

THE ORIGIN OF MARK 16:9-20

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	2
PART ONE: EXTERNAL EVIDENCE	
CH. 1: External Evidence from the 2nd and 3rd Centuries	5
CH. 2: External Evidence from the 4th Century	20
CH. 3: External Evidence from the Early 400's	42
Ch. 4: Some External Evidence from the Mid-400's and Later	63
CH. 5: External Evidence With the Double-Ending	82
CH. 6: Lectionaries	90
PART TWO: INTERNAL EVIDENCE	
CH. 7: "Ephobounto Gar"	92
CH. 8: The Style of the Long Ending of Mark (by Dr. Bruce Terry)	96
CH. 9: Is Mk. 16:9-20 Non-Markan?	104
PART THREE: PROPOSED SOLUTIONS	
CH. 10: Theories about How the Ending was Lost	108
CH. 11: The Unlikelihood of Late Addition	115
CH. 12: The Best Solution	118
CH. 13: Matthew, Luke, and John	122
CH. 14: Closing Remarks	130
Appendix A: Excerpts from the Diatessaron	131
Appendix B: The Short Ending	132

Preface

In 1881, Westcott & Hort, reinforcing the conclusions of some scholars who preceded them, presented what appeared to be strong and persuasive evidence that the Gospel of Mark originally did not contain Mark 16:9-20.¹ Today most commentators deny, often almost casually, that this passage was an original part of the Gospel of Mark.² That view has affected modern Bible translations and may affect them more noticeably in the future.³

In this book I will offer evidence that the modern consensus should be reconsidered. First, however, I will present external and internal evidence showing that Mark 16:9-20 is a first-century text, and not a late scribal addition as is frequently claimed by some commentators whose research can be fairly described as negligent, or negligible, or both.

The origin of Mark 16:9-20 is this: in Rome, Mark wrote Mark 1:1-16:8. He had intended to write more, and, after that, to release the work for dissemination, but he was prevented from doing so by the rising threat of persecution. Mark departed Rome, and placed his unfinished Gospel-account in the hands of colleagues who remained there. They perceived that it was unfinished. These colleagues, not desiring to release the book in its incomplete state, and simultaneously reluctant to create an ending from

1 ~ Cf. Westcott & Hort's Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek, Notes on Select Readings pp. 28-51 (© Harper & Brothers, New York 1882), a source often cited to this day. For example, Dr. Craig Evans advised readers of the Word Biblical Commentary series, "For descriptions of the MS evidence, see Westcott-Hort, Introduction 2:28-51; Metzger, TCGNT1, 122-28." (p. 544, Word Biblical Commentary 34b – Mark 8:27-16:20 © 2001 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.)

Until Westcott & Hort, no scholarly consensus on this issue existed. Their contemporary Philip Schaff assembled the varied opinions of scholars from the 1800's about the subject: "The passage is defended as genuine by Simon, Mill, Bengel, Storr, Matthaei, Hug, Schleiermacher, De Wette, Bleek, Olshausen, Lange, Ebrard, Hilgenfeld, Broadus ("Bapt. Quarterly," Philad., 1869), Burgon (1871), Scrivener, Wordsworth, McClellan, Cook, Morison (1882). It is rejected or questioned by the critical editors, Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott and Hort (though retained by all in the text with or without brackets), and by such critics and commentators as Fritzsche, Credner, Reuss, Wieseler, Holtzmann, Keim, Scholten, Klostermann, Ewald, Meyer, Weiss, Norton, Davidson. Some of these opponents, however, while denying the composition of the section by Mark, regard the contents as a part of the apostolic tradition." (from www.ccel.org/s/schaff/hcc1/htm/i.XII.81.htm)

Samuel Tregelles initially opposed Markan authorship but by 1854 stated that 16:9-20 "might have been written by Mark at a later period." (see p. 23, The Mutilation of Mark's Gospel by N. Clayton Croy, © 2003 Abingdon Press.)

2 ~ This point should, however, be viewed alongside the observations that (a) most commentaries do not go into great detail about the pertinent manuscript-evidence, and (b) a considerable number of commentators merely echo Dr. Bruce Metzger's Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, and (c) many commentators present false descriptions of the external evidence, indicating that their research into the question was shallow or non-existent.

3 ~ Treatments of Mk. 16:9-20 range from complete omission (p. 374, The Short Bible, © 1933 Univ. of Chicago, edited by Edgar J. Goodspeed and J.M. Powis Smith) to full inclusion (on p. 573 of The Reader's Digest Bible ©1982 by the Reader's Digest Association, Inc. Bruce Metzger, General Editor). More recently, in a small book called The Message of Hope, which consists mainly of selections from The Message, the Gospel of Mark was presented up to the end of 16:8, where it stopped with no footnote. (p. 70, The Message of Hope, Copyright © 2001 by Eugene H. Peterson, publ. NavPress Publishing Group and distributed in association with Alive Communications.) In the Today's New International Version Mark 16:9-20 was separated from the rest of the book, and was printed in an italicized font. The TNIV's preface stated that the passage has "a very questionable—and confused—standing in the textual history of the New Testament." (Preface and p. 77-78, The Holy Bible, Today's New International Version, © 2001 by International Bible Society.)

their own minds, decided to attach a short composition which Mark had written previously – a composition which summarized the post-resurrection appearances of Christ. Thus completed, the Gospel of Mark was first disseminated for use in the Christian churches. The short composition which was added by Mark’s Roman colleagues is known today as Mark 16:9-20. Several theories adequately explain the loss of Mark 16:9-20, but I have found one which is especially elegant. I shall present leading theories offered in the past to account for the loss of Mark 16:9-20, before explaining what I believe to be the best explanation of the state of the available evidence.

The reader is encouraged to keep in mind, while reading this book, the basis on which a text is considered canonical. The question of the canonicity of a disputed passage in a New Testament book should not be decided on the basis of whether or not the main author of the book wrote the disputed passage. Co-authorship does not preclude canonicity. Roman Catholics may contend that the pronouncements of the Council of Trent make Mk. 16:9-20 “canonically authentic” regardless of its authorship and date. Others may propose that history vindicates the passage as a text which God intends for His people to use as Scripture.⁴ Nevertheless the position I have assumed is that the legitimacy of Mark 16:9-20 as Scripture ultimately depends on whether it was or was not present in the Gospel of Mark when it was originally disseminated.

Kurt & Barbara Aland stated, “**The competence of New Testament textual criticism is restricted** to the state of the New Testament from the moment it began its literary history through

4 ~ The diversity of scholars’ views about the canonicity of Mark 16:9-20 is shown by the following quotations.

Alfred Wikenhauser: “Even if the longer ending of Mark is not by Mark himself, yet it is an integral part of Holy Scripture” (p. 173, New Testament Introduction, © 1963 Herder and Herder, New York. Nihil Obstat and Imprimatur ≅ 1958 Daniel Mageean, Bishop of Down and Conner). Wikenhauser, on p. 19 of the same book, described the decrees of the Council of Trent as “infallible and irreformable decisions of the magisterium.” To read a pertinent citation from the Council of Trent, see www.ntcanon.org/closing-west.shtml. The variety of views taken toward the canonicity of Mark 16:9-20 may be seen in the following quotes:

Bruce Metzger: “Many translators, including myself, consider verses 9 through 20 to be a legitimate part of the New Testament” in 1994 in Christian History magazine; see www.purewords.org/kjb1611/html/hmar16_9.htm.

C.E. Graham Swift: “Although the question of literary authenticity must remain uncertain, all scholars agree that these verses are canonically authentic. They are part of the Canon of Holy Scripture.” (p. 886, The New Bible Commentary, Revised © 1970 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, D. Guthrie & J.A. Motyer, editors.)

The Oxford Annotated Bible With the Apocrypha: “The contents of vv. 9-20 . . . appear to have been gleaned from traditions known to us from the other gospels and Acts. From early Christian times these verses have traditionally been accepted as part of the canonical Gospel of Mark and therefore as inspired Scripture.” (p. 1238, © 1965 by Oxford University Press, New York.)

The Jerusalem Bible: “The ‘long ending’ of Mark, vv. 9-20, is included in the canonically accepted body of inspired Scripture.” (p. 89 (New Testament), © 1966 by Darton, Longman & Todd, Ltd. and Doubleday & Company, Inc., New York, Alexander Jones, Editor.)

Douglas R. A. Hare: “It must be emphasized that these lines about handling poisonous snakes and drinking poisonous liquids are not scriptural. They do not belong to the authentic Gospel of Mark, and therefore are not part of the biblical canon.” (p. 227, Westminster Bible Companion: Mark, ©1996 Douglas R. A. Hare, published by Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, KY)

C. R. Gregory: “These closing verses of Mark positively do not belong to this Gospel, positively have no right to be in the New Testament.” (p. 513, Canon and Text of the New Testament, © 1907 by Charles Scribner’s Sons, NY).

transcription for distribution. All events prior to this are beyond its scope.”⁵ If, on such a premise, Mk. 16:9-20 is shown to have been part of the text when the Gospel of Mark was first disseminated, the ongoing debate about its right to be considered original and canonical should be considered settled, even if the question of the authorship of the passage remains unresolved. The gist of the theory of the origin of Mk. 16:9-20 which I advocate is similar to the theory proposed by G.F. Maclear in 1877. He suggested that the Long Ending was added by someone other than Mark before the Gospel of Mark was published.⁶

Robert H. Gundry: ““Canonically speaking, however, we first have to interpret Mark as ending with 16:8. Despite the addition of a long ending (vv 9-20) in the Textus Receptus, we should not think of that ending as canonical any more than we think of the myriad other unauthentic readings in the Textus Receptus as canonical.” (p. 1009, Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross, © 1993 by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.)

5 ~ p. 292, The Text of the New Testament, © 1987 William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI.

[Bold print in original.]

6 ~ G. F. Maclear wrote: “The two most probable solutions are either (i) That the Evangelist, being prevented at the time from closing his narrative as fully as he had intended, *himself* added, “in another land, and under more peaceful circumstances,” [here he is quoting another scholar, Ellicott] the conclusion which we now possess; Or (ii) That it was added by *some other hand*, shortly if not immediately afterwards, but at any rate before the publication of the Gospel itself.” – p. 16, The Gospel According to St. Mark, © 1902 The University Press, Cambridge; printed by C.J. Clay & Sons. First edition 1877; reprinted many times.

PART ONE: EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

Chapter 1: External Evidence from the 2nd and 3rd Centuries

No manuscripts of the sixteenth chapter of Mark dating from the 100's or 200's are known to exist. The oldest copy of Mark, Papyrus 45 (P⁴⁵), from about A.D. 225, is fragmentary, and is missing several pages, including all of chapter 16. P⁴⁵ is not entirely silent; its extant text is related to the text of Codex W; nevertheless it cannot be claimed with confidence as support for 16:9-20.¹ In the patristic evidence from this period, however, we find considerable support for the inclusion of Mark 16:9-20 as part of the Gospel of Mark.

