

## When is a ‘recension’?

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“The Syrian text must in fact be the result of a ‘recension’ in the proper sense of the word, a work of attempted criticism, performed deliberately by editors and not merely by scribes.”<sup>1</sup> It is not my wont to appeal to Fenton John Anthony Hort, but his understanding of ‘recension’ is presumably correct. A recension is produced by a certain somebody (or –bodies) at a certain time in a certain place. If someone wishes to posit or allege a recension, and do so responsibly, he needs to indicate the source and supply some evidence.<sup>2</sup>

Are there any recensions among the MSS that contain the Catholic Epistles? I will base my response on the collations presented in *Text und Textwert* (TuT).<sup>3</sup> They collated about 555 MSS, some 30 of which are fragmentary; this represents around 85% of the total of extant MSS. I will use Colwell’s requirement of 70% agreement in order for MSS to be classified in the same text-type (although for myself I require at least 80%). Since TuT presents 98 variant sets, spread over the seven epistles, we have a corpus that presumably is reasonably representative. Although the *Institut* has never divulged the criteria by which they chose the sets, so far as I know, the chosen sets are significant (not trivial).

### An Alexandrian Recension?

Is there an Egyptian or Alexandrian recension, or text-type? TuT follows the ‘standard’ text, which it calls LESART 2. No single MS has this profile. The closest is Codex B, that diverges from it 13 times out of 98, three being sub-variants and four being singulars (including two of the sub-variants)—the agreement is 86.7% [ignoring the sub-variants it is 89.8%]. Next is cursive 1739 that diverges 29 times out of 98, four being sub-variants and no singulars—the agreement is 70.4% [ignoring the sub-variants it is 74.5%]. Next is P<sup>74</sup> [7<sup>th</sup> century] that diverges 3 times out of 10, one being a sub-variant and one being a singular—the agreement is 70% [ignoring the sub-variant it is 80%]. Next is Codex A that diverges 34 times out of 98, four being sub-variants and no singulars—the agreement is 65.3% [ignoring the sub-variants it is 69.4%]. Next is Codex C that diverges 24 times out of 66, one being a sub-variant and four being singulars—the agreement is 63.6% [ignoring the sub-variant it is 65.2%]. Next is cursive 1852 that diverges 36 times out of 95, two being sub-variants and no singulars—the agreement is 62.1% [ignoring the sub-variants it is 64.2%]. Next is Codex  $\aleph$  that diverges 40 times out of 98, seven being sub-variants and nine being singulars (including four of the sub-variants)—the agreement is 59.2% [ignoring the sub-variants it is 66.3%]. Next is Codex 044 [a. 800] that diverges 40 times out of 97, four being sub-variants and seven being singulars

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<sup>1</sup> B.F. Westcott and F.J.A. Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek* (2 vols.; London: Macmillan and Co., 1881), *Introduction*, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> Hort did suggest Lucian of Antioch as the prime mover—a suggestion both gratuitous and frivolous, since he had not really looked at the evidence available at that time. (Were he to repeat the suggestion today, it would be patently ridiculous.)

<sup>3</sup> *Text und Textwert der Griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments* (Ed. Kurt Aland, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1987), volumes 9 and 11.

(including three of the sub-variants)—the agreement is 59% [ignoring the sub-variants it is 62.9%]. Next is Codex 048 [5<sup>th</sup> century] that diverges 8 times out of 18, one being a sub-variant and no singulars—the agreement is 55.6% [ignoring the sub-variant it is 61.1%]. Not next is P<sup>72</sup> that diverges 18 times out of 38, six being sub-variants and nine being singulars (including three of the sub-variants)—the agreement is 52.6% [ignoring the sub-variants it is 68.4%]. Codex B is clearly the most important MS in Aland’s scheme of things; and the ‘standard’ text is a composite.

