

Knowledge of documents

Parallel to the discussion of the variants I used a basic rating system to evaluate the quality of the individual manuscripts. One may call this "repeating Westcott-Hort": By comparison of clearly ratable variants the value of individual manuscripts can be judged. With this knowledge, then, a clearer appraisal is possible. Please read [WH, Introduction § 38-41, p. 30-34](#) for a very good presentation of this classic, still generally accepted method.

After analyzing the arguments pro and contra an appraisal has been given to each variant reading.

Nomenclature:

- 2 = The non-txt reading is clearly secondary
- 2? = The non-txt reading is probably secondary
- = the evidence is indecisive
- 1? = it is possible that the txt reading is wrong
- 1 = the txt reading is clearly wrong

These numbers should not be taken too serious. Especially they have nothing to do with the rating system of the UBS GNT. They are meant simply to keep track of the decisions and to allow for an easy analysis of the external evidence. What I have done is only a first step. Similar to the Text & Textwert analyses I have tried to single out the better manuscripts. As a second step the detailed analysis of these manuscripts must then follow.

Using this collection of the clearly secondary readings, the witnesses have been weighted and tabulated. All numbers can be found in the [Tables-file](#) in this commentary.

With this information then the judgment of readings can be refined. Variants difficult to evaluate internally can be judged by the external evidence again:

WH: "Knowledge of documents should precede final judgment upon variants."

To check if my selection of variants was a good one, all variants in NA²⁷ for Mt and all variants from T&T Mk and Jo have been analyzed additionally. Also, a full collation of Jo 1-5 from Swanson has been carried out. These gave very similar results.

The analysis basically confirms the superiority of O1, B and the Alexandrian text in the Gospels. Nevertheless I also identified some variants where it is possible that the printed text, NA²⁷, (= txt) might be wrong. The analysis also shows that

the important manuscripts change from Gospel to Gospel and it confirms the conclusion that the "consistently cited manuscripts" in an apparatus must be specified individually for each Gospel. I also identified several changes of "texttypes" within one book ([block-mixing, extra file](#)). This should be noted in NA.

N.B.: This manuscripts analysis has been done with the noted variants only (ca. 300 for each Gospel) and is not based on full collations. Thus they give us only a rough view. It is clear enough though for our purposes (separate "good" from "bad") and will not change dramatically when more variants are added, except that the groups (e.g. Caesarean) will come out much more clearly. The purpose of this study was to find those manuscripts which are "the best". The isolation of texttypes was only second-rank.

A more detailed analysis must of course follow later.

External evidence:

The quality of a manuscript belongs to the "external evidence". It is one of the most important "external" arguments:

"In case of doubt, prefer the reading supported by the best manuscripts."

What is a "good" manuscript?

A good manuscript is of course one that comes close to the original text. The quality of a manuscript can be evaluated by counting the (clearly) secondary readings. This already says a lot. But a manuscript can have many minority or singular readings, but few Byzantine readings, e.g. D. This means that D is not so strongly affected by the Byzantine tradition. To take these things into account, two numbers should characterize a manuscript: For a manuscript to be good it must have a) few secondary readings and b) few Byzantine readings.

Example:

If it comes to secondary readings alone, D would probably be the worst manuscript of all times, only f13 comes close. On the other hand if one compares the "Byzantinity" of the manuscripts, D comes out much better, for example D is only about 40% Byzantine in Mt. Thus one would use the weight of D differently, depending if it's a Byzantine reading or a minority reading.

N.B.: The numbers are only meaningful for this study. I have calculated them to get a firmer basis for the external argumentation. In other studies probably other numbers will come out, but the order of the manuscripts will be about the

same. I have compared my data with the "Text & Textwert" study from Muenster and the results are comparable.

Note also that the values for the versions are generally lower compared to Greek manuscripts because not in all cases the reading of a version is clear. In those cases the reading is counted as "secondary". This is probably not always correct so one can assume that the versions are actually somewhat better than the percentages given.