(1) **Papias** wrote in about 108, in Asia Minor. He may be regarded as a possible witness for the existence of 16:9-20 at the beginning of the second century. Papias did not explicitly quote from 16:9-20. However, he mentioned a story about Justus Barsabbas (cf. Acts 1:23), in which Justus drank a poisonous drink and suffered no ill effects. Eusebius of Caesarea preserved Papias' statement:

*"... We must now point out how Papias, who lived at the same time [i.e., the same time that Philip's four daughters were said to be living in Hierapolis], relates that he had received a wonderful narrative from the daughters of Philip. For he relates that a dead man was raised to life in his day. He also mentions another miracle relating to Justus, surnamed Barsabbas, **how he swallowed a deadly poison, and received no harm, on account of the grace of the Lord.**" [emphasis added]*

Philip of Side, in about 435, echoed Eusebius, but he included details which Eusebius did not mention: "The aforesaid Papias recorded, on the authority of the daughters of Philip, that Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, **drank the poison of a snake in the name of Christ** when put to the test by the unbelievers **and was protected from all harm.** He also records other amazing things, in particular one about Manaim's mother, who was raised from the dead."² [emphasis added]

1 ~ Dr. Helmut Koester's statement that "These verses are never attested in any early papyri" (p. 286, Ancient Christian Gospels, © Helmut Koester 1990, pub. SCM Press Ltd. and Trinity Press International) and similar statements are not particularly helpful to novice readers, since the same thing can be said about any portion of Mark that is not preserved in the heavily mutilated P⁴⁵ and the fragmentary P⁸⁴ and P⁸⁸.

In Text-Critical Methodology and the Pre-Caesarean Text: Codex W in the Gospel of Mark, Dr. L. W. Hurtado established (p. 43) that "In Mark 5:31-16:8, W is usually described as a Caesarean witness, but the average quantitative relationship of W and Θ in Mark 6-16 is 39.7 percent." On p. 87, Hurtado stated, "The W-P⁴⁵ relationship (68.9%) borders on the 70 percent suggested criterion of a text-type relationship." He concluded, "Of all the MSS studied, P⁴⁵ is the closest ally of W in the sample where P⁴⁵ is extant." (p. 65, © 1981 by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids. Studies and Documents Volume 43.)

2 ~ See the Fragments of Papias beginning at www.ccel.org/fathers/ANF-01/papi/fragmentsofpapias.html which accesses Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History III:39, and the quotations from Philip of Side (fifth century) in Lightfoot & Harmer's Apostolic Fathers, p. 318, ed. Michael Holmes, © 1989 Baker Book House Co., Grand Rapids.

Dr. James Kelhoffer (in Miracle and Mission, p. 433) noted that "on the issue of Justus' drink, the later author, namely Philippus Sidetes, preserves the more original version of what Papias wrote." This is because snake-venom can be digested without harm, as long as it does not enter the bloodstream, and as Kelhoffer observes (with examples), this was not unknown in ancient times. Eusebius, perhaps aware that the ingestion of snake venom was not a particularly impressive feat, may have decided to describe the substance ambiguously.

The date of 108 for Papias' writings is based on the evidence supplied by R.H. Gundry on pp. 1026-1033 in Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross from which Gundry deduced, "A large number of considerations unite to disfavor a date of 130 or later in accordance with Philip of Side and to favor a date of 101-108."

Philip of Side states that the daughters of Philip were the source of the story about Justus (instead of the source of the story of a dead man being resurrected in Papias' day, as Eusebius says). He also includes the phrase "in the name of Christ," and states that the poison that Justus drank was snake-poison. This suggests that Mk. 16:17-18 influenced either the form of Papias' statement used by Philip of Side, or else it influenced Philip of Side's recollection. Papias' motive for mentioning this story may have been to provide an example of the fulfillment of Mark 16:18.

Perhaps more significantly, Eusebius of Caesarea wrote in *Ecclesiastical History* III:39 that Papias had reported that Mark "took special care not to omit anything he had heard, and not to put anything fictitious into the statements." Papias indicated elsewhere (via a brief and fanciful comment about the demise of Judas, in Fragment III) that he had read the book of Acts, and thus Papias would have been aware that Peter had preached about Jesus' post-resurrection appearances and ascension.

This evidence from Papias is vulnerable to the objection that it does not show that Mk. 16:9-20 was recognized by Papias as part of the Gospel of Mark. On the other hand, any similarly brief and non-explicit use of material from the Gospels could be vulnerable to the same objection. Only a strange logic would completely dismiss Papias' testimony on the grounds that *it is too early*.

(2) **Justin Martyr** wrote his First Apology in about 160. A presentation of the pertinent portion, and the surrounding text in ch. 45, is as follows, with some words placed in bold print for emphasis:

And that God the Father of all would bring Christ to heaven after He had raised Him from the dead, and would keep Him there until He has subdued His enemies the devils, and until the number of those who are foreknown by Him as good and virtuous is complete, on whose account He has still delayed the consummation – hear what was said by the prophet David.

These are his words [from Psalm 110:1-3]. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. The Lord shall send to Thee the rod of power out of Jerusalem; and rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies. With Thee is the government in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of Thy saints: from the womb of morning have I begotten Thee."

That which he says, "He shall send to Thee the rod of power out of Jerusalem," is predictive of the mighty word, which His apostles, going forth from Jerusalem, preached everywhere. And though death is decreed against those who teach or at all confess the name of Christ, we everywhere both embrace and teach it. And if you also read these words in a hostile spirit, you can do no more, as I said before, than kill us; which indeed does no harm to us, but to you and all who unjustly hate us, and do not repent, brings eternal punishment by fire.³

This short chapter shares some elements with Mark 16:9-20: Justin mentions the ascension of Christ [cf. 16:19], victory over devils [cf. 16:9, 16:17], the preaching of the word everywhere [cf. 16:20], the name of Christ [cf. 16:17], and a lack of true harm done to Christians [cf. 16:18]. Justin's statement, "That which he [i.e., David, in Psalm 110] says, 'He shall send to thee the rod of power out of Jerusalem,' is predictive of the mighty word, which his apostles, going forth from Jerusalem, preached everywhere" is especially significant. Here the parallels are not only thematic but verbal:

Justin: ἐξεληθοντες πανταχου εκηρυξαν ~
went forth everywhere preaching.

³ ~ See the English translation of Justin Martyr's First Apology at CCEL, which can be found at www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-01/anf01-46.htm#P3821_705110. See also Metzger's UBS Textual Commentary, p. 124.

*went forth preaching everywhere.*⁴

In 1881, Hort expressed a measure of doubt about the connection between Mark 16:20 and Justin's statement in First Apology ch. 45 because "v. 20 does not contain the point specially urged by Justin, ἀπο Ιερουσαλημ ... ἐξεληγοντες (cf. *Ap.* I. 39, 49), which is furnished by Lc. xxiv. 47ff. ; Acts i. 4, 8."⁵ Some modern-day commentators, including Bruce Metzger, have tended to echo Hort on this point. However, when Hort wrote those words, he was unaware of the arrangement of text in Tatian's *Diatessaron* (our next witness) as preserved in the Arabic *Diatessaron*, which was published in 1888 by P. Agostino Ciasca.

J. Rendel Harris, writing in 1890, and Frederic Henry Chase, writing in 1893, both noticed that *Diatessaron* 55:14 states that the disciples "returned to Jerusalem" (using Lk. 24:52) and that following this, in 55:16, the *Diatessaron* says that the disciples went forth "from thence," that is, from Jerusalem. The *Diatessaron* displays precisely the point specially urged by Justin.

The objection may be raised that just because Tatian's harmony of the Gospels had this feature, that does not mean that it was assumed by Justin. Anticipating this, Chase noted, "It will be, I think, generally admitted that the probability is that there is some kind of connexion, more or less immediate, between Tatian's *Diatessaron* and Justin's N.T. quotations."⁶

The odds that Justin was recollecting Mk. 16:20 are increased in light of the rarity of the word πανταχου (*everywhere*). Justin used πανταχου twice in ch. 45. Chase observed that in the phrase ημεις πανταχου και ασπαζομεθα και διδασκομεν – "we everywhere both salute and teach" the name of Christ – Justin repeats the word "as if it were a word occurring in an authority quoted by him."⁶

When all these points are taken into consideration, the probability that Justin was recollecting a phrase in a Gospels-harmony (possibly one he had composed from yet more ancient materials) which incorporated Mark 16:9-20 becomes extremely high.

Thus the earliest secure witness for 16:9-20 as part of the Gospels is earlier than the earliest patristic witness for almost any other part of the Gospel of Mark – and virtually contemporary, in an indirect way, with P⁵², the earliest MS containing text from the New Testament.

The fifty-fifth chapter of the *Diatessaron* can be read in Appendix A.

(3) Tatian was a follower of Justin until Justin's martyrdom. In his later years he was regarded as an Encratite, one who denied the full physicality of Christ and strenuously promoted celibacy and vegetarianism. In about A.D. 172, in Syria, Tatian merged the texts of the Gospels into one continuous narrative called the *Diatessaron*. Some MSS used to reconstruct the *Diatessaron* are not written in Greek or Syriac; they are Arabic, Armenian, Old Dutch, Italian, Latin, and Persian – and most of them are late. They arrange the text of Mk. 16:9-20 in different ways.

Working mainly with late evidence, several prominent scholars have categorically affirmed that Tatian's *Diatessaron* contained Mk. 16:9-20. However, because each branch of evidence about the *Diatessaron* treats the passage differently, an argument could be proposed that the passage was independently grafted into each branch, which would imply its original absence from the *Diatessaron*.

⁴ ~ See p. 124, Metzger's Textual Commentary.

⁵ ~ p. 39, Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek, "Notes on Select Readings."

⁶ (twice) ~ See pp. 154-155 of Chase's The Syriac Element in the Text of Codex Bezae, © 1893, MacMillan and Co., NY. J. Rendel Harris, after covering much of the same ground that Chase did, concluded, "Dr. Hort may therefore remove the query from the name of Justin in the tabulated evidence for the twelve verses," on pp. 57-58 of The Diatessaron of Tatian - A Preliminary Study, © 1890 Cambridge University Press, London.

There is evidence, however, against such an argument. The Arabic *Diatessaron*, made in 1043, was based on a MS (which was written in 873) of the Syriac text of the *Diatessaron*. The Arabic

Diatessaron's arrangement may be regarded, with some qualifications, as a fairly close representation of the original arrangement of the Diatessaron.⁷ The Arabic Diatessaron (ch. 55) pictures the encounter between Jesus and the disciples when the disciples were sitting down (cf. Mk. 16:14) as part of the same mountainside scene described in Mt. 28:16-20. The scene then changes suddenly (in 55:12) from Galilee to Bethany. This difficult treatment could motivate copyists and editors to make independent adjustments, and this would explain why other texts derived from Tatian's Diatessaron do not incorporate Mk. 16:9-20 in the same way. It seems likely that the Arabic Diatessaron reflects the Syriac text of the Diatessaron faithfully at this point, and that the Diatessaron's question-raising structure elicited independent adjustments in various branches of the late evidence.

