵAC,sy^p,bo [**K^r** is independent and ancient]
 καταλαλωσιν **K^x**
 καταλαλεισθε P⁷²B,sa

1 Pet. 4:3— υμιν **K^r** ℵbo [**K^r** is independent and ancient]
 ημιν **K^x** C
 (omit) P⁷²AB,lat,syr,sa

2 Pet. 2:17— εις αιωνας **K^r** [**K^r** is independent]
 εις αιωνα **K^x** AC
 (omit) P⁷²ℵB,lat,syr,cop

3 John 12— οιδαμεν **K^r** [**K^r** is independent]
 οιδατε **K^x**
 οιδας ℵABC

So what conclusions may we draw from this evidence? **K^r** is independent of **K^x** and both are ancient, dating at least to the **IV** century.[4] A few of the examples could be interpreted to mean that **K^r** is older than **K^x**, dating to the **III** and even the **II** century, but let's leave that possibility on the back burner and look at some further evidence. The following examples are based on *Text und Textwert* and the IGNTP *Luke*.

Luke 1:55— εως αιωνος **K^r** C [**K^r** is independent and **V** century]
 εις τον αιωνα **K^x** ℵAB

Luke 1:63— εσται **K^r** C [**K^r** is independent and **V** century]
 εστιν **K^x** ℵAB

Luke 3:12— υπ αυτου και **K^r** C [**K^r** is independent and **V** century]
 — — και **K^x** ℵABD

Luke 4:7— σοι **K^r** [**K^r** is independent]
 σου **K^x** ℵAB

Luke 4:42— εζητουν **K^r** [**K^r** is independent]

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[4] Someone may object that it is the readings that are ancient, not the texttypes; but if a texttype is clearly independent, with constantly shifting alignments among the early witnesses, then it has ancient readings because it itself is ancient. And in the case of **K^r** there are many hundreds, if not thousands (I haven't counted them, yet), of variant sets where its reading has overt early attestation. (Recall that Aland's 𝓜 and Soden's **K** include **K^r**—the poor texttype itself should not be held responsible for the way modern scholars treat it.) If it can be demonstrated objectively that a texttype has thousands of early readings, but it cannot be demonstrated objectively to have any late ones, on what basis can it be declared to be late?

επεζητουν   **K**ˣ ℵ ABCD

Luke 5:1— περι   **K**ʳ   [**K**ʳ is independent]
            παρα   **K**ˣ P⁷⁵ ℵ ABC

Luke 5:19— ευροντες δια   **K**ʳ   [**K**ʳ is independent]
             ευροντες —   **K**ˣ ℵ ABCD

Luke 5:19— πως   **K**ʳ   [**K**ʳ is independent]
             ποιας   **K**ˣ ℵ ABC

Luke 6:7— — τω   **K**ʳ D   [**K**ʳ is independent and **V** century]
            εν τω   **K**ˣ ℵ AB

Luke 6:10— ουτως και   **K**ʳ   [**K**ʳ is independent]
          —— και   **K**ˣ ℵ ABD

Luke 6:26— καλως ειπωσιν υμας   **K**ʳ ℵ A   [**K**ʳ is independent and **IV** century]
            καλως υμας ειπωσιν   **K**ˣ D
            υμας καλως ειπωσιν   P⁷⁵B

Luke 6:26— παντες οι   **K**ʳ P⁷⁵AB(ℵ)   [**K**ʳ is independent and early **III** century]
          —— οι   **K**ˣ D,syr

Luke 6:49— την οικιαν   **K**ʳ P⁷⁵   [**K**ʳ is independent and early **III** century]
          — οικιαν   **K**ˣ ℵ ABC

Luke 8:15— ταυτα λεγων εφωνει ο εχων ωτα ακουειν ακουετω   **K**ʳ   [**K**ʳ is independent]
                       (omit)   **K**ˣ ℵ ABD

Luke 8:24— και προσελθοντες   **K**ʳ   [**K**ʳ is independent]
            προσελθοντες και   **K**ˣ ℵ ABD

Luke 9:27— εστηκοτων   **K**ʳ ℵ B   [**K**ʳ is independent and **IV** century]
            εστωτων   **K**ˣ ACD

Luke 9:56— (have verse)   **K**ʳ **K**ˣ lat,syr,Diat,Marcion   [**K**ʳ is **II** century]
            (omit verse)   P⁴⁵,⁷⁵ ℵ ABCDW,cop

Luke 10:4— πηραν μη   **K**ʳ P⁷⁵ ℵ BD   [**K**ʳ is independent and early **III** century]
            πηραν μηδε   **K**ˣ AC

Luke 10:6— εαν μεν   **K**ʳ   [**K**ʳ is independent]
            εαν ——   **K**ˣ P⁷⁵ ℵ ABCD

Luke 10:39— των λογων   **K**ʳ   [**K**ʳ is independent]
            τον λογον   **K**ˣ P⁴⁵,⁷⁵ ℵ ABC

Luke 10:41— ο Ιησους ειπεν αυτη   **K**ʳ D   [**K**ʳ is independent and **V** century]
            ο Κυριος ειπεν αυτη   P⁴⁵   [the word order is **III** century]
            ειπεν αυτη ο Ιησους   **K**ˣ ACW,syr,bo
            ειπεν αυτη ο Κυριος   P⁷⁵ ℵ B,lat,sa

Luke 11:34— — ολον   **K**ʳ CD   [**K**ʳ is independent and **V** century]
            και ολον   **K**ˣ P⁴⁵,⁷⁵ ℵ AB

Luke 11:53— συνεχειν   **K^r**   [**K^r** is independent !]
              ενεχειν   **K^x** P⁷⁵ℵAB
              εχειν   P⁴⁵D
              επεχειν   C