Limitation:

It should be kept in mind that also a very good manuscript contains errors, possibly even serious ones. No manuscript is infallible. B/03, the best manuscript might be correct in 95% of the cases, but it is still possible that it is dead wrong in the remaining 5%. Have a look at the "top variants" list to find some examples, where it is possible that B is wrong in serious cases.

It was already J.R. Harris who wrote in 1894:

"There is nothing against which we need to be so much on our guard as to seductive supposition that the cause of certain variants is necessarily the cause of the remainder, or that we can, because we have explained two or three obscure changes in the text, use the Newtonian 'vera causa' over the remainder." (Four lectures ...)

The following table gives a qualitative listing of all the evidence.

[insert Resultslist here]

General observations:

The nature of the variants:

More than 50% of the variants are harmonistic, either to immediate context or to the other Gospels. Most of the other variants are improvements of style, natural additions and additions of direct subjects/objects. Some variants can be assigned to liturgical/lectionary usage.

Only very few variants (< 5%) are due to removing a factual (not stylistic) difficulty.

The Manuscripts:

Only about 25 manuscripts have in one or more Gospels a text that is correct in more than 75% of the cases (note that % means only % of the analyzed variants, NOT the complete text!). Only about 5 manuscripts have this 75% correct text in all four Gospels. Only about 7 manuscripts have at least in one Gospel a 90% correct text. It's only B that has in all four Gospels a correct text in more than 90% of the cases. B is the one outstanding manuscript in the Gospels.

Of the uncials O1 and L are almost equally good in Mt to Lk (better 85%). But note that L is blockmixed in Mt and has good text only from ch. 18-28. O1 is not so good in Jo (only about 70%), whereas L remains good in Jo, too. Further noteworthy are only Ψ in Mk (90%) and W and C in John (80%). Of the fragments Z is very good in Mt (comparable to O1/B), Ξ is very good in Lk and T/029 is outstanding in Luke and John (better 90%). Δ is good in Mk (80%).

The text of D is best in Mt (60% correct readings) and worst in Mk and Lk (both 45%).

Of the papyri only P45, P66 and P75 have enough text to get sound data. All three show a good text with P75 being the best (85-95%). P66 has ca. 75% correct text and P45 65-75%.

The best overall minuscule in the Gospels is 892. It has in 65-78% of the cases the correct text in all four Gospels. In addition to these only 1342 (in Mk) and 579, 1241 (both in Lk) have a text better than 75%. 33 has a text that is 65-70% correct. f1 is quite good in Mt (65%).

Of the versions the Coptic has the best text (80-85%). There is no real difference in quality between the Sahidic and the Bohairic. The old Latin is best in Mt (66%) and worst in Mk/Lk (50%). The Syriac is also not very good. Sy-S and Sy-C have in Mt, Mk and Jo about 50-60% good text. Sy-S is bad in Mk (43%). Sy-P and Sy-H are basically Byzantine (80-90% Byz).

Certainly a "cult of the best manuscripts" is not a good thing, but with these results it is understandable that WH wrote:

"(1) readings of O1/B should be accepted as the true readings until strong internal evidence is found to the contrary, and

(2) that no readings of O1/B can safely be rejected absolutely." (Intro §303, p. 225).

Text & Textwert:

It is interesting how few good manuscripts have been newly found by the Text & Textwert analyses. The following manuscripts are noteworthy (% "2" readings noted):

	Mt	Mk	Lk	Jo		Mt	Mk	Lk	Jo
22	32	-	13	9	033	4	3	15	35
1192	22	-	-	8	865	-	-	-	31
372	36	9	9	5	213	6	7	13	29
2737	33	10	9	3	799	5	4	6	25
2786	24	16	17	24	517	16	15	11	-
849	-	-	-	58(!)	954	4	9	-	7
850	-	-	-	?	1424	21	14	11	7
397	-	-	-	41(!)	1675	16	15	13	9
597	6	2	6	31	157	9	-	33	17
0141	-	-	-	30	1612	-	-	29	-
821	-	-	-	33	1627	-	-	18	-
					2766	2	13	7	5
					279	22	-	-	5
					2680	20	5	2	11

Mt: 22, [372, 2737, (2786)].