The Arabic Diatessaron is allied with much earlier evidence from a commentary on the Diatessaron written by Ephrem Syrus, who died in 373. In his commentary, Ephrem included a quotation of Mk. 16:15 combined with Mt. 28:19. The Syriac MS – Chester Beatty Syriac MS 709 – of Ephrem's commentary was produced in about A.D. 500. The only conclusion which can be justified by this is that the Diatessaron included the LE.⁸

Further evidence that Tatian's Diatessaron included Mk. 16:9-20 is a reading found in the West Saxon text of the Gospel of Mark, in the "Wessex Gospel," which displays a text that is regarded as having been influenced by the Diatessaron. In 1995 Tjitze Baarda, a specialist in Diatessaron-studies, observed that the Wessex Gospel, in Mk. 16:11, reads the equivalent of "they did not believe *them*." Baarda pointed out that this reading, which is found (in the West) in Codex Fuldensis and the Old High German and (in the East) in the Arabic Harmony (in 53:61), does not fit the context, since only Mary Magdalene is in view. Baarda proposes that inasmuch as all these texts have been influenced by the Diatessaron, the co-incidence of this variant suggests that it was present in the Syriac Diatessaron (which influenced texts in the East) and the Latin Diatessaron (which influenced texts in the West). This, in turn, implies that it was originally in Tatian's Diatessaron, and thus that Tatian's Diatessaron included Mark 16:9-20.⁹

In addition, we should consider the fact that the Arabic Diatessaron does not include the Pericope of the Adulteress or the genealogies of Jesus. (The Borgian Arabic MS of the Diatessaron includes the genealogies, but placed separate from the Diatessaron's text.) In light of its resistance to assimilation to the Syriac Gospels in these respects, it seems reasonable to consider it a fairly reliable witness to the original arrangement of the Diatessaron. We agree with Baarda's assessment that the Arabic harmony

7 ~ See Leslie McFall's mention of the view of Baarda and Howard in "Tatian's Diatessaron: Mischievous or Misleading?" in *Westminster Theological Journal* vol. 56 (1994), pp. 87-114, at www.btinternet.com/~lmf12/.

8 ~ Dr. Andreas Juckel of the University of Muenster pointed out to me the commentary of Ephrem Syrus, as edited by Louis Leloir. In Chester Beatty Syriac MS 709, Ephrem's commentary clearly displays the use of Mark 16:15. An Armenian text of Ephrem's commentary (preserved in two MSS, both from A.D. 1195) appears to have abridged this portion of the composition. Details about Ephrem's use of Mark 16:15 may be found in Leloir's Saint Ephrem, Commentaire de l'Evangile Concordant, Texte Syriaque (Manuscript Chester Beatty 709), *Chester Beatty Monographs* #8, Dublin, 1963, which in 1990 Leloir supplemented with Saint Ephrem, Commentaire de l'Evangile concordant, texte syriaque (Mauscrit Chester Beatty 709). Folios Additionnels.

9 ~ see pp. 458-465, Tjitze Baarda, New Testament Studies, Vol. 41, #3, July 1995. Baarda noted that this variant in the Wessex Gospel is also present in Mark 16:11 in Codex Θ, two Greek minuscules (209 and 346), and the Peshitta. 209 is a member of f^1 and 346 is a member of f^{13} . A line of descent from these MSS to the Wessex Gospel seems extremely unlikely.

"appears to be of high value for the reconstruction of the original Syriac Diatessaron," and "The neglect and disregard which was so often the share of the Arabic harmony is unwarranted."¹⁰

(4) **Epistula Apostolorum**, a composition made prior to 150 and translated into Coptic prior to 180 (dates deduced from a prophecy within the text), was unknown to Westcott and Hort.¹¹ According to Martin Hengel, M. Horschuh stated in *Studien zur Epistula Apostolorum*, PTS 5, 1965, that this text's resurrection-narrative "is closest to the so-called inauthentic conclusion to Mark in respect of its structures," and "The basic pattern of the account is thus derived from the inauthentic conclusion of Mark."¹²

The basis for Horschuh's statement is subtle but substantial. There is more to consider in this narrative than the reference to "mourning and weeping" which occurs in *Epist. Ap.* 1:10 (and in Mk. 16:10). In a narrative portion of the text, one of the women (the name varies among the witnesses) goes from the tomb to the disciples and reports that "the Master is risen from the dead," and the disciples do not believe her. In the canonical Gospels, the closest scenario to that is in Mk. 16:10-11, where Mary reports to the disciples that Jesus is alive and has been seen by her, and they do not believe her. This is not so much a quotation as it is the establishment of the framework of a narrative, but it indicates that the author knew Mk. 16:10-11.

Epistula Apostolorum pictures the disciples saying, "We believed her not that the Saviour was risen from the dead. Then she returned unto the Lord and said unto him: None of them hath believed me, that thou livest." The phrase "that thou livest" resembles the phrase "that Jesus was alive" in Mk. 16:11 and the phrase "None of them hath believed me" may be based on the phrase "they did not believe it" in Mk. 16:11. *Epistula Apostolorum*'s narrative does not seem to be based on Luke 24, where it would appear that the women reported to the apostles without personally encountering Jesus first. So, while *Epistula Apostolorum* does not contain an explicit quotation from Mk. 16:9-20, its structure and verbiage indicate that its author knew the text that we know as Mk. 16:9-11.

(5) **Irenaeus**, bishop of Lyons, in about A.D. 184, quoted Mark 16:19 and attributed it to Mark. In *Against Heresies*, Book Three, 10:5-6 he says, "In fine euangelii ait Marcus: Et quidem Dominus Iesus, postquam locutus est eis, receptus in caelos, et sedet ad dexteram Dei" – "Also, towards the conclusion of his Gospel, Mark says: 'So then, after the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God.'"¹³ Although the Greek text of this portion of *Against Heresies* is not extant, it is mentioned in a Greek marginal note which appears next to Mk. 16:19 in MS 1582:

10 ~ p. 25, T. Baarda, "To the Roots of the Syriac Diatessaron Tradition (TA 25:1-3)" *Novum Testamentum*, Vol. XXVIII, Jan. 1986, © 1986 by E.J. Brill, Leiden, The Netherlands. It should be noted that even among scholars who specialize in the study of the Diatessaron, there is disagreement about basic points such as the identification of the Diatessaron's original language. Some useful materials for the study of the Diatessaron (and Syriac texts) are named in the footnotes in A.F.J. Klijn's essay on pp. 5-31 of A Survey of the Researches into the Western Text of the Gospels and Acts, Part Two, © 1969 E.J. Brill, Leiden, Vol. XXI of *Supplements to Novum Testamentum*. The book Tatian's Diatessaron by William L. Petersen, © 1994 by E.J. Brill, is also recommended. See also the article by Peter Head at www.tyndale.cam.ac.uk/Tyndale/staff/Head/Tatian.htm and the essay "Tatian's Diatessaron: Mischievous or Misleading?" by Leslie McFall, at www.btinternet.com/~lmf12 in which the author lists 12 points in the Arabic Diatessaron which have not been assimilated to the Syriac Gospels.)

11 ~ See the introduction to *Epistula Apostolorum* is at www.earlychristianwritings.com/apostolorum.html. *Epistula Apostolorum* can be read in English at www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/apostolorum.html.

12 ~ p. 168, "Studies in the Gospel of Mark," English translation © John Bowden 1985. Originally published in part as articles appearing in WUNT 28 (1983) and 33 (1984)).

13 ~ See the text at www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-01/anf01-60.htm#P7435_1989248.

Ειρηναίος ο τῶν ἀποστόλων πλησίον ἐν τῷ πρὸς τὰς αἰρέσεις Τριτῷ λόγῳ τοῦτο ἀνηνεγκεν τὸ ρητὸν Μαρκοῦ εἰρημένον ¹⁴ – which means, *Irenaeus, who lived near the time of the apostles, cites this from Mark in the third book of his work Against Heresies.*

Irenaeus' testimony is particularly weighty, since – besides being a bishop, and besides writing in the second century, and besides having been in Asia Minor, Rome, and Gaul – we may surmise that he was unaware of any dispute pertaining to the ending of Mark, inasmuch as he did not appeal explicitly to “the ancient and approved copies” as he did when explaining the superiority of the reading (in Revelation 13:18) “666” over “616” in *Against Heresies* Book 5, 30:1.

Further evidence of Irenaeus' use of 16:9-20 might be found in Book Two, 32:4 of *Against Heresies*, which was quoted by Eusebius in *Ecclesiastical History* 5:7. There the phrases “in His name,” “drive out demons,” “the laying on of hands, and restore them to health,” and “speak through the Spirit, with all kinds of tongues” occur close together.¹⁵

(6) Acts of John is another composition assigned to the second century. In this legend-rich text, the apostle John is depicted stating to a pagan opponent (in part XX), “If thou give me poison to drink, when I call on the name of my Lord, it will not be able to harm me,” and he is also depicted (in part XVI), after a re-telling of Luke 16:19-31, saying, “And these words our Lord and Master confirmed by examples of mighty works.”¹⁶ These sentences are plainly based on Mk. 16:17 and 16:20.

(7) Tertullian, who wrote from about A.D. 195 to 212, was cited in favor of the inclusion of 16:9-20 in the second edition of the GNT (p. 196). In the fourth edition (p. 189) he is not cited for inclusion or non-inclusion. This is an improvement, because Tertullian's testimony is not secure one way or another.

Hort stated that there was “strong negative evidence” indicating that Tertullian's copies of Mark did not contain 16:9-20.¹⁷ However, a trace of Mk. 16:19 is conceivably present in *Against Praxeas*, ch. 2, where Tertullian states, “We believe [Jesus] to have suffered, died, and been buried, according to the Scriptures, and, after He had been raised again by the Father **and taken back to heaven, to be sitting at the right hand of the Father.**”¹⁸ And in *De Baptismo* 10:7, despite Hort's correct assertion that Tertullian did not explicitly use Mark 16:16 in that composition, Tertullian states “a true and steadfast faith is baptized with water unto salvation, but a feigned and feeble faith is baptized with fire unto judgement.” The structure of this sentence, which is itself a comment on Mt. 3:11b, may be modeled upon Mk. 16:16, “He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who disbelieves shall be condemned.”¹⁹

14 ~ See pp. 169-170 of K.W. Kim's article in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 69, June 1950 © Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, Georgia.

15 ~ See the text at www.newadvent.org/fathers/250101.htm and (presented in context) at www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-01/anf01-59.htm#P6719_1628705.

16 ~ Acts of John may be read at wesley.nnu.edu/noncanon/acts/actjohn.htm. My thanks to Bob Morse for alerting me to this text.

17 ~ Introduction, Notes, p. 37. Hort argued that Tertullian's non-use of Mk. 16:16 in his case for the importance of baptism indicates that the verse was not in Tertullian's Gospels-text. That is a good point; however, we should not speedily assume that Tertullian (or any patristic writer) would always raise his points from the most succinct and perspicuous texts available to him. Tertullian and other patristic writers occasionally take the scenic routes, so to speak, to their conclusions.