But is there an Egyptian text-type here? Well, **B** and **ℵ** disagree in 44 out of 98 sets, so their agreement is 55.1%. **B** and **A** disagree in 43 out of 98 sets, so their agreement is 56.1%. **B** and **P<sup>72</sup>** disagree in 19 out of 38 sets, so their agreement is 50%. **B** and **C** disagree in 27 out of 66 sets, so their agreement is 59.1%. **B** and **P<sup>74</sup>** disagree in 5 out of 10 sets, so their agreement is 50%. **B** and **1739** disagree in 37 out of 98 sets, so their agreement is 62.2%. **A** and **ℵ** disagree in 35 out of 98 sets, so their agreement is 64.3%. **A** and **P<sup>72</sup>** disagree in 24 out of 38 sets, so their agreement is 36.8%. **A** and **C** disagree in 26 out of 66 sets, so their agreement is 60.6%. **A** and **P<sup>74</sup>** disagree in 4 out of 10 sets, so their agreement is 60%. **A** and **1739** disagree in 36 out of 98 sets, so their agreement is 63.3%. **ℵ** and **P<sup>72</sup>** disagree in 26 out of 38 sets, so their agreement is 31.6%. **ℵ** and **C** disagree in 30 out of 66 sets, so their agreement is 54.5%. **ℵ** and **P<sup>74</sup>** disagree in 5 out of 10 sets, so their agreement is 50%. **ℵ** and **1739** disagree in 46 out of 98 sets, so their agreement is 53.1%. **C** and **P<sup>72</sup>** disagree in 18 out of 31 sets, so their agreement is 41.9%. **C** and **P<sup>74</sup>** disagree in 3 out of 7 sets, so their agreement is 57.1%. **C** and **1739** disagree in 23 out of 66 sets, so their agreement is 65.2%. **1739** and **P<sup>72</sup>** disagree in 22 out of 38 sets, so their agreement is 42.1%. **1739** and **P<sup>74</sup>** disagree in 3 out of 7 sets, so their agreement is 57.1%. Based on this evidence Colwell would not allow us to claim a text-type. The early MSS evidently suffered a common influence, but each wandered off on a private path. No two sets have the same roster of disagreements. They each are certainly independent in their own generation. The common influence observable in the early MSS must have had a source, but that source is really too shadowy to qualify as a recension.

### A Byzantine Recension?

LESART 1 is a majority text in the strictest sense. Aland followed the majority reading in every case, except for two variant sets where there is no majority variant and there he followed the plurality (set 32, 1 Peter 3:16—καταλαλωσιν has 49.8%, against καταλαλουσιν with 44.6%) (set 34, 1 Peter 4:3—ημιν has 47.1%, against υμιν with 41.7%). As a byproduct of that procedure no single MS has that precise profile—I found four MSS that come within two variants (607, 639, 1730, 2423) and five that miss by three. The basic f<sup>35</sup> profile diverges by five.

Having analyzed the profiles for the ± 555 MSS, apart from f<sup>35</sup> I found precisely one cluster of four MSS (82, 699, 1668, 2484), with a few hangers-on, and one cluster of three MSS (390, 912, 1594), also with a few hangers-on, and nine pairs—all the rest have private profiles (including the ‘hangers-on’).

Within  $f^{35}$  31 MSS have the basic profile; there is a sub-group of 6 MSS, another of 4, another of 3, plus two pairs—these 17 MSS, plus another 10, differ from the basic profile in only one variant. There are 15 MSS that differ by two and 7 by three, making a total of 80 MSS (32 of which have private profiles), plus a few others on the fringes.

Setting aside all the MSS with a shared profile, plus about 30 that have less than 11% of the total, we are left with around 450 MSS that have a private profile (based on the 98 variant sets), the heavy majority of which are Byzantine. We are looking at a normal transmission; no mass production of a single exemplar.

Setting aside the fragmentary MSS, there are about 40 that fall below Colwell's 70% threshold; all the rest ( $\pm 485$ ) would qualify as members of one text-type, which we may call Byzantine. Using my 80% threshold we lose another 17 MSS, leaving  $\pm 470$ . But I would really rather have 90%, and with that threshold we lose another 46—call it  $\pm 420$  MSS. Setting aside the 30 fragmentaries, dividing 420 by 525 we have 80% of the MSS that are strongly Byzantine<sup>4</sup> (using the 80% threshold gives almost 90%) [using the 70% threshold gives 92%]. 345 of the 420 have private profiles—with the possible exception of  $f^{35}$  there was no 'stuffing the ballot box'.

Although  $f^{35}$  obviously falls within the Byzantine stream, I will factor it out and treat it separately. 420 less 80 equals 340 strongly Byzantine MSS, only 25 of which share a profile. We obviously have a text-type, but is it a recension? To posit a recension we need a source—who did it, when and where? And using what? Did he merely edit existing materials or did he invent some of the variants? If he invented, is there an observable pattern to explain his attitude?