372 and 2737 form a group with 59/64 (92%) agreement.

Mk: [372, 2737, 2786], [517, (954), 1424, 1675], 2766

372, 2737 and 2786 are also noteworthy in Mt!

517 agrees 185/196 (94%) with 1675, 166/188 (88%) with 954 and 168/188 (86%) with 1424.

Lk: [157, 1612, 1627], 2786

157 agrees with 1612 77%, 1612 agrees with 1627 69%,

1627 agrees with 1342 81%.

Jo: [033, 213, 799, 865], [0141, 821], 397, [849, 850]

0141 agrees with 821 95% (very close!)

the manuscripts of group 033 agree 80-90%, 033 and 865 93%.

the agreement of 849 and 850 is not yet clear (see below).

22 and 1192: probably only in Mt a group: 22 (Paris, 12th CE), 1192 (Sinai, 11th CE). Some scholars (and also T&T) see a relation of 22 with f1 (1, 1582, 205) and Origen! This is confirmed in this study (22 agrees with f1 69% 127/184). 22 has lacunae at Mt 1:1-2:2, 4:19-5:25 and Jo 14:22-16:27. Gregory notes "variants in the margin". It might be interesting if there is a correlation with Origen? The nearest neighbors textually besides f1 are 01 and B. For 22 see: Harris, JBL 33 (1914), 91-117.

[372, 2737, 2786] is an important new group: 372 (Rome, 16th CE), 2737 (Rome, 16th CE) and 2786 (once Thira, Greek island 14th CE), all parchment.

372: Gregory writes: "looks like a printed book, Jo 3:1-21:25 missing, written in Italy (by Honoratus?)". The limited data I have from T&T and Legg indicate a special connection of 372 with B and with the Latin (vg + it, but not D!). 372 is block-mixed in Mt: very good in ch. 1-11, Byz in the rest. Is it possible that an ancestor has been corrected to a Latin manuscript? This group deserves more study!

2786: "lost or destroyed, but film available" (T&T).

517, 954, 1424, 1675: 517 (Oxford, 12th CE), 954 (Athos, 15th CE), 1424 (10th CE), 1675 (Athos, 14th CE). Some good readings here and there. This is Streeter's family 1424 and Wisse's cluster 1675, a "weak Caesarean group".

157, 1612, 1627: 157 (Rome, 12th CE), 1612 (Athos, 12th CE), 1627 (Athos, 17th CE). 157 is almost completely Byzantine in Mt, but it has some older readings, too. It is best in Lk, where it is comparable to 33 or 892. It agrees sometimes with f1 and 33.

849 is the best of all newly analyzed manuscripts. It is a 17th CE manuscript written on paper! It rests in the Vatican library (Barb. gr. 495) and contains John only. It is fragmentary (Jo 7:25 - 10:18) and extant only for 45 out of 153 Teststellen. It omits the PA. The manuscript has the commentary from Cyril Alex. added (book 5 and 6). Scrivener: 730, Soden: Ki60

Gregory notes: "copied from 850?" Unfortunately 850 has not been collated for T&T (due to a misinterpretation of the manuscript), but it will be given as an addendum in the next volume. Should be interesting. Textually 849 is closest to L (80% agreement, only 60% with B).

850 is a 12th CE manuscript, parchment, also in the Vatican (Barb. gr. 504). It contains Jo 1:1 - 10:17. Also with Cyril commentary (Book 1-6). Scrivener 729, Soden: Ki20

397 is the second best of the newly analyzed manuscripts. It is a 10/11th manuscript in Rome (Bibl. Vallicell. E40). Contains John only. Text with catena. Scrivener 397, Soden Ci10. It omits the PA.

597 is a 13th CE manuscript in Venice (Bibl. Naz. Marc., Gr. I, 59, 1277). It's written on parchment and contains the Gospels. Gregory: "has good readings". Scrivener 464, Soden: ε340. It's rather close to group X, (73% agreement with X).