18 ~ See the English translation of Against Praxeas at www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-03/anf03-43.htm#P10395_2912630. Tertullian's statement may echo an early creedal statement

Another reference to Christ “seated at the right hand of God” occurs in chapter 30, but it may be considered a reference to Col. 3:1. Similarly Tertullian's words in An Answer to the Jews, ch. 5, may or may not allude to Mark 16:20 (see www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-03/anf03-19.htm#P2021_691723 (at note 76).

19 ~ See the text of De Baptismo at www.tertullian.org/articles/evans_bapt/evans_bapt_text_trans.htm.

(8) Clement of Alexandria is often cited as if he provided clear evidence that he used a form of Mark which ended with 16:8. Many commentators have perpetuated Metzger's statement, “Clement of Alexandria and Origen show no knowledge of the existence of these verses.”²⁰ Some commentators have unjustifiably overamplified and warped Metzger's statement. For example, A.F.J. Klijn wrote,

“According to Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius and Jerome, the gospel ends with 16, 8,” and Sharyn E. Dowd wrote, “The ending at 16:8 is attested by Clement, Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome.”²¹

While Clement does not explicitly quote from Mark 16:9-20, neither does he explicitly state that the Gospel of Mark ends at the end of 16:8. When gauging the weight of Clement’s non-use of 16:9-20, we should consider the observation made by Burgon that it should not be thought very surprising “that Clement of Alexandria, who appears to have no reference to the last chapter of *S. Matthew’s* Gospel, should be also without any reference to the last chapter of *S. Mark’s*.”²²

Hort’s comment regarding Clement and Origen was, “In the extant writings of Clem.al and Origen they [Mk. 16:9-20] are wholly wanting. Unfortunately no commentary of Origen on any Gospel narrative of the Resurrection and the subsequent events has been preserved ; and the evidence from the silence of both these writers is of the casual rather than the special kind.”²³ An argument from silence is all that Clement of Alexandria provides, and considering that Clement fails to quote from many 12-verse sections of the Gospel of Mark, this silence is of very little weight.

But is Clement entirely silent? In *Stromata* VI:6, Clement quoted from a text called *Preaching of Peter* which he apparently regarded as genuine: “In the *Preaching of Peter*, the Lord says, “I chose out you twelve, judging you to be disciples worthy of me, whom the Lord willed, and thinking you faithful apostles; sending you unto the world to **preach the Gospel to men throughout the world**, that they should know that there is one God; to declare by faith in me [the Christ] what shall be, that **they that have heard and believed may be saved**, and that they which have not believed may hear and bear witness, not having any defense so as to say “We did not hear.””²⁴ *Preaching of Peter*, though not the voice of Clement, is a text Clement used and respected. It seems to use language derived from or based upon Mk. 16:15-16.

In addition, Cassiodorus (d. 560) preserved, with some editorial changes, a comment on First Peter 5:13b (“Mark, my son, salutes you”) made by Clement of Alexandria in the first part of the text called *Adumbrationes* (“Comments”):

“Mark, the follower of Peter, while Peter publicly preached the Gospel at Rome before some of Caesar’s equites, and adduced many testimonies to Christ, in order that thereby they might be able to commit to memory what was spoken, of what was spoken by Peter wrote entirely what is called the Gospel according to Mark. As Luke also may be recognised by the style, both to have composed the Acts of the Apostles, and to have translated Paul’s Epistle to the Hebrews.”²⁵

Clement appeals to the style of the author to affirm, not to question, the Marcan authorship of the entire text of Mark, even though there is no other Marcan text with which the book can be compared. This suggests that Clement’s comment was intended to address a question about the authorship about a particular part of the book. Since the only such question known is the issue about 16:9-20, this seems to indicate that Clement regarded Mk. 16:9-20 as part of the Gospel of Mark.

20 ~ p. 123, *Textual Commentary* by Bruce M. Metzger, © 1971 by the United Bible Societies, Stuttgart.

21 ~ The first quotation is from p. 27 of *An Introduction to the New Testament* by A.F.J. Klijn, © 1967 by E.J. Brill, Leiden. Translated by Mrs. M. van der Vathorst-Smit. The second quotation is from p. 169 of *Reading Mark: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Second Gospel*, by Sharyn E. Dowd, © 2000 by Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Macon, GA.

22 ~ p. 38-39, Burgon, *The Last 12 Verses of Mark*.

23 ~ p. 37, *Introduction, Notes*.

24 ~ See the text with comments at www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/preachingpeter.html

25 ~ William Wilson’s English translation of the *Adumbrationes of Clement of Alexandria*, as preserved by Cassiodorus, can be read at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf02.vi.iv.ix.html> .

(9) **Hippolytus** (d. 235), who was known as a student of Irenaeus, indicates that he was familiar with Mk. 16:9-20. Hort dismissed the testimony of Hippolytus, apparently because he believed that writings attributed to Hippolytus actually came from some other source. In *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist*, part 46, a close parallel to Mk. 16:19 appears in a statement that Christ “was received into the heavens, and was set down on the right hand of God the Father,” but such language is not unique to Mk. 16:19. A

more impressive reference occurs in Apostolic Tradition 32:1: “Let every one of the believers be sure to partake of communion before he eats anything else. For if he partakes with faith, even if something deadly were given to him, after this it cannot hurt him.”²⁶ Such a comment is an interpretation of I Cor. 11:30-31 viewed through the lens of Mk. 16:18b.

26 ~ Burgon offered two citations from Hippolytus: a use of 16:17-18 in Peri Charismaton and a use of 16:19 in Homily on Noetus. Hort called the connection between Hippolytus and Peri Charismaton a “precarious hypothesis” (p. 39, Introduction, Notes). In Homily on Noetus, Hippolytus wrote, “This is the One who breathes upon the disciples, and gives them the Spirit, and comes in among them when the doors are shut, and is taken up by a cloud into the heavens while the disciples gaze at Him, and is set down on the right hand of the Father, and comes again as the Judge of the living and the dead” (the English text is presented at www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/hippolytus-dogmatical.html), but he may have used Col. 3:1 or Heb. 10:12 rather than Mk. 16:19. Burgon claimed (p. 25, The Last 12 Verses of Mark), “In the creeds, Christ is invariably spoken of as *ανεληθοντα* : in the Scriptures, invariably as *αναληθεντα*. So that when Hippolytus says of Him, *αναλαμβανεται εις ουρανους και εκ δεξιων Πατρος καθιζεται*, the reference must needs be to S. Mark xvi. 19.”

In 1551, a marble statue was discovered in a Roman cemetery which featured an inscription which reads, on lines 9-11, “[P]ERI XARISMATWN / [AP]OSTOLIKH / PARADOSIS.” This statue from the 200’s (a date discernible by the analysis of a calendar inscribed on its sides) is usually considered a tribute to Hippolytus, though analysis of the statue seems to indicate that it was originally a female figure.

Apostolic Tradition 32.1 (reckoned in some editions as ch. 36) is extant in all four transmission-lines of the text -- Latin, Ethiopic, Sahidic, and Arabic. In addition, the passage that pertains to Mark 16:18 is one of the few sections of Apostolic Tradition which has been preserved in Greek. In the 1992 edition of Gregory Dix’s book on this text, revised by Henry Chadwick, on the third page of the Preface, the reader is informed of the following:

“Two new Greek fragments have to be reported here. The first is preserved in a dogmatic florilegium of patristic quotations contained in two manuscripts, cod. Ochrid.86 (saec. XIII) f. 192 and Paris.gr.900 (saec. XV) f.112. The discoverer, Professor Marcel Richard, printed the excerpt from the *Apostolic Tradition* in *Symbolae Osloenses* 38 (1963), page 79 . . . This new fragment preserves the original Greek of chapter xxxii.1 (= Botte 36):

ΕΚ ΤΩΝ ΔΙΑΤΑΞΕΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝ
ΠΙΑΣ ΔΕ ΠΙΣΤΟΣ ΠΕΙΡΑΣΘΩ, ΠΡΟ ΤΟΥ ΤΙΝΟΣ ΓΕΥΣ
ΑΣΘΑΙ ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΙΑΣ ΜΕΤΑΛΛΑΜΒΑΝΕΙΝ. ΕΙ ΓΑΡ
ΠΙΣΤΕΙ ΜΕΤΑΛΛΑΒΟΙ [v.l.: ΜΕΤΑΛΛΑΒΗ] ΟΥΔ’ ΑΝ
ΘΑΝΑΣΙΜΟΝ ΤΙΣ ΔΩΗ ΑΥΤΩ ΜΕΤΑ ΤΟΥΤΟ ΟΥ
ΚΑΤΙΣΧΥΣΕΙ ΑΥΤΟΥ (Cf.. Mark xvi.18).”

Also, the authors of the Hermeneia series’ commentary on Apostolic Tradition draw readers’ attention to a statement by Jerome, in his Epistle 71:6. Jerome wrote, “What you ask about Saturday, whether one ought to fast on that day, and about the Eucharist, whether one ought to receive it daily, observances which the Roman church and Spain recommend, has been treated of by Hippolytus, a man of great learning.” Bradshaw/Johnson/Phillips note that Hippolytus wrote about fasting on Saturday in his “Commentary on Daniel” 4:20. But where is the reference to daily celebration of the eucharist? “While chap. 36 does not specifically mention daily reception, it seems to be the only place in works attributed to Hippolytus that hints at it.” - pp. 180-181, The Apostolic Tradition: A Commentary, Copyright © 2002 Augsburg Fortress, by Paul Bradshaw, Maxwell E. Johnson, and L. Edward Phillips.

Thus we have (a) a third-century inscription in honor of Hippolytus naming *Apostolic Tradition*, and (b) the passage in all extant transmission-lines of *Apostolic Tradition*, including a Latin version from the very late 400’s, and (c) the Greek text of the passage, and (d) an apparent allusion to the passage by Jerome as a statement by Hippolytus. The identification of *Apostolic Tradition* as essentially a work of Hippolytus, and the nature of 32:1 as an original part of *Apostolic Tradition*, are both favored by all the evidence; against which the alternative is merely conceivable.

13

(10) Doctrine of Addai, to which a date prior to A.D. 217 may be assigned, relates how a disciple named Addai (Thaddaeus, or one of the 72) travels to the city of Edessa to visit and heal king Abgar.²⁷ In the course of the story, Abgar mentions his belief in Christ, and Addai states, “I place my hand upon thee in His name.” Abgar is thus healed. The story also states that Addai “did wonders and marvelous works, and preached the word of God.” Such statements are only vaguely reminiscent of phrases which occur in

Mk. 16:9-20, but when Addai states, “We were commanded to preach His gospel to the whole creation,” we see a clear utilization of Mk. 16:15.

The author of *Doctrine of Addai* probably derived such language from the Diatessaron, which is mentioned in the text in the following sentence as if the author assumed that it had existed in the days of Addai: “Moreover, much people day by day assembled and came together for prayer and for the reading of the Old Testament, and the New, the Diatessaron.”