We have 315 strongly Byzantine MSS (without  $f^{35}$ ) with private profiles—they are independent in their own generation, presumably representing as many exemplars, also presumably independent in their own generation, etc. Which is at least partly why scholars from Hort to Aland have recognized that any Byzantine 'recension' could not have been created later than the 4<sup>th</sup> century. I have argued elsewhere, at some length, against any notion of a Byzantine recension, at any time or place.<sup>5</sup>

As a preliminary to taking up the question of  $f^{35}$  ( $K^1$ ) as possibly a recension, I wish to consider other aspects of the general evidence presented in TuT. Of the MSS that were collated, 78 are dated. There are nine pairs of MSS with the same date (but no more than two MSS to a year—so 60 have a private year); in eight of them the two MSS are quite different in profile; in the ninth pair both MSS are  $f^{35}$  but differ in one variant. Both are at Mt. Athos, but in different monasteries—it is highly improbable that they had the same exemplar. There is no evidence here of mass production. But why would a monk on Mt. Athos produce a copy in 1280 AD? If the copy is still there, it was not to fill an order from the city. So why did he do it, as a religious

<sup>4</sup> For a 95% threshold we lose another 35 MSS;  $385 \div 525$  gives 73%. 75% of the MSS reflect a very strong consensus, and yet most have private profiles.

<sup>5</sup> *The Identity of the New Testament Text II* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, third edition, 2003), pp. 21-28, 32-42, 52-54, 70-80, 86-99, 126-133.

exercise or duty? But what would he copy? It seems to me most likely that he would copy an aged exemplar that was showing signs of wear, to preserve its text. I will demonstrate below that the MSS produced in a single monastery were based on distinct exemplars (as Lake, Blake and New indicated 75 years ago).<sup>6</sup>

### **Mt. Athos**

I have heard it said that the MSS at Mt. Athos are under suspicion of having been mass produced, and of being made to conform to an arbitrary standard. I suspect that the speaker was not aware that there are a number of distinct monasteries in that area. TuT lists a mere twenty. Recall that these monasteries represented different patriarchates, orders, countries and even languages. An average small city in the U.S. will likely have an Assembly of God, a Baptist church, a Bible church, a Congregational church, an Episcopal church, a Methodist church, a Presbyterian church, some kind of neo-pentecostal church, among others. How do they relate to each other? To what extent do they join forces? Even a city-wide evangelistic campaign will not get them all together. Were monks in the Byzantine empire any different than pastors in the U.S.? Has human nature changed? The point I am making is that there was probably very little comparing of notes between monasteries on a subject like copying MSS.

Consider: Grigoriu, Pavlu and Protatu are listed with one MS each (for the Catholic Epistles),<sup>7</sup> none of which are **f<sup>35</sup>**. Karakallu and Kavsokalyvion are listed with one each that is **f<sup>35</sup>**. Konstamonitu, Philotheu and Stavronikita are listed with two MSS, one **f<sup>35</sup>** and one not. Xiropotamu has two MSS, neither being **f<sup>35</sup>**. Pantokratoros has three, one of which is **f<sup>35</sup>**. Dochiariu has five MSS, none being **f<sup>35</sup>**. Esphigmenu also has five, one being **f<sup>35</sup>**. Panteleimonos is listed with seven MSS, two being **f<sup>35</sup>**. Dionysiu is listed with nine MSS, three being **f<sup>35</sup>**. Kutlumusiu is listed with ten MSS, two being **f<sup>35</sup>**. Ivion is listed with twelve MSS, five being **f<sup>35</sup>**. Vatopediu is listed with 28 MSS, five being **f<sup>35</sup>**. Lavra is listed with 52 MSS, 22 being **f<sup>35</sup>**. With the possible exception of Lavra, there was evidently no **f<sup>35</sup>** ‘steamroller’ at work.

But what about within a single monastery? Although MSS presently located at places like London or Paris were presumably produced elsewhere, those located at places like Mt. Athos, Patmos, Jerusalem and Sinai were probably produced right there. The monastery at Mt. Sinai is sufficiently isolated that we might expect that a good deal of ‘inbreeding’ took place. So let’s take a look at the Sinai MSS listed by TuT.

### **Mt. Sinai**

I will list the MSS in a descending order of ‘Alexandrishness’, with the proviso that such an ordering is only relevant for the first seven or eight:<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> K. Lake, R.P. Blake and Silva New, “The Caesarean Text of the Gospel of Mark,” *Harvard Theological Review*, XXI (1928), 348-49.