0141 is a 10th CE codex in Paris (Bib. Nat. Gr 209), Contains John only. Text with catena. Gregory 314 (p. 178, he notes: "compare with X") Soden Ci13 (I-text, p. 1506)

821 is a 16th CE manuscript again written on paper! Contains John only. Text with catena, at the beginning a catena on Genesis. It rests in the National Library of Madrid (4673, fol. 262-542). Soden Ci60 (I-text). It omits the PA. Is it a direct copy?

Group X: All four manuscripts omit the PA.

X/033: Codex Monacensis, 9/10th CE, Munich, Univ. lib. (2^o Cod. ms. 30), came in the 16th CE from Rome, text in uncials, commentary in early minuscule, chiefly

Chrysostom. Extant in John: 1:1-3:8, 7:1-13:5, 13:20-15:25, 16:23-fin., Jo 4:6-5:42 is supplied on paper, 12th CE. Soden: A3 (p. 249, 564ff., 1506)

865: 15th CE codex on paper! Vatican library (Vat. gr. 1472), Contains John only. Text with Chrysostom commentary. Soden: A502 (von Soden already notes that 865 is a "dublette" or copy of 033, p. 565). 865 is very close to X. Is it possible that the Gospel of John has been copied from 033, before the manuscript left Rome?

213: 11th CE codex, parchment, Venice, Bib. Naz. Marc. (Gr. Z. 542, 409), Jo 19:6-fin. is a 14/15th CE suppl., 213 is Byz in Mt and Mk and has 13% "2" readings in Lk. Soden: ε129

799: 11th CE (Gregory: 12th) codex, parchment, Athen, Nat. Lib. (no. 117), the manuscript is Byz in Mt-Lk, Soden: ε196. 799 is only a loose member of this group.

It shows von Soden's failure that he assigned the four codices different groups: 033: none, 865: A^C, 213: I^O, 799: K^X (Soden found it irrelevant to analyze 033 more closely, but he notes that 033 is closer to 01/B in John, p. 565)

Additionally, often disregarded, but manuscripts with good readings are:

Mt: 22, 700¹⁴⁻²⁸

Mk: Δ, 1342

Lk: 070, 1241, 157, 565¹⁻², 700¹⁻¹⁰

Jo: N, Ψ, 1241

Since the Byzantine text comes out as a bad text, I have not investigated it any further. For its analysis the following groups appear interesting:

[A], [K, Π], [N, O, Σ, Φ], [P, Q].

Additionally the manuscripts: M, U, X, Y, Γ, Λ.

It might also be interesting to investigate the agreements of the Byzantine readings of the Western text with the early Byzantine manuscripts.

Cumulative list of all manuscripts with (at least some) good text in the Gospels:
(not counting small fragments)

Papyri: P45, P66, P75

Majuscules: 01, (A), B, C, D, L, R, T, W, X, Z, Δ, Θ, Ξ, Ψ, 070, 083, 085, 086,
0141, 0274, 0281

Minuscules: f1, f13, 22, 28, 33, 157, 372, 517, 565, 579, 700, 892, 954,
1071, 1241, 1342, 1424, 1675, 2737, 2786

/Σ = 45 manuscripts

The very good ones are:

(P45), P66, P75^{Lk, Jo}

01, B, L, T^{Lk, Jo}, Z^{Mt}, Δ^{Mk}, Ξ^{Jo}, Ψ^{Mk}, 083^{Mk, Jo}, 085^{Mt}, 0274^{Mk},
(C^{Mk, Jo}, W^{Lk, Jo}, Θ^{Mt}, 070^{Lk}, 086^{Jo}, 0141^{Jo}, 0281^{Mt})
f1^{Mt}, 33^{Mt, Jo}, 372^{Mt}, 579^{Lk}, 892, 1241^{Lk}, 1342^{Mk (Lk)},

/Σ = 21 (28) manuscripts

These manuscripts deserve our foremost intensive study. Almost all need a new in depth study with state-of-the-art technology.