(11) Ammonius lived in Egypt in the late second century. Eusebius of Caesarea stated in his *Epistle to Carpian*, “Ammonius the Alexandrine, with the expense of much industry and zeal – as was proper – left us the Diatessaron Gospel, in which he had placed the similar pericopes of the rest of the Evangelists alongside Matthew ...”²⁸ Largely due to this reference, the section-numbers used in Eusebius’ Canon-tables have acquired the name “Ammonian Sections.” As a result, Ammonius was cited in the second edition of the UBS Greek New Testament and elsewhere as a witness against the inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20.

However, Eusebius’ description of Ammonius’ work indicates that Ammonius had arranged the text of Matthew with parallel-passages from the other Gospels placed alongside the Matthean text. The most that can be said about Ammonius’ treatment of Mark 16:9-20 is that after Eusebius adopted Ammonius’ divisions of the Gospel of Matthew and the sections of the other Gospels which contained parallels to the Matthean text, and after Eusebius had devised his own more elaborate arrangement, the section-divisions did not include Mk. 16:9-20. Inasmuch as the Ammonian Sections in their extant form(s) include passages in Mark, Luke, and John not paralleled in Matthew, it is clear that they are the handiwork of Eusebius.²⁹

Relevant evidence is also found in a comment by Dionysius bar-Salibi (d. 1171). He stated, “Eusebius of Caesarea took care to draw up the canons of the gospels, and this is known from his Epistle to Carpianus, and he showed in them the agreement of the Evangelists. Ammonius – also Tatian – has written the Gospel of [the] Yitessaron [sic] – that is, of [the] four – as we remarked above. And when they came to the narrative of the resurrection and saw that [the accounts] varied, they gave up their work.”³⁰

27 ~ For an introduction to *Doctrine of Addai* see www.tertullian.org/fathers/addai_1_intro.htm and for the English text see www.tertullian.org/fathers/addai_2_text.htm. J.R. Harris deduced a composition-date prior to 217 on the following basis: “In the original document there stood these words of Addai: “Because ye have so believed in me, the town in which ye dwell shall be blessed and the enemy shall not prevail against it for ever.” Now it seems almost certain that such predictions could hardly have been referred to the Lord in the time immediately following the year A.D. 217, when Edessa was devastated by the Romans; and perhaps this date may be an interior limit to the time of production of the *Doctrine of Addai*.” (p. 10, The Diatessaron of Tatian - A Preliminary Study, 1890, C.J. Clay & Sons, London) This applies only to the main narrative; the part about Protonice or Petronice is suspected of being an interpolation.

28 ~ p. 144, “*The Epistle of Eusebius to Carpianus*,” introduced and translated by Harold H. Oliver in pp. 138-145, Novum Testamentum, Vol. 3, #1-2, 1959, (c) E.J. Brill, the Netherlands.

29 ~ John Burgon provided a demonstration that the “Ammonian Sections” were made by Eusebius in Appendix G of The Last 12 Verses of Mark, pp. 295-312.

30 ~ p. 59-60, Tatian’s Diatessaron, by William L. Petersen, © 1994 by E.J. Brill, The Netherlands. Petersen also described a note in the margin of MS Vatican Syriac 154, a MS which contains the *Commentary on the Gospel of*

It would seem that Dionysius bar-Salibi (or a source which he used) confused the four-column Gospels-harmony made by Ammonius and the Diatessaron made by Tatian. Inasmuch as Tatian’s Diatessaron contained the harmonized resurrection-accounts, we may deduce (if Dionysius bar-Salibi’s statement is to be salvaged at all) that he was describing Ammonius’ work, in which case it is inferred that Ammonius’ Gospels-harmony stopped harmonizing at the beginning of the resurrection-accounts. Thus Ammonius cannot be considered a witness for the inclusion or non-inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20; nor

can his voice be heard regarding the parts of Luke and John which describe Jesus' post-resurrection appearances. Bar-Salibi's statement may imply that Mk. 15:47 or 16:8 was the last part of Mark which Ammonius incorporated into his cross-reference scheme, but this theory does not mean that Ammonius knew a form of Mark which ended at 16:8, any more than it means that Ammonius' copy of Luke ended at 23:56 or 24:11, or that his copy of John ended at 19:42 or 20:10.³¹

(12) Origen (d. 254), the most productive patristic writer of his generation, worked in Alexandria until 231, and after that mainly in Caesarea. In his extant writings he does not quote from Mk. 16:9-20. This has been interpreted as evidence that he used a form of the Gospel of Mark which ended at 16:8. However, this is an argument from silence, and the same considerations which applied to Clement of Alexandria's silence apply to Origen's as well.

In *De Oratione* 18:3, Origen wrote something which indicates that he did not use the Gospel of Mark very much, and his silence ought to be considered with this low level of usage in the equation. There, in a discussion of the Lord's Prayer, Origen wrote, "We have also searched Mark for some such similar prayer that might have escaped our notice, but we have found no trace of one."³² A person who frequently used the Gospel of Mark would not need to consult it to affirm that it did not contain a prayer like the Lord's Prayer.

Origen might not be completely and utterly silent about Mk. 16:9-20. In *Against Celsus* VII:17, he wrote, "There is nothing absurd in the fact that a man died, and that his death was not only an example of death endured for the sake of piety, but also the first blow in the conflict which is to overthrow the power of the evil spirit of the devil, who had obtained dominion over the whole world. For there are signs of the destruction of his empire; namely, those who through the coming of Christ are everywhere escaping from _____"

Matthew written by Gregory of Be'elatan, who died in 790. The MS is from the 700's or 800's and the margin-note is from the 1200's. The MS includes part of Eusebius' letter to Carpian. In the margin, alongside the part of the text where Eusebius mentions Ammonius' work, a Syriac note states, "Tatian, the heretic, is – some say – he who made this. And when he came to the story of the resurrection and saw that it was different, he gave up his work." (Petersen was citing Tjitze Baarda, *Vier = Een: Enkele bladzijden uit de geschiedenis van de harmonistiek der Evangelien* (Kampen 1969), 51-53).)

31 ~ The reasons why Ammonius was ever cited as a witness for the non-inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20 are not entirely clear. It appears that Metzger has interpreted the Ammonian Sections as if they are an independent voice because in some MSS they appear without the Canon-tables. In *Textual Commentary*, p. 123, Metzger wrote, "The original form of the Eusebian sections (drawn up by Ammonius) makes no provision for numbering sections of the text after 16.8." This description of the Sections dissolves in the light of Burgon's analysis of the Ammonian Sections in Appendix G of *The Last 12 Verses of Mark*, pp. 295-312.

In the second edition of Metzger's *Text of the New Testament*, p. 226, in a discussion about Mk. 16:9-20, Metzger wrote, "Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Eusebius show no knowledge of the existence of these verses." In the third edition of the same book, p. 226, Metzger wrote, "Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Ammonius show no knowledge of these verses." The second statement, as far as Ammonius is concerned, is correct but not helpful, inasmuch as we have no trace of any work of Ammonius other than the Ammonian Sections as issued by Eusebius.

32 ~ This is noted on p. 101 of *New Testament Textual Studies* Vol. VIII, "References in Origen to Variant Readings" by Bruce Metzger (© 1968 by E.J. Brill, Leiden, Netherlands), where Metzger thus supports his statement that Origen "was apparently less well acquainted with the Gospel of Mark than with the other Gospels." The quotation of Origen is from a rendering by Paul Koetschau.

15

the power of demons." And, at the beginning of Book VIII, Origen wrote, "The Holy Spirit gave signs of His presence at the beginning of Christ's ministry, and after His ascension He gave still more; but since that time these signs have diminished."³³

These two statements are far from a manifest quotation, but if no question had ever arisen about the authenticity of Mk. 16:9-20, they may have been considered possible allusions to Mk. 16:17 and

16:20. The first statement should be kept in mind when encountering the Freer Logion (which we shall do shortly).

(13) Vincentius of Thibarisis is known as one of the many bishops who attended the Seventh Council of Carthage in A.D. 256. He made a statement which appears in the midst of many brief statements from other bishops expressing their agreement with the verdicts drawn up at that council. Vincentius said, “We have assuredly the rule of truth which the Lord by His divine precept commanded to His apostles, saying, ‘Go ye, lay on hands in my name, expel demons.’ And in another place: ‘Go ye and teach the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’”³⁴ His second reference is to Mt. 28:19; his first reference is probably based on Mk. 16:15-18.

(14) Porphyry, an infamous critic of Christianity in the second half of the third century, wrote a long book called *Against the Christians* in about A.D. 270. This text is no longer extant but portions of it are preserved in the form of quotations, some of which are extensive. Eusebius of Caesarea is credited with an extensive response to Porphyry, but this is not extant.

A Christian writer named Macarius Magnes, in about 405 in the city of Magnes in Asia Minor, composed a text called *Apocriticus* in reply to an anti-Christian book. *Apocriticus* is itself a witness from the early fifth century, but it is very probable that the text to which Macarius Magnes responded, and from which he provides some extensive quotations, was based on Porphyry’s *Against the Christians*.

A problem with that theory is that Macarius Magnes displays a lack of awareness that he is replying to Porphyry. In III:42 he writes, as if addressing the objector, “You can verify these things from the book “Concerning the Philosophy of Oracles” and learn accurately the record of the things sacrificed, as you read the oracle of Apollo concerning sacrifices, which Porphyry, puffed up with deceit, handed down to his intimates in a mystery, charging them with a terrible oath”³⁵

Macarius Magnes’ ignorance of the identity of the creator of the objections to which he responds is understandable when an individual named Hierocles is brought into the picture. Hierocles – who was not only an admirer of Porphyry but also was proconsul of Bithynia during the persecution of Christians there in 303 – is known as the author of a text called *Philaletheis Logoi*. Researchers who have studied the remains of Hierocles’ work have generally concluded that Hierocles derived many of his objections from earlier writers, especially Porphyry.

33 ~ p. 197, [A Sourcebook for Ancient Church History](#), by Dr. Joseph Cullen Ayer, Jr. © 1913 Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York; © 1941 Joseph Cullen Ayer, Jr.)

34 ~ An English presentation of the Seventh Council of Carthage, including Vincentius’ statement, may be read at www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-05/anf05-124.htm#P9405_293_3103. Hort questioned this evidence, stating, “On the whole the balance of the somewhat ambiguous evidence is against any reference to vv. 17f. in the words of Vincentius” (p. 41, [Introduction, Notes](#)). The alternative is that Vincentius alluded to Mt. 10:6-8. Contrary to Hort, however, three pieces of evidence tilt in favor of the proposal that Vincentius was using Mark 16:

Both quotations would thus have in view the pronouncement of the Great Commission.

Mk. 16:17 matches Vincentius’ reference to deeds done “in my name;” Mt. 10:6-8 does not.

Mk. 16:18 matches Vincentius’ reference to laying on hands; Mt. 10:6-8 does not.

35 ~ *Apocriticus* can be read in English at www.tertullian.org/fathers/macarius_apocriticus.htm. The reader will also wish to carefully read the introduction to Porphyry’s *Against the Christians* at www.tertullian.org/fathers/porphyry_against_christians_01_intro.htm.