<sup>7</sup> TuT lists a MS each for Andreas and Dimitriu, but did not collate them. Esphigmenu has an added three MSS that were not collated.

<sup>8</sup> TuT includes two 6<sup>th</sup> century uncial fragments: 0285 has one reading (of the 98) and 0296 has two. Such a scant basis only allows us to guess that they are not Byzantine.

1.  $\aleph, 01^9$ – IV - eapr (2 = 57 [2 subs],<sup>10</sup> 1/2 = 5 [1 sub], 1 = 19 [3 subs], sing = 9, odd = 8) = 98 variants;
  2. 1243 – XI - eap (2 = 51, 1/2 = 6, 1 = 22 [5 subs], sing = 2, odd = 16) = 97;
  3. 1241 – XII - eap (2 = 47 [5 subs], 1/2 = 4, 1 = 17 [2 subs], sing = 5, odd = 18) = 91;
  4. 1881 – XIV - ap (2 = 42 [3 subs], 1/2 = 3 [1 sub], 1 = 16 [1 sub], sing = 1, odd = 11) = 73;
  5. 2495 – XIV - eapr (2 = 37 [2 subs], 1/2 = 4, 1 = 37 [4 subs], sing = 2, odd = 17) = 97;
  6. 2492 – XIII - eap (2 = 17 [2 subs], 1/2 = 8, 1 = 58 [2 subs], sing = 1, odd = 9) = 93;
  7. 2494 – 1316 - eapr (2 = 11, 1/2 = 4, 1 = 73 [2 subs], odd = 10) = 98;
- From here on down all the MSS fall within the Byzantine stream.
8. 1874 – X - ap (2 = 4, 1/2 = 9, 1 = 78 [2 subs], sing = 1, odd = 6) = 98;
  9. 1877 – XIV - ap (2 = 2, 1/2 = 9, 1 = 81 [5 subs], sing = 2, odd = 4) = 98;
  10. 2086 – XIV - ap (2 = 2, 1/2 = 8, 1 = 82 [2 subs], sing = 1, odd = 5) = 98;
  11. 1251 – XIII - eap (2 = 2, 1/2 = 9, 1 = 82 [3 subs], odd = 4) = 97;
  12. 1245 – XII - ap (2 = 3, 1/2 = 10 [1 sub], 1 = 83 [6 subs], odd = 2) = 98;
  13. 1240 – XII - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 7, 1 = 82 [7 subs], odd = 4) = 94;
  14. 2356 – XIV - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 9, 1 = 76 [2 subs], odd = 4) = 90;
  15. 1880 – X - ap (2 = 2, 1/2 = 10, 1 = 84 [5 subs], odd = 2) = 98;
  16. 2502 – 1242 - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 9, 1 = 73 [6 subs], odd = 2) = 85;
  17. 1242 – XIII - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 9, 1 = 86 [4 subs], odd = 2) = 98;
  18. 1250 – XV - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 10, 1 = 77 [3 subs], odd = 3) = 91; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 2]
  19. 1247 – XV - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 10, 1 = 81 [3 subs], odd = 3) = 95; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 2]
  20. 1876 – XV - apr (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 83 [3 subs], odd = 3) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 2]
  21. 1249 – 1324 - ap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 10, 1 = 84 [3 subs], odd = 2) = 97; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 1]
  22. 1248 – XIV - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 84 [3 subs], sing = 1, odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 1]
  23. 2501 – XVI - ap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 83 [5 subs], odd = 1) = 96; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 4]
  24. 2085 – 1308 - ap (2 = 0, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 84 [3 subs], sing = 1, odd = 2) = 98;
  25. 1244 – XI - ap (2 = 0, 1/2 = 10, 1 = 85 [3 subs], odd = 2) = 97;
  26. 2799 – XIV - ap (2 = 0, 1/2 = 3, 1 = 28 [2 subs], sing = 1, odd = 1) = 33.<sup>11</sup>

Absolutely no two MSS are identical; even the six f<sup>35</sup> MSS all differ by at least one variant. The rest of the Byzantine MSS are all distinct, some really so,<sup>12</sup> yet all clearly fall within the Byzantine tradition.<sup>13</sup> These 26 MSS represent as many exemplars; there was no ‘inbreeding’, no stuffing the ballot box; each copyist tried to reproduce what was in front of him, regardless of the type of text. Since the MSS were still there in 1800, they were not made to fill an order

<sup>9</sup> Of course Aleph is presently located in London, but it became extant in Sinai; to this day the monks at St. Catharine’s refer to Tischendorf as ‘the thief’.