Observations on the individual Gospels:

Matthew:

01 and B are by far the best manuscripts in Matthew. Also quite good witnesses are L¹⁸⁻²⁸, Θ¹⁴⁻²⁸, f1, 372¹⁻¹⁰ and 892. Very good fragmentary manuscripts of Mt are Z/035 and 085. Also quite good is 0281.

L, Θ, 33, 372 and 700 are block-mixed in Mt. Interestingly in 372 it is the first part that is good, whereas in L, Θ, 33 and 700 it is the second part. Θ is a very good witness in the second part of Mt, this is not very well known. It is the 5th best uncial after 01, B, L, Z. Compare file on block mixing in this commentary.

579 is almost Byzantine in Mt (it is best in ch. 15-21). 33 is better, but not really outstanding (it is best in ch. 22-28, where it is comparable to 892).

It has been found that f1 is a strong witness to the Egyptian text. It is very non-Byzantine. f1 is sometimes the only supporter with 01/B for the original text, in a few times f1 is even without them. f1 has no close textual neighbors, it has a unique mixture of readings. It's still true what K. Lake wrote in 1928, that in Mt f1 "stands alone". It appears, although I have not checked this systematically, that f1 in Mt has a text similar to that used by Origen. There are certain striking coincidences. This was first noted already by Hort, 1896 (Lake, Caesarean text, p. 208). [The closeness of f1 to the Egyptian text has recently been confirmed by J.-F. Racine in his book "The text of Matthew in the writings of Basil of Caesarea", SBL, 2004, p. 252-254]

It may also be noted that of 17 secondary readings of B in this commentary (Mt), f1 supports only one. This may indicate that B and f1 are not close relatives, but rather independent.

Manuscript 22 forms a close group with f1 (in Mt only), but being more Byzantine. There are some striking agreements on minority variants, also with Origen. Gregory notes that 22 has "variants in the margin", possibly similar to 1582 from Origen? It appears that 22 is worse in the last chapters of Mt. From T&T we learn that 1192 appears to be close to 22.

Manuscript 652 belongs to family 1 in Mt from 22:15 on to the end. This has been discovered by Russell Champlin in 1964 (Family Pi in Matthew, Studies and Documents 24). Unfortunately T&T classified 652 simply as Byz (due to too few Teststellen). The manuscript deserves further analysis. It is located in Munich (Bayr. Staatsbibl. Gr. 594).

The "Western" group D/it stands out very clearly with its unique readings, but compared to the other Gospels it has a comparatively good text in Mt. Especially it is very non-Byzantine! It has strong weight in judging Byzantine readings. The Vulgate is not a strong Western witness. It has a comparatively good text.

The Caesarean group is more difficult to identify. Only Θ and f13 stand out clearly. Θ and f13 are sometimes supported additionally by 700 and 1424, but this relation is not strong enough to establish a group (at least not on the basis

of my data, a full collation might change that). It can be seen from the discussion that the readings of Θ /f13 are almost all secondary (interestingly they often harmonize to Mk). This is not the case with f1. Here we have several readings where no clear secondary cause is discernible.

Of f13 the manuscript 788 is the most remarkable. It has by far the highest number of distinct readings.

W is the oldest Byzantine witness we have for most of Mt, since A is missing up to 25:6.

Mark:

01, B, L, Ψ are the outstanding manuscripts in Mk. They are far better than everything else. Ψ is extant from 9:5 on. Also quite good are C, Δ, 892 and 1342. Δ and 1342 get much better from ch. 5 on. Of the fragmentary manuscripts 083 and 0274 are outstanding. 33 and 579 are not very good, but quite Byzantine.

In Mk the Caesarean texttype is much more prominent than in the other Gospels. The most clearly separated and very similar manuscripts of the Caesareans are Θ and 565, they form a close group. This is in contrast to Mt, where Θ and f13 form a close group. Other Caesarean witnesses, but not as strong, in Mk are f1, f13, 28 and 700.

1071, 1424 are sometimes said to have a Caesarean "touch", but this isn't really the case, they are basically Byzantine. f13 is also quite Byzantine but has much more distinct readings.