In Book III, ch. 21 of *Apocriticus*, Macarius Magnes cites the pagan text as stating that Peter put Ananias and Sapphira to death. This is very similar to a view which Jerome attributed to Porphyry in Jerome’s *Epistle 130, To Demetrius*. This unusual shared feature indicates that the text cited in *Apocriticus* was Hierocles’ restatement of material from Porphyry’s *Against the Christians*.

In *Apocriticus*, Book III, ch. 16, Apocritus provided the following quotation from the pagan text:

“Again, consider in detail that other passage, where he [Jesus] says, “Such signs shall follow them that believe: they shall lay hands upon sick folk, and they shall recover, and if they drink any deadly drug, it shall in no wise hurt them.” So the right thing would be for those selected for the priesthood, and particularly those who lay claim to the episcopate or presidency, to make use of this form of test. The deadly drug should be set before them in order that the man who received no harm from the drinking of it might be given precedence of the rest. And if they are not bold enough to accept this sort of test, they ought to confess that they do not believe in the things Jesus said.”

This loose quotation exposes barely enough text to form a target for the author’s jibe. Yet it is perfectly clear that the author was quoting from Mk. 16:17-18. The quotation is framed between quotations from Jn. 6:53 and Mt. 17:20, showing that the author was accessing a Gospels-book.

(15) Cyprian, bishop in the African city of Carthage, was martyred in 258 after years of industrious and prolific service, during which he wrote several compositions and many letters. According to Hort, Cyprian never quoted from Mk. 16:9-20, and “There can be only one reason for its absence from the third book of *Testimonies* from Scripture” – the implied reason being that it was not in the text of Mark used by Cyprian. However Hort’s claim about the implications of Cyprian’s silence does not survive close scrutiny.³⁶

The first heading from Cyprian’s *Testimonies* which Hort listed is “*Ad regnum Dei nisi baptizatus et renatus quis fuerit pervenire non posse* (25),” but since this is an interpretive paraphrase of John 3:5, it is no shock that Cyprian proceeds to use John 3:5 rather than Mk. 16:16 as its proof.

The second heading which Hort listed is “*Eum qui non crediderit jam judicatum esse* (31),” but since this is a paraphrase of John 3:18, it is no shock that Cyprian proceeds to use John 3:18 rather than Mk. 16:16, or Acts 16:31 or many other passages about the importance of faith.

The third heading which Hort listed is “*Fidem totum prode esse et tantum nos posse quantum credimus* (42),” that is, “That faith is of advantage altogether, and that we can do as much as we believe.” Cyprian provided eight proof-texts for this heading, two of which are Mk. 11:23 and Mk. 11:24; his non-use of material from Mk. 16:9-20 does not imply that he was unaware of the passage any more than it implies that he was unaware of a multitude of other passages which can be used to support such a statement.

The fourth heading which Hort listed is, “*Possee eum statim consequi [baptismum] qui vere crediderit* (43),” that is, “That he who believes can immediately obtain [baptism]” (the word “baptism” being implied). Cyprian provides a single proof-text under this heading: “In the Acts of the Apostles: Lo, here is water; what is there which hinders me from being baptized? Then said Philip, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.” This is Acts 8:37, a “Western” reading. Mk. 16:16 does not speak specifically about the question raised by the heading, and thus Cyprian’s non-use of the passage here is not indicative of its absence in the form of the Gospel of Mark known to Cyprian.

In the course of Cyprian’s *Three Books of Testimonies*, he explicitly quotes the Gospel of Mark a total of three times, compared to 35 explicit quotations from Matthew, 20 explicit quotations from Luke, and 34 explicit quotations from John. What is indicated here is simply Cyprian’s tendency to find his

36 ~ see p. 38, [Introduction](#), *Notes*. The quotations of Cyprian’s *Three Books of Testimonies* made here are from the translation made by Dr. Ernest Wallis, at www.ewtn.com/library/PATRISTIC/ANF5-20.TXT .

proof-texts in the “Western” order in the Gospels (Matthew first, then John, then Luke, and finally Mark), and his preference for Matthean and Johannine material. Those who read Cyprian’s *Three Books of Testimonies* will appreciate that for some questions he merely listed one or two passages which sufficiently provided what the heading required; Cyprian did not aspire to offer exhaustive collections of supportive Scriptures.

Cyprian's Gospels-text is sometimes claimed to be comparable in various respects to the Latin text displayed in the Old Latin Codex Bobbiensis, which was made in the early fifth century and is the only extant witness to the Short Ending of Mark unaccompanied by 16:9-20. However, in his *Testimonies*, Cyprian quoted Mk. 11:26, which is omitted in Codex Bobbiensis. If Cyprian's text of Mark did not include 16:9-20, it would be the only known text to do so while including Mk. 11:26.

(16) De Rebaptismate is sometimes called a fourth-century work; however it is listed here as a third-century witness.³⁷ Before investigating the question of the correct date of this witness, we shall examine its pertinent contents, found in its ninth chapter:

"All the disciples also judged the declaration of the women who had seen the Lord after the resurrection to be idle tales; and some of themselves, when they had seen Him, believed not, but doubted; and they who were not then present believed not at all until they had been subsequently by the Lord Himself in all ways rebuked and reproached, because His death had so offended them that they thought that He had not risen again, who they had believed ought not to have died, because contrary to their belief He had died once."³⁸

This beginning of this passage is crammed with allusions to various passages, beginning with Lk. 24:11, Mt. 28:17, and perhaps Jn. 20:24. Unless Jesus' gentle invitation to Thomas is interpreted as a rebuke and a reproach – in which case Thomas must be interpreted as more than one disciple – the only passage in the Gospels in which the apostles are rebuked by Jesus after the resurrection is Mk. 16:14.

We begin to explore the question of whether *De Rebaptismate* is a third- or fourth-century text by consulting Gennadius' sequel to Jerome's "*Lives of Illustrious Men*," identically named. In ch. 27, Gennadius writes:

*"Ursinus the monk wrote against those who say that heretics should be rebaptized, teaching that it is not legitimate nor honouring God, that those should be rebaptized who have been baptized either in the name of Christ alone or in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, though the formula has been used in a vitiated sense. He considers that after the simple confession of the Holy Trinity and of Christ, the imposition of the hands of the catholic priest is sufficient for salvation."*³⁹

G.A. Julicher, commenting on these remarks of Gennadius, wrote, "This Ursinus is doubtless the antipope" – that is, the individual named Ursinus who, in 366, was avidly promoted by his admirers, instead of Damasus, in an unsuccessful bid to become the bishop of Rome – "and the polemic mentioned by Gennadius is probably the pseudo-Cyprianic *De rebaptismate*, which modern scholarship places in the third century. Whatever the authorship of the work in question, it is known that during the time of Ursinus a certain deacon named Hilarius demanded the rebaptism of all who had been baptized by Arians, and it is probable that Gennadius was rightly informed when he stated that Ursinus polemicized against such tenets."⁴⁰

³⁷ ~ The UBS GNT, p. xxxiii, dates this witness as "III?". *De Rebaptismate* does not seem to have been cited in the Nestle-Aland apparatus. The introduction to *De Rebaptismate* mentions that Rigaltius, Fell, Cave, Tillemont, and Galland considered it a third-century work. J. Tixeront, in his *Handbook on Patrology*, c. 1920, concurred.

³⁸ ~ See the introduction to *De Rebaptismate* at see www.earlychristianwritings.com/tixeront/section1-6.html and a translation of the text at www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf05.vii.iv.ii.html.

³⁹ ~ See the English translation of Gennadius at www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf203.v.iv.xxviii.html.

⁴⁰ ~ G.A. Julicher, "Ursinus," pp. 110-111, The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Vol. 12, at www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf203.v.iv.xxviii.html.

18

Initially one could surmise that Ursinus is the author of *De Rebaptismate*, in which case this witness would shine a ray of light upon the text used by a very popular deacon in the city of Rome in the mid-300's. However, the following pieces of information lead us to a different conclusion:

• In *De Rebaptismate*, ch. 1, the author states, "*It is fitting for no faithful and sane man to dare to hold such a view [i.e., the view that ex-heretics who had been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit must be rebaptized]. This is particularly true of those who are ordained in any clerical office*

at all, and much more in the episcopal order; it is like a prodigy for bishops themselves to devise such scandals.” The implication of this is that the author was writing against the views promoted by a bishop, which describes Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, in the mid-200’s, but not Hilarius, a deacon.

- In ch. 6, the author writes, “*It is the very greatest disadvantage and damage to our most holy mother Church, now for the first time suddenly and without reason to rebel against former decisions after so long a series of so many ages.*” Inasmuch as the issue of rebaptism of heretics was famously debated in the 200’s, no straightforward writer in Rome in the 300’s would have made such a statement.

- In ch. 10, the author writes, “*What wilt thou say of those who are in many cases baptized by bishops of very bad character, who yet at length, when God so wills it, convicted of their crimes, are even deprived of their office itself, or absolutely of communion?*” and, answering this question, “*Thou wilt assuredly say, with that marvelous carefulness of thine, that these too should be baptized again.*” Two such men – Basilides of Leon and Martial of Merida, in Spain – were known to Cyprian; in 254, in his *Epistle 67*, Cyprian used Hosea 9:4 to describe such men and their ministry: “*Their sacrifices shall be as the bread of mourning; all that eat thereof shall be polluted.*” Thus if the author of *De Rebaptismate* wrote in 254-258, he could be assured indeed of what Cyprian would say in such cases.⁴¹

- In ch. 16, the author focuses on the beliefs of a group of heretics who derive their teachings from a book called the “*Preaching of Paul,*” and treats it as a real possibility that his readers might meet people from this group. This fits the mid-200’s better than the 300’s, and it seems more appropriate in a response to Cyprian’s insistence that all heretical baptisms were invalid, than in a response by Ursinus, in the mid-300’s, to the view that it was necessary to rebaptize repentant ex-Arians.

- The *Letters of Dionysius of Alexandria to Stephen and Xystus* (in which are objections to Stephen’s view that it was adequate for a bishop to lay his hands on a converted ex-heretic, rather than to rebaptize him) challenge the idea that a longstanding custom exists in which Christians and non-Christians were identically received. This opening statement by Dionysius seems to be a reaction to the opening statement in *De Rebaptismate*, that “*According to the most ancient custom and ecclesiastical tradition,*” those baptized outside the church in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord would be received, in repentance, if they submitted to the imposition of the hands of the bishop, for the reception of the Holy Spirit. Dionysius of Alexandria died in 265.⁴²

- Cyprian, in “*On the Unity of the Church,*” used Peter and the rest of the apostles as examples of the unique authority invested in the church. The author of *De Rebaptismate* selects Peter and the rest of the apostles as examples of individuals who lapsed, or who had imperfect ideas of Christ’s mission, but were not rebaptized, as if to use Cyprian’s own witnesses against him.

- Cyprian, in “*On the Unity of the Church,*” used First John 5:7-8 to make a point about the oneness of the church; the author of *De Rebaptismate* uses the same passage, cited in a different (and more exact) form, to argue that baptism, whether it be by the Spirit, the water, or blood, testifies that the believer is saved.

⁴¹ ~ Cyprian’s *Epistle 67*, 1-6 is included as a short chapter entitled “The Spanish Appeal” on pp. 248-250 of *A New Eusebius*, © J. Stevenson, 1957, pub. SPCK, 1960.