<sup>10</sup> ‘subs’ stands for sub-variants, which are included in the larger number. Where a ‘sub’ is also a singular I list it only as a singular—each variant is counted only once.

<sup>11</sup> The last three MSS have very different profiles.

<sup>12</sup> Notice that no MS scores a perfect 87 for LESART 1, and only four score a perfect 11 for LESART 1/2.

<sup>13</sup> Remember that we are only looking at 98 variant sets—if we had complete collations for the seven books it is almost certain that no two MSS would be identical (from all sources); perhaps for a single book, the smaller the better, a very few might be found.

from elsewhere. Given its isolation, the ancestors of the 26 extant MSS were probably brought to the monastery before the Islamic conquest.

The profiles of the first five MSS in the above list are **very** different, distinct from each other;<sup>14</sup> none is a copy of  $\aleph$ , which I find to be curious. Evidently  $\aleph$  was not copied—why?<sup>15</sup>

### Lavra

Well, ok, but what about Lavra? Isn't the disproportionate percentage of  $f^{35}$  MSS suspicious? To find out we must do for Lavra what we did for Sinai, which will be twice as much work (52 X 26). Again, I will list the MSS in a descending order of 'Alexandrishness', with the proviso that such an ordering is only relevant for the first nine or ten:

1. 1739 – X - ap (2 = 66 [4 subs], 1/2 = 7, 1 = 12 [2 subs], odd = 13) = 98;
  2. 044 – VIII - ap (2 = 52 [1 sub], 1/2 = 7, 1 = 20, sing = 7, odd = 11) = 97;
  3. 1735 – XI - ap (2 = 43 [2 subs], 1/2 = 7 [1 sub], 1 = 35 [2 subs], sing = 1, odd = 12) = 98;
  4. 1505 – XII - eap (2 = 41 [3 subs], 1/2 = 4, 1 = 35 [3 subs], odd = 18) = 98;
  5. 1448 – XI - eap (2 = 23, 1/2 = 7 [1 sub], 1 = 58 [2 subs], sing = 1, odd = 8) = 97;
  6. 1490 – XII - eap (2 = 13, 1/2 = 7 [1 sub], 1 = 69 [4 subs], odd = 9) = 98;
  7. 1751 – 1479 - ap (2 = 7 [1 sub], 1/2 = 11 [1 sub], 1 = 69 [3 subs], sing = 5, odd = 6) = 98;
  8. 1501 – XIII - eap (2 = 8 [1 sub], 1/2 = 8, 1 = 73 [1 sub], sing = 1, odd = 8) = 98;
  9. 1661 – XV - eap (2 = 6, 1/2 = 9 [1 sub], 1 = 73 [5 subs], sing = 3, odd = 7) = 98;
- From here on down all the MSS fall within the Byzantine stream.
10. 1609 – XIV - eap (2 = 9 [1 sub], 1/2 = 9, 1 = 76 [4 subs], odd = 3) = 97;
  11. 1646 – 1172 - eap (2 = 3, 1/2 = 10, 1 = 77 [6 subs], sing = 5, odd = 3) = 98;
  12. 1509 – XIII - eap (2 = 3, 1/2 = 9, 1 = 77 [5 subs], sing = 3, odd = 5) = 97;
  13. 1744 – XIV - ap (2 = 2, 1/2 = 8, 1 = 81 [2 subs], sing = 2, odd = 5) = 98;
  14. 1643 – XIV - eap (2 = 3, 1/2 = 7, 1 = 82 [3 subs], odd = 6) = 98;
  15. 1626 – XV - eapr (2 = 2, 1/2 = 9, 1 = 81 [6 subs], sing = 1, odd = 5) = 98;
  16. 1743 – XII - ap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 7 [1 sub], 1 = 83 [2 subs], odd = 7) = 98;
  17. 1622 – XIV - eap (2 = 4, 1/2 = 10, 1 = 81 [4 subs], odd = 3) = 98;
  18. 2194 – 1118 - ap (2 = 2, 1/2 = 8, 1 = 83 [2 subs], odd = 5) = 98;
  19. 1495 – XIV - eap (2 = 4, 1/2 = 10, 1 = 82 [5 subs], odd = 2) = 98;
  20. 1642 – 1278 - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 10, 1 = 82 [6 subs], sing = 1, odd = 3) = 97;
  21. 1738 – XI - ap (2 = 2, 1/2 = 10, 1 = 82 [8 subs], odd = 3) = 97;
  22. 1649 – XV - eap (2 = 2, 1/2 = 9, 1 = 84 [5 subs], odd = 3) = 98;
  23. 1734 – 1015 - apr (2 = 1, 1/2 = 9, 1 = 82 [1 sub], odd = 4) = 96;
  24. 049 – IX - ap (2 = 1 [1 sub], 1/2 = 9, 1 = 84 [4 subs], odd = 3) = 97;
  25. 1741 – XIV - ap (2 = 0, 1/2 = 7 [1 sub], 1 = 87 [4 subs], odd = 4) = 98;
  26. 1456 – XIII - eap (2 = 0, 1/2 = 8 [1 sub], 1 = 69 [2 subs], odd = 4) = 81;
  27. 1747 – XIV - ap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 9, 1 = 84 [6 subs], odd = 2) = 96;