It is noteworthy how often the Western and Caesarean manuscripts agree with each other, they can be seen as two sub-branches in Mk. There is a considerable number of variants supported by e.g. D, Θ, 565 or D and W. There are several very remarkable agreements of D, Θ and 565. Hurtado, in his quantitative study on W even suggests not to call them Caesarean at all, but better mixed Western.

Codex W is sometimes said to be Western in ch. 1-5 and Caesarean in 6-16. This is a bit too simplistic. Even though W agrees often with Western and Caesarean witnesses, and the agreement with the Western text is closest in Mk 1-5, its mixture of readings is quite unique. It forms a loose group with P45 and Sy-S. In ch. 1 - 5 the nearest neighbors - textually - of W are Sy-S and f13, in ch. 6-16 these are P45, f1 and Sy-S. Even though W agrees often with D/it, it also disagrees with them often, so that the relation is not very close.

The status of Sy-S is also not really clear. It is not so clearly Western as in the other Gospels. The nearest neighbors - textually - of Sy-S are vg(!), f1, W and P45 (in this order). Sy-C is not extant.

The analysis of P45 is limited by its very fragmentary character. On the basis of these limited data one can say that, similar to W the mixture of readings of P45 is also quite unique. Even though the nearest neighbors of P45 are W and Sy-S, P45 stands rather alone. L. Hurtado in his quantitative study on W gets similar results.

It is possible that P45/W on the one hand and D/it on the other are two different strands of the "free" texts of the early time. We have two clear-cut, well separated groups D/it and Θ/565, and two loose groups [P45, W, Sy-S] and [f1, f13, 28, 700]. The exact relationship is not really clear, these need to be further investigated in more detail using full collations, but I doubt that it will be much clearer then.

It should be noted that 131 belongs to f1 in Mk 1-5 according to Lake ("Codex 1"). It is Byzantine in the remaining part. 131 is also f1 in Lk.

872 is also a weak member of f1, but it is very much conformed to the Byzantine text.

2542 is sometimes said to be a member of f1. The relation is not very close. It is closest to f1, f13 and 700. It clearly belongs to the Caesarean witnesses.

Overall, the Caesarean and Western texts come out as very bad. They have about 20% more significant secondary readings than the Byzantine text. (Probably there are even more.) This is remarkable. It is astonishing how much work has been done on these manuscripts already, considering their bad textual character.

Another interesting point is that we have more textually "very good" witnesses for Mk than we have for Mt, and the groups are more clearly separated.

In Mt we have: 01, B, 892 plus blockmixed L and Θ.

In Mk we have: 01, B, C, L, Δ, Ψ, 892, 1342.

Codex A is about 90% Byzantine in Mk and is the oldest witness for the Byzantine text.

Luke:

P75, B, and T/029 are the outstanding manuscripts in Lk.

Also very good are 01, L, W¹⁻⁷ and Ξ/040.

Additionally good text have: (P45), 070, 579, 1241 and 1342⁶⁻¹⁰.

Codex W is Alexandrian from ch. 1-7, afterwards it is Byz. Ψ, an outstanding witness in Mk is almost Byzantine in Lk. C is also quite Byzantine in Lk. Codex R is mixed in Lk with an especially good block in ch. 13-16. This deserves a more detailed study. 579 is much better than 33 in Lk. 33 is almost Byzantine.

The Western texttype in Lk, represented by D and the Old Latin, is exceptionally strong. D and the Old Latin share so many special readings that one could speak of a complete revision. Most of these readings give a secondary impression. The Western text of Lk is worse than the Majority/Byzantine text. The closest neighbors of D/it are Sy-S and Sy-C, but they are not so close as in Mt. They share only about one third of the Western minority readings (two third in Mt).

Several D-readings are supported by Marcion. Also some readings are supported by Tatian's Diatessaron. Since both, Marcion and Tatian, probably used some kind of Western text it is difficult to distinguish them. Nevertheless it can be said that probably some readings of D come from Marcion and/or Tatian.