⁴² ~ See Dionysius of Alexandria’s letter to Stephen (the bishop of Rome against whose views Cyprian and Dionysius protested) at www.tertullian.org/fathers/dionysius_alexandria_letters.htm .

- Cyprian, in “*On the Unity of the Church,*” cites I Cor. 1:10; the author of *De Rebaptismate* also cites it, as if in response to Cyprian’s reference to it: “*Since it is not in our power, according to the apostle’s precept, ‘to speak the same thing, that there be not schisms among us,’ yet, as far as we can, we strive to demonstrate the true condition of this argument. . . .*”

- Cyprian, in “*On the Unity of the Church,*” quotes I Cor. 13:3, and so does the author of *De Rebaptismate*.

• Cyprian, in “On the Unity of the Church,” quotes Mt. 7:22-23 and Mk. 12:29-31, very close together. The author of *De Rebaptismate* also quotes Mt. 7:22-23, and quotes Mt. 22:37-39 (the parallel to Mk. 12:29-31).⁴³

It is as though the author of *De Rebaptismate* was determined to build his case with Scripture-blocks taken from Cyprian’s treatise.

In light of these points it seems safe to infer that *De Rebaptismate* was composed no later than 258.

From the evidence so far, the discerning reader may draw a conclusion very different from the view of C.S. Mann, who wrote, “In fact, in all the literature before the middle of the fourth century there are only two possible allusions to this anonymous ending.”⁴⁴

We conclude from this early evidence that the lists of patristic witnesses for non-inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20 provided in the textual apparatus of the UBS GNT and that of the Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece are not very thorough.⁴⁵ Far too much has been inferred from the silence of Clement of Alexandria and Origen, against the cautious qualifications made by Hort. Ammonius has been treated as if we possess his work and a statement of his opinion on the subject, which we do not possess. Meanwhile significant evidence supportive of Mk. 16:9-20 has been left unlisted, or else has been accompanied by a question-mark – which, in the case of Justin, can only be considered the result of over-reliance on parts of Hort’s argumentation which Hort would probably not have offered in 1881 if he had known and studied the text of Tatian’s Diatessaron which was published by A. Ciasca in 1888.⁴⁶

43 ~ Cyprian’s “On the Unity of the Church” may be read at www.newadvent.org/fathers/050701.htm.

44 ~ in The Anchor Bible Commentary, vol. 27 (Mark), © 1986 Doubleday & Company, Inc., New York.

45 ~ On p. 245 of The Text of the New Testament, Kurt & Barbara Aland, referring to the 26th edition of NTG, stated, “For such instances as the ending of Mark, or the passage known as the Comma Johanneum (I John 5:7-8), etc., the documentation in the apparatus is practically complete, comparable to expectations for a large critical edition.” (p. 245, The Text of the New Testament, © William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., E.J. Brill, Leiden, The Netherlands.) However in the case of the ending of Mark, the apparatus of the 27th edition of NTG fails to list many important early references. It also cites MS 2427 – a recent copy produced sometime after 1860 – in 16:14 both for and against the inclusion of δε.

46 ~ Some careful thoughts on the nature of Justin’s harmonizations and their relationship to Tatian’s Diatessaron are offered in The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin Martyr, by A. J. Bellinzoni, Suppl. to Novum Testamentum, Vol. XVII, © 1967 E.J. Brill, Leiden. See especially pages 130 and 140-142.

20

Chapter 2: External Evidence from the 4th Century

The chief witnesses from the 300’s are Eusebius of Caesarea, Codex Vaticanus, and Codex Sinaiticus. Before we focus on them, we shall turn our attention to other witnesses of comparable age.

(1) Aphrahat the Persian Sage (also known as Aphraates) wrote a series of 22 homilies in the Syriac language. This collection of homilies was completed by A.D. 336 and was supplemented by a 23rd

homily in 345.¹ In the 17th paragraph of Demonstration One: Of Faith, Aphrahat wrote, “And again when our Lord gave the sacrament of baptism to His apostles, He said thus to them: Whosoever believes and is baptized shall live, and whosoever believes not shall be condemned,” and at the end of the same paragraph, “Again He said thus: ‘This shall be the sign for those that believe; they shall speak with new tongues and shall cast out demons, and they shall lay their hands on the sick and they shall be made whole.’”² Aphrahat’s quotations are clearly derived from Mk. 16:16-18, although he skips the part about taking up serpents and drinking poison.

Aphrahat is regarded as a frequent user of Tatian’s Diatessaron, but his quotation differs in some respects from the form of the passage found in the Arabic Diatessaron. His representation of Mk. 16:16, with the phrase, “Whosoever believeth and is **baptized shall live**,” seems more like a quote from the Peshitta than from the Syriac text from which the Arabic Diatessaron was translated.³

(2) Wulfilas’ Gothic Version is assigned a date of A.D. 350. The Gothic Version fully includes Mk. 16:9-20. The second edition of the UBS GNT noted that a famous Gothic MS, Codex Argenteus (the “Silver Bible”), was missing the page which contained 16:12-20.⁴ The missing page was discovered in a church-building in Europe in 1970.⁵

(3) Acts of Pilate, sometimes called the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, may be assigned a date in the 330’s, though some portions may have been written earlier than this. In ch. 14 of *Acts of Pilate (Gesta Pilati)*, “a certain priest named Phinees, and Addas a teacher, and Aggaeus a Levite” report to the religious leaders that they saw “Jesus and his disciples sitting upon the mountain which is called Mamilch, and he said unto his disciples: Go into all the world and preach unto every creature: he that believeth and is

1 ~ This is related on p. 19, The Diatessaron of Tatian - A Preliminary Study, J.Rendel Harris, 1890, C.J. Clay & Sons.

2 ~ The English text of Aphrahat’s Syriac work is at www.ccel.org/fathers2/NPNF2-13/Npnf2-13-38.htm#TopOfPage. Aphrahat’s Demonstration One may also be read at www.synaxis.org/ecf/volume36.

3 ~ For comparison, see the interlinear Syriac-English text of the Peshitta at www.peshitta.org.

4 ~ In the textual apparatus on p. 196, the 2nd edition of the GNT reported, “(goth ms lacks vv 12-20).”

5 ~ Metzger reported on p. 274 of the third edition of Text of the New Testament, “Happily in 1970 one more leaf of the Gospel codex Argenteus, the most extensive of surviving Gothic manuscripts, was found in a wooden chest of relics in the cathedral of Speyer. Upon examination the stray leaf was discovered to contain the last nine verses of the Gospel according to Mark (xvi. 12-20).” (© 1992 Oxford Univ. Press, Inc.)

This page is listed among the Gothic MSS at extranet.ufsia.ac.be/wulfila/Corpus/Manuscripts.asp. In Kurt & Barbara Aland’s The Text of the New Testament, a photograph of this page of Codex Argenteus is featured as Plate 64.

Mark 16 in the Gothic version may be viewed at extranet.ufsia.ac.be/wulfila/corpus/Corpus.html. Alfred Wikenhauser cites K. Kauffmann as stating that Codex Argenteus and the Old Latin MS Brixianus (it^b) were both written in northern Italy in the 500’s (p. 109, New Testament Introduction, © 1963 Herder and Herder, New York). An informative essay about the Gothic version and its leading MS, Codex Argenteus, may be read at www.ifla.org/IV/ifla64/050-132e.htm.

baptized shall be saved, but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.”⁶ At this point, some forms of the text continue with Mk. 16:17-18; others do not. But the presence of Mk. 16:15-16 is sufficient to show that the author of *Acts of Pilate* was acquainted with Mark 16:9-20.

(4) Old Latin Codex Vercellensis. This Old Latin MS, known as it^a, is something of a relic; its production is attributed to Eusebius of Vercelli, who died in 371.⁷ It^a presently contains Mk. 16:9-20. However, it appears on a replacement-leaf, in a form which, unlike the main text of the MS, is derived

from the Vulgate. Bruce Metzger describes the state of the MS: “The last four leaves of the codex (after Mark xv. 15) have been cut out, and then follows a single leaf containing Mark xvi. 7 (from the word *galileam*) to 20 in a later hand and in the Vulgate text. According to C.H. Turner, the four excised leaves probably did not contain Mk. 16:9-20, “unless both very drastic methods of compression were employed in the text itself, and also there was a complete absence of colophon or subscription. . . .”⁸

In reaching this conclusion, Turner reasoned that the reason why the last leaf began at the word *galilaeum* was because the missing last leaf had originally begun at the same point in the text. He then observed, “The new leaf is written in much longer lines than the original scribe of *a* had used (about 17 letters per line instead of about 10), and so the matter of the Longer Ending is easily got into one complete page, and one column of the second page, of a single leaf.”⁹

Turner’s conclusion seems to depend on a few premises: (1) that it^a has lost only four of its original pages at the end of Mark, (2) that the replacement-leaf was specially made for it^a, and was not supplied from a less cherished MS, (3) that the producer of it^a did not simply miscalculate the number of pages necessary to contain the text, and (4) that the producer of it^a did not accidentally skip over a sizeable portion of text, causing the resultant shorter text to occupy less space than the theoretically reconstructed text would occupy, and that it was the detection of such an error which elicited someone to cut out four pages of the MS, intending to proceed to remedy a parableptic error which had occurred in ch. 15.

If any one of these premises is not accepted, it^a may be considered a silent witness due to the mutilated state of its text. If they are all accepted – on whatever grounds – then we may conclude with Dr. Turner that Codex Vercellensis had either the Short Ending, or that its text of Mark stopped at the end of 16:8. If the missing text of it^a were found, it would not be astonishing to find that it concluded Mark at the end of 16:8. Eusebius of Vercelli was enough of an admirer of Eusebius of Caesarea that he (Eusebius of Vercelli) took the trouble to translate Eusebius of Caesarea’s *Commentary on the Psalms*

6 ~ See the text of *Acts of Pilate* at www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-08/anf08-77.htm#P6572_1985146 and at www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/gospelnicodemus.html. An informative commentary provides some background for the text at www.earlychristianwritings.com/actspilate.html. Justin Martyr referred to the reports made by Pilate about Jesus, in *First Apology*, ch. 35 and 48, but there is no verifiable connection, aside from the name of the composition, between what Justin had in mind and the text known as Acts of Pilate.

7 ~ See Eusebius of Vercelli’s biography at www.newadvent.org/cathen/05614b.htm and www.ccel.org/s/schaff/encyc/encyc04/htm/eusebius_of_thessalonica.htm.

8 ~ p. 312-313, *The Early Versions of the New Testament*, © 1977 Oxford University Press. (See also the brief description of it^a at www.skypoint.com/~waltzmn/Versions.html#Latin.) The paper by C.H. Turner, to which Metzger refers, appeared in 1928. Turner concluded that it^a “in fact must have had either the Shorter Ending or none at all.” (p. 18, “*Did Codex Vercellensis (a) Contain the Last Twelve Verses of St. Mark?*” in *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. 29 (1928), reprinted ©1965 Oxford Univ. Press).