<sup>14</sup> I consider a high 'erraticity' quotient to be a defining feature of 'Alexandrishness'.

<sup>15</sup> But over ten people did try to correct it, down through the centuries, so they knew it was there. 1243 and 1241 are almost as bad, and they were produced in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, respectively.

28. 1736 – XIII - ap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 10, 1 = 83 [4 subs], odd = 2) = 96;
29. 2511 – XIV - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 10 [1 sub], 1 = 76 [1 sub], odd = 2) = 89;
30. 1750 – XV - ap (2 = 0, 1/2 = 9, 1 = 87 [3 subs], odd = 2) = 98;
31. 1733 – XIV - apr (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 83 [3 subs], odd = 3) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 2] (16, 91)
32. 1732 – 1384 - apr (2 = 2, 1/2 = 11 [1 sub], 1 = 83 [3 subs], odd = 1) = 97; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 2] (1, 72)
33. 1508 – XV - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 10, 1 = 85 [4 subs], odd = 2) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 2] (21, 65)
34. 1482 – 1304 - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 10, 1 = 85 [2 subs], odd = 2) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 2] (45, 65)
35. 1656 – XV - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 84 [2 subs], odd = 2) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 2] (8, 45)
36. 1748 – 1662 - ap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [4 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 2] (32, 62)
37. 1737 – XII - ap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [3 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 2] (32, 77)
38. 1749 – XVI - ap (2 = 2, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 78 [3 subs], odd = 1) = 92; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 1] (29)
39. 1637 – 1328 - eapr (2 = 2, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 84 [3 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 1] (17)
40. 1740 – XIII - apr (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [4 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 1] (39)
41. 1617 – XV - eapr (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [4 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 1] (21)
42. 1618 – 1568 - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [2 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 1] (32)
43. 1072 – XIII - eapr (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [3 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 0]
44. 1075 – XIV - eapr (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [3 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 0]
45. 1503 – 1317 - eapr (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [3 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 0]
46. 1619 – XIV - ea(p) (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [3 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 0]
47. 1628 – 1400 - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [3 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 0]
48. 1636 – XV - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [3 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 0]
49. 1745 – XV - apr (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [3 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 0]
50. 1746 – XIV - apr (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [3 subs], odd = 1) = 98; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 0]
51. 1652 – XVI - eap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 3, 1 = 21) = 25; [f<sup>35</sup> frag]
52. 1742 – XIII - ap (2 = 1, 1/2 = 11, 1 = 85 [3 subs]) = 97; [f<sup>35</sup> ± 5]

Again, setting aside the f<sup>35</sup> MSS for the moment, absolutely no two MSS are identical. The rest of the Byzantine MSS are all distinct, some really so, yet all clearly fall within the Byzantine tradition. These 30 MSS represent as many exemplars; there was no ‘inbreeding’, no stuffing the ballot box; each copyist tried to reproduce what was in front of him, regardless of the quality of text. Since the MSS were still there in 1800, they were not made to fill an order from elsewhere.

Also, where did the monasteries get the parchment for their ongoing production of MSS? Did they have money to go out and buy from tanneries? It seems to me more probable that they made their own from the skins of the sheep and goats that they ate. In such an event it could easily take several years to get enough for a single New Testament. The problem of finding enough parchment mitigates against the mass production of copies at any time in the vellum era. Three of the dated MSS at Sinai are eight years apart (1308, 1316, 1324)—might it have taken that long to gather enough vellum?