To the contrary the Caesarean element is very weak. Θ and f13 are quite close. Their nearest neighbor is 1071. I would not call this a texttype in Lk, they are basically Byzantine (about 82%).

f1 is a mixed Alexandrian, 157 and 892 are its closest neighbors. They are about 60% Byzantine. In Lk 131 belongs to f1. It is also f1 in Mk 1-5.

John:

P66¹⁻⁵, P75, B, C, L, W, T and O83 are the best manuscripts in John. The quite unknown manuscript O83 appears to be very good from the scattered evidence found in TIS and NA. A full collation is desirable.

Note that O1 is strictly Western from 1:1 to 8:38! It is very close to D. Therefore, compared to the Synoptic Gospels, O1 has a comparatively bad text in John. The quality is not getting better in ch. 9-21.

According to Fee and my own studies, P66 has distinct Western properties from ch. 6 on to the end. Fee notes a strong Western element in ch. 6-7 and scattered Western readings throughout ch. 8-21.

A more detailed analysis of chapters 1-5 which took into account all variants from Swanson gave the following results:

1. Prime Alexandrians: P66¹⁻⁵, P75, B
2. Secondary Alexandrians: C, L, W^{sub}
3. Tertiary Alexandrians: Ψ, 33, 579

Caesareans:

group 1: Θ, f13, 1071

group 2: f1, 565

These Caesarean groups are very weak in John. The manuscripts are basically Byzantine.

Codex X/O33 has a comparatively good text in John. It is quite close to 33. Ψ has a rather bad, mixed text in John. It is better than that in Lk, but much worse than that in Mk.

A has its best text in John (76% Byzantine readings compared to about 90% in Mk and Lk). Similarly Codex N also has only about 75% Byzantine readings, but this codex has more secondary minority readings. It shares the same Byzantine pattern with A.

W has a supplement for Jo 1:1 - 5:10. The textual character is not changing though. It is close to O1. 892 is not good in John, it is worse than 33 and 579, and it has a Byzantine supplement from 14:23 - end.

565 belongs to f1 or 565 and f1 form a close group in John. This has already been found by Kilpatrick (TZ 25, 1969, p. 130). 565 with its dating to the 9th CE is therefore the oldest member of f1. It has the PA at the end of John as has f1. Actually the last page of 565 is missing, but the introductory note (known from f1) is present. (At the beginning of Luke 565 has a scholion consisting of extracts from Origen's homily 1 on Luke, hitherto unknown in Greek.)

Conclusion on the manuscripts:

We are left with about 45 manuscripts with comparatively good text (small fragments not counted, see table above). This is a good basis for establishing the text. Almost all manuscripts are mixed to some degree. Some are mixed with Byzantine readings throughout, some change texttype from one Gospel to the next, some even within one Gospel. This must be carefully analyzed for each manuscript and has to be taken into account when making judgments on external evidence. A much more careful and nuanced description of every manuscript is needed. Statements like "33 is Alexandrian" are not very helpful. Of the complete manuscripts only 01, B, and L are really first rate.

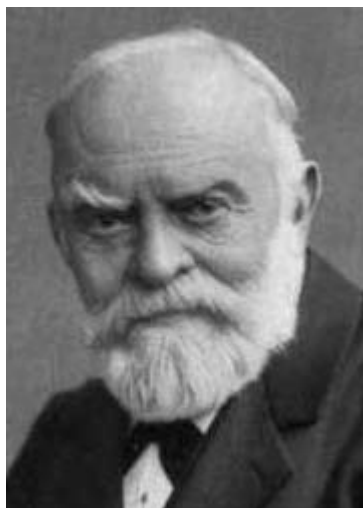
What do we need? We need more serious and in depth study of the individual manuscripts and their texts. Especially the following manuscripts need more study, if possible complete transcriptions:

1. We need a full transcription of the following minuscules:
22^{Mt}, 892, 1241^{Lk, Jo}, 1342^{Mk}
2. The groups [372, 2737, 2786],
[157, 1612, 1627] in Lk,
[517, 954, 1424, 1675]
are not very well known. They need more study, especially the group 372! Full transcriptions of 372, 2737 and 2786 in Mt.
3. What is the relation of f1, 22, 652 and Origen? This needs to be studied in detail! A full collation of 1, 22, 652, 1582 and Origen is needed. They are probably quite close. Acc. to Kim (JBL 68, 1949, 125ff.) 1582 and Origen agree in 77% of all readings. It should be noted once again that f1 does not agree with other "Caesarean" manuscripts in Mt (like Θ or f13), but forms a group of its own. The question arises, what to call the "Caesarean" text of Mt? If the evidence proves true that Origen used an f1 text in Caesarea, and it appears like that, then f1 would be the "true" Caesarean text and not Θ/f13.
4. Codex T has a very good text in Lk and Jo, but unfortunately it is scattered in several libraries and fragments. A complete transcription of everything would be useful. The New York fragment has never been published before (it is given in the appendix of the file on the Fragmentary Uncials).
The same is true for 083.
5. Codex R and X: Are they simply Byzantine? Clearly not. R is mixed in Lk and X is good in John! The designation "Kat. V" by Aland is not correct. Collations!

6. What was the base text of the Byzantine text? Agreements of the early groups should be analyzed, e.g. A, the K, Π group, the purple uncials (N, O, Σ, Φ) and P, Q.
8. It is astonishing how little study has been carried out on the really excellent manuscripts. New in depth studies on O1, B, C, L, T, Z, Ξ, Ψ, 070 are needed. What has been done on L since Tischendorf? T and 070 are scattered over several libraries and a complete description would be helpful.
9. It would be a really great help to have good color images of the above mentioned about 45 manuscripts on CDs or DVD. Will this ever happen?

As I have noted above, the next step must be the in depth analysis of the best manuscripts. What are their special qualities? What are their typical errors? Where are the possible reasons for their readings?

Bernhard Weiss (1827 - 1918):



About 100 years ago a similar analysis has been carried out by B. Weiss, one of the most eminent German Biblical scholars. Over several years he analyzed about 12.000 variants in the important majuscules, especially ALL variants in O1, A, B, C, D, L and many in R, X, Z, Δ, Σ, Ξ and the Byzantine majority. His work can be seen as complementary to mine or as a continuation. He analyzed the categories of error, like harmonizations etc. to get an impression of what readings are most likely typical errors of a manuscript and which ones are unusual. Whereas in my study I evaluated the manuscripts as to how often they read "correct", Weiss studied how often and in what categories a manuscript reads "wrong". Weiss did not know all the newly discovered manuscripts but he found B the outstanding codex of the Gospels too and summarized his results as follows (my translation):

"1. The preference for B lies not in it being error-free. It has about 400 singular errors, but its specialty are the kinds of errors. The often heard statement that B represents a recension, is contradicted by the evidence in all points. Especially those [kinds of] readings, which show a stable type and

uniformly recur in the majority of the codices, are almost not present in B. Only conformations to the context and, very rarely, but striking, harmonizations to the parallels appear. The peculiar errors are mostly due to carelessness and simple oversights and show blatant thoughtlessness. Thoughtful emendations cannot be found."

"2. The stereotypical errors of the late codices try to make an expression more correct or pleasing, better understandable, more forcible. Because these categories appear again and again one can presume an underlying recension. On the other hand one must be careful not to suspect too much careful design behind it. Most of the variants touch only the formal side of the text."

[...]

"In all cases we have to decide if a reading shows the character of the peculiar readings of B and if the counter-reading makes the impression of an emendation or similar error. B has over 280 times the correct reading alone, but other codices only very rarely."

Unfortunately Weiss' book is very difficult to read and not all evidence is presented. Especially in view of all the new manuscripts discovered since Weiss, the work has to be done again.

[There is a book forthcoming by James Royse on "Scribal Habits" that might be interesting in this respect.]

Compare:

Bernhard Weiss

"Textkritik der Evangelien"

Series: Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Altchristlichen Literatur,
Vol. 4.2

Leipzig, 1899; 246 pages