9 ~ p. 18, “*Did Codex Vercellensis (a) Contain the Last Twelve Verses of Mark?*” in *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. 29 (1928), reprinted ©1965 Oxford Univ. Press).

22

from Greek into Latin.¹⁰ It is possible that Eusebius of Vercelli obtained knowledge of Eusebius of Caesarea’s opinion about Mk. 16:9-20, and adopted it as his own.

On the other hand, some evidence indicates that it^a descends from a Latin transmission-line which supports the inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20. The Old Latin Codex Corbiensis, known as ff², is a copy from the 400’s which supports the inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20.¹¹ This MS shares an interesting feature with it^a: In it^a, according to Fredericus Pustet, “At the end of Matth. XXVII, 66, after the word << *Custodibus* >> and before the first verse of the following chapter stand the figures LXXIII.”¹² This is a section-number,

indicating that the Old Latin text was divided into small chapters, the 74th of which began at the beginning of Matthew 27. “Codex ff². Corbiensis, has this same number in the same place, whilst other Old Latin versions have it very near the same position in the sacred text”¹² and “This division is found in Mss. *h. ff. c. ept. g*¹ and Paris 6.”¹²

The evidence that indicates that it^a did not originally contain Mk. 16:9-20 is offset by the evidence that it^a, at least where the text of Matthew is concerned, belongs to a transmission-stream which, as a whole, supports the inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20.

(5) The Freer Logion. In Codex W, between 16:14 and 16:15, an interpolation appears:

κακεινοι απελογουντε λεγοντες οτι ο
They excused themselves, saying (that)
αιων ουτος της ανομιας και της απιστιας
“This age of lawlessness and unbelief
υπο τον Σαταναν εστιν ο μη εων τα υπο
is under Satan, who does not allow, through
των πνατων ακαθαρτα την αληθειαν
the unclean spirits, the truth
του Θυ καταλαβεσθαι δυναμιν. δια
and power of God to be understood. So
τουτο αποκαλυψον σου την δικαιοσυ-
then, reveal your righteousness
νην ηδη εκεινοι ελεγον τω Χω και ο
now,” they said to Christ. And
Χς εκεινοις προσελεγεν οτι πεπληρω-
Christ told them (that), “Fulfilled are
ται ο ορος των ετων της εξουσιας του
the years of the reign of

10 ~ This is mentioned by Jerome in chapter 96 of *De Viris Illustribus* which can be read at www.newadvent.org/fathers/2708.htm; see also his statement in Epistle 61 at www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001061.htm: “Eusebius of Vercellae, who witnessed a like confession, must also be held in fault; for he has translated into our tongue the Commentaries upon all the Psalms of his heretical namesake [i.e., Eusebius of Caesarea], omitting however the unsound portions and rendering only those parts which are profitable.”

In this statement, Jerome was not condemning Eusebius of Vercelli. An examination of the context of his words will verify that Jerome was referring to Eusebius of Vercelli’s actions as a precedent to defend his own use of unorthodox writings.

11 ~ A fifth-century date is usually assigned to ff², but M.E.S. Buchanan, following a careful examination of the MS, assigned it a date in the 300’s; see Kenyon’s *Handbook*, p. 201-202).

12 (thrice) ~ p. vi, *Collectanea Biblica Latina*, Vol. III, © 1914 Fredericus Pustet, Pontificus Bibliopola, Rome.

23

Σατανα αλλα εγγιζει αλλα δινα. και υ-
Satan, but other terrors approach. And
περ ων εγω αμαρτησαντων παρεδοθη
for those who have sinned I was delivered
εις θανατον ινα υποστρεψωσιν εις την
unto death, that they might return unto the
αληθειαν και μηκετι αμαρτησωσιν,

truth and sin no more,

ινα την εν τω ουρανω πνικην. και α-
so that in heaven the spiritual and
φθαρτον της δικ—αιουσνης δοξαν
incorruptible glory of righteousness
κληρονομησωσιν. — αλλα πορευθεντες ...¹³
they may inherit. But go ...”

This is known as the “Freer Logion.”¹⁴ Codex W is the only extant MS known to contain it. Jerome, in about A.D. 417, mentioned the same interpolation in *Dialogue Against the Pelagians*, II:15 –

In quibusdam exemplaribus et maxime in graecis codicibus
In certain exemplars and especially in Greek codices
iuxta Marcum in fine eius evangelii scribitur:
near the end of the Gospel of Mark the same thing is written:
‘postea quum accubuissent – crediderunt (v. 14).
After they reclined at table – believed [Jerome cites almost all of Mk. 16:14, ending with “crediderunt.”]
Et illi satisfaciebant dicentes: Saeculum istud iniquitatis et incredulitatis
And there, making this point, they say, This age of iniquity and unbelief
sub Satana est, qui non sinit per immundos spiritus veram Dei apprehendi
is under Satan, who does not allow, by unclean spirits, the truth and power of God to be understood
virtutem. Idcirco jam nunc revela justitiam tuam.”
*properly. Therefore right now reveal your righteousness.”*¹⁵

Because Codex W is ordinarily assigned a date around A.D. 400, and because Jerome mentioned the interpolation’s presence in various copies in 417, its origin may be traced to a point no later than the

13 ~ This Greek text, and the information about the Freer Logion, is based on pages 378-379, The Gospel According to St. Mark, by Alfred Plummer, © 1914, *Cambridge Greek Testament for Colleges and Schools*; reprinted 1982 by Baker Book House Co.; the text was modified to agree with the arrangement shown in photographs of the MS. Words or letters underlined by dots are special contractions (*nomina sacra* – “sacred names”) in the MS. The translation is based on Plummer’s. A similar translation is offered on p. 124 of the UBS Textual Commentary. A remarkably popular photograph of the page of Codex W which contains this interpolation is presented in Dr. Bruce Metzger’s book Manuscripts of the Greek Bible – An Introduction to Greek Palaeography, as Plate XVI (p. 83, © 1981 Oxford University Press), and as Plate XXVII in Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts by Sir Frederick Kenyon, and as Plate 30 in Kurt & Barbara Aland’s The Text of the New Testament, p. 112, and elsewhere.

14 ~ So named after Charles Lang Freer, an art collector from Detroit, Michigan, who purchased Codex W in Egypt in 1907. The MS is currently housed in the Freer Museum at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C.

15 ~ This Latin text is given according to Albert Huck’s citation on p. 213, Synopsis of the First Three Gospels, © 1963 Basil Blackwell, Oxford. Plummer’s commentary, p. 378, was also consulted.) Hort noted that some copies of Jerome’s writings, instead of the phrase “*sub Satana*,” have “*substantia*,” which disagrees with W’s contents (p. 51, Introduction, Notes).

24

end of the fourth century. Metzger states that Freer Logion “is probably the work of a second or third century scribe who wished to soften the severe condemnation of the Eleven in 16:14.”¹⁶

(6) Ambrose was born in 339 and served as bishop of Milan from 374 until his death in 397.¹⁷ Ambrose quoted from Mk. 16:9-20 several times. One example is in *The Prayer of Job and David* 4:1:4 – “He says, ‘In my name they shall cast out devils, they shall speak in new tongues, they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them.’” Another example is in *Concerning*

Repentance, I:8 (section 35) – “He gave all gifts to His disciples, of whom He said: ‘In My name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall do well.’”¹⁸ Yet another is in *Of the Holy Spirit*, II:13 (sect. 145), “Wisdom sent the apostles, saying, ‘Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel.’” And in *Of the Christian Faith*, I:14 (sect. 86), Ambrose states, “We have heard the passage read where the Lord saith: ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to all creation.’”

(7) The Vulgate Gospels were issued by Jerome in 383, and included Mk. 16:9-20 in the Gospel of Mark. In a preface to this work, addressed to Pope Damasus, Jerome explained the basis of its text: “I therefore promise in this short Preface the four Gospels only, which are to be taken in the following order, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, as they have been revised by a comparison of the Greek manuscripts. Only early ones have been used. But to avoid any great divergences from the Latin which we are accustomed to read, I have used my pen with some restraint, and while I have corrected only such passages as seemed to convey a different meaning, I have allowed the rest to remain as they are.”¹⁹

The evidence in the Vulgate should not be allowed to be overshadowed by Jerome’s comments elsewhere about Mk. 16:9-20 (which shall be examined shortly). Jerome states in his *Preface to the Four Gospels* that he had tried to avoid creating readings which would startle Latin readers, while simultaneously he had used ancient Greek MSS to veto the Latin exemplars where they disagreed with the ancient Greek MSS. From this we may deduce that either Jerome did not expect his readers to be surprised by the presence of Mk. 16:9-20 in the Vulgate, or that he included it because he found it in the ancient Greek codices which he allowed to overrule his Latin exemplars, or for both of these reasons.

The influence of old Greek copies – copies considered old, that is, in 383 – was what Jerome insisted was a major source of differences between the Vulgate and other Latin texts. Jerome expressed a cautious but clear preference for the readings in these old Greek copies, and regarded the Latin exemplars as unreliable in comparison: “If we are to pin our faith to the Latin texts, it is for our opponents to tell us which; for there are almost as many forms of texts as there are copies.”¹⁹

16 ~ p. 124-125, [Textual Commentary on the New Testament](#), Bruce M. Metzger. © 1971 by the United Bible Societies. The [Textual Commentary](#) also gives a translation of the interpolation, on p. 124.

17 ~ A well-written biography of Ambrose of Milan is at www2.evansville.edu/ecoleweb/articles/ambrose.html.

18 ~ William Farmer provides a thorough list of Ambrose’s uses of material from Mk. 16:9-20 in footnote #5 on p. 33 of [The Last Twelve Verses of Mark](#). Burgon lists seven uses (by page-references) in a footnote on p. 27 of [The Last 12 Verses of Mark](#). The text of *Concerning Repentance* cited here can be found at www.newadvent.org/fathers/34061.htm.

19 (twice) ~ See the English text of Jerome’s *Preface to the Four Gospels of the Vulgate* at people.bu.edu/dklepper/RN305/jerome1.html. Following his comment about the Latin copies, he wrote, “If, on the other hand, we are to glean the truth from a comparison of many, why not go back to the original Greek and correct the mistakes introduced by inaccurate translators, and the blundering alterations of confident but ignorant critics, and, further, all that has been inserted or changed by copyists more asleep than awake?”. His meaning seems to be that by appealing to the original Greek, the mistakes made by erroneous Latin translators, reckless Latin editors, and sleepy Latin copyists may be corrected.

Thus we may deduce that if Jerome’s Latin exemplars had lacked Mk. 16:9-20 and his old Greek copies had contained the passage, he probably would have considered the Latin copies to be outweighed by the old Greek copies, and consequently retained the passage. And, if his Latin exemplars had contained Mk. 16:9-20 but his old Greek copies did not contain it, he would probably *not* have included the passage, inasmuch as the presence of Mk. 16:9-20 certainly conveys a meaning different from its absence.

(8) The Claromontanus Catalogue, a list of books which was written in Codex Claromontanus, between Philemon and Hebrews. Codex Claromontanus, a Greek-Latin copy of the Pauline Epistles