Now let's consider the  $f^{35}$  group. Seven are  $f^{35} \pm 2$ , but no two of them have an identical profile—I have put the deviant variants within ( ) at the end of the line, so the reader can check that at a glance. Five are  $f^{35} \pm 1$ , but no two of them have an identical profile either, as the reader can see at a glance. So these twelve MSS must also have been copied from as many exemplars—we now have 42 MSS that were copied from distinct exemplars. Ah, but there are eight MSS with a perfect  $f^{35}$  profile; what of them? Well, let's start with the contents: three contain **eapr**, three contain **eap**, two contain **apr**—at the very least, these three groups must represent distinct exemplars. So now we are down to a maximum of five MSS that might not represent a distinct exemplar. Setting aside preconceived ideas, what objective basis could anyone have for affirming that these five were not copied on the same principle as the rest, namely to preserve the text of the exemplar? It seems to me only fair to understand that the 52 extant MSS at Lavra represent as many distinct exemplars.<sup>16</sup>

### An $f^{35}$ ( $K^r$ ) Recension?

Since  $f^{35}$  is the only group of consequence with a significant number of MSS with a perfect profile, we can determine its archetypal text with certainty—we have the most cohesive of all text-types. But is it a 'recension'? Von Soden claimed that it was, assigning it to the 12<sup>th</sup> century; I am not aware that he named a source, but if he did he was wrong. Cursive 35, along with other 11<sup>th</sup> century MSS, belongs to this group—their exemplars were presumably 10<sup>th</sup> century or earlier. I have demonstrated elsewhere<sup>17</sup> that  $f^{35}$  ( $K^r$ ) is independent of  $K^x$ , throughout the NT—if it is independent it cannot have been based upon  $K^x$ . Repeatedly  $f^{35}$  has overt early attestation, against  $K^x$ , but there is no pattern to the alignments, they are hap-hazard. It is supported (against  $K^x$ ) by  $P^{45,46,47,66,75}$ ,  $\aleph$ , A, B, C, D, lat, syr, cop—sometimes just by one, sometimes by two, three, four or more of them, but in constantly shifting patterns. If there is no pattern then there is no dependency;  $f^{35}$  has ancient readings because it itself is ancient.

Returning to TuT and the Catholic Epistles, I will list the present location of  $f^{35}$  MSS by century:

XI—Paris, Rome, Trikala;

XII—Athos (Kutlumuşiu, Lavra, Panteleimonos, Stavronikita, Vatopediu), Jerusalem;

XIII—Athens, Athos (Ivion, Konstamonitu, Lavra, Pantokratoros, Philotheu), Bologna, Kalavryta, Leiden, Rome;

XIV—Athens, Athos (Dionysiu, Esphigmenu, Ivion, Karakally, Kavsokalyvion, Lavra, Vatopediu), Grottaferrata, Jerusalem, Karditsa, London, Ochrida, Paris, Patmos, Rome, Sinai;

XV—Athens, Athos (Ivion, Lavra), Bucharest, London, Meteora, Rome, Sinai, Sparta, Venedig, Zittau;

XVI—Athens, Athos (Ivion, Kuthumuşiu, Lavra), Lesbos, Sinai;

XVII—Athos (Dionysiu, Lavra).

<sup>16</sup> I remind the reader again that we are only looking at 98 variant sets—if we had complete collations for the seven books it is almost certain that no two MSS would be identical. With full collations these five will doubtless prove to be distinct as well.

<sup>17</sup> "The Dating of  $K^r$  (alias  $f^{35}$ , nee  $f^{18}$ ) Revisited". (See also "Concerning the Text of the *Pericope Adulterae*".)



Manuscripts at Rome, Jerusalem, Patmos, Athens, Sinai, Athos, at least, are most probably based on a line of ancestors held locally; any importing of exemplars probably took place in the early centuries. If there are **f<sup>35</sup>** MSS in those places today, it is presumably because there have been **f<sup>35</sup>** MSS there from the beginning.

I reject as totally unfounded the allegation that **f<sup>35</sup>** is a recension. If anyone wishes to claim that it is, I request that they state who did it, when and where, and that they furnish evidence in support of the claim. Without evidence any such claim is frivolous and irresponsible.