Luke 12:22— λεγω υμιν   **K^r** P⁷⁵ℵBD,lat   [**K^r** is independent and **II** century]
              υμιν λεγω   **K^x** AW

Luke 12:56— του ουρανου και της γης   **K^r** P⁴⁵,⁷⁵D   [**K^r** is independent and early **III** century]
              της γης και του ουρανου   **K^x** ℵAB

Luke 12:58— βαλη σε   **K^r** (D)   [**K^r** is independent]
              σε βαλη   **K^x** A(P⁷⁵ℵB)

Luke 13:28— οψεσθε   **K^r** BD   [**K^r** is independent and **IV** century]
              οψησθε   **K^x** P⁷⁵AW
              ιδητε   ℵ

Luke 19:23— επι την   **K^r**   [**K^r** is independent]
              επι —   **K^x** ℵABD

Luke 21:6— επι λιθον   **K^r**   [**K^r** is independent]
              επι λιθω   **K^x** ℵAB

Luke 21:15— αντειπειν η αντιστηναι   **K^r** A   [**K^r** is independent and **V** century]
              αντειπειν ουδε αντιστηναι   **K^x** W
              ——— — αντιστηναι   D,it,syr
              αντιστηναι η αντειπειν   ℵB,cop

Luke 22:12— αναγαιον   **K^r** ℵABD   [**K^r** is independent and **IV** century]
              αναγεον   CW
              ανωγεον   **K^x**

Luke 22:66— απηγαγον   **K^r** P⁷⁵ℵBD   [**K^r** is independent and early **III** century]
              ανηγαγον   **K^x** AW

Luke 23:51— ος —   **K^r** P⁷⁵ℵBCD,lat   [**K^r** is independent and **II** century]
              ος και   **K^x** AW

There are a number of further examples where **K^r** is alone against the world, showing its independence, but I 'grew weary in well doing', deciding I had included enough to make the point. Note that N-A²⁷ mentions only a third of these examples from Luke—to be despised is to be ignored. This added evidence confirms that **K^r** is independent of **K^x** and both are ancient, only now they both must date to the **III** century, at least.

It will be observed that I have furnished examples from the Gospels (Luke, John), Acts, Paul (Romans, 2 Corinthians), and the Generals (James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 3 John), with emphasis on Luke, Acts and James.[5] Throughout the New Testament **K^r** is independent and ancient. Dating to the **III** century, it is just as old as any other texttype. Therefore, **it should be treated with the respect that it deserves!!**

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[5] I also have a page or more of examples from Revelation that confirm that **K^r** (**M^c**) is independent and **III** century in that book as well, but this paper is already too long and that further evidence would not take us beyond where we already are.

I have cited Maurice Robinson twice and shown that the evidence vindicates his claims. Both **Kʳ** and **Kˣ** date to the beginning of the velum era. But he makes a further claim that is even bolder:

> Nor do the uncials or minuscules show any indication of any known line deriving from a parallel known line. The 10 or so "texttype" lines of transmission remain independent and must necessarily extend back to a point long before their separate stabilizations occurred—a point which seems buried (as Colwell and Scrivener suggested) deep within the second century.[6]

Well, well, well, we're getting pretty close to the Autographs! Objective evidence from the **II** century is a little hard to come by. For all that, the examples above taken from Acts 21:8, Acts 23:20, Romans 5:1, Luke 9:56, Luke 12:22 and Luke 23:51 might place **Kʳ** (and **Kˣ**) in the **II** century. However, it is not the purpose of this paper to defend that thesis. For the moment I content myself with insisting that **Kʳ** must date to the **III** century and therefore must be rehabilitated in the practice of NT textual criticism.

In conclusion, I claim to have demonstrated that **Kʳ** is independent and ancient, dating to the **III** century (at least). But there is an ingrained disdain/antipathy toward that symbol, so I am proposing a new name for the texttype. Let's substitute **f³⁵** for **Kʳ**—it is more objective and will get away from the prejudice that attaches to the latter.

Appendix:

Having criticized von Soden's dating of **Kʳ**, I hasten to add that I don't think he was perverse—he really thought that. So I now ask, what led him to that conclusion and why has his conclusion been almost universally accepted by the scholarly community? I answer: the number of **Kʳ** type MSS first becomes noticeable precisely in the 12th century, although there are a few from the 11th and a lesser few from the 10th. That number grows in the 13th and grows some more in the 14th, calling attention to itself.[7]

Those who catalog NT MSS inform us that the 12th and 13th centuries lead the pack, in terms of extant MSS, followed by the 14th, 11th, 15th, 16th and 10th, in that order. There are over four times as many MSS from the 13th as from the 10th, but obviously Koine Greek would have been more of a living language in the 10th than the 13th, and so there would have been more demand and therefore more supply. In other words, many hundreds of really pure MSS from the 10th perished. A higher percentage of the really good MSS produced in the 14th century survived than those produced in the 11th; and so on. That's why there is a progressive level of agreement among the Byzantine MSS, there being a higher percentage of agreement in the 14th than in the 10th. But had we lived in the 10th, and done a wide survey of the MSS, we would have found very nearly the same level of agreement (perhaps 98%). The same obtains if we had lived in the 8th, 6th, 4th or 2nd century. In other words, THE SURVIVING MSS FROM THE FIRST TEN CENTURIES ARE NOT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE TRUE STATE OF AFFAIRS AT THE TIME.

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[6] *Ibid.*

[7] Those who had already bought into Hort's doctrine of a late 'Syrian' text would see no reason to question von Soden's statement, and would have no inclination or motivation to 'waste' time checking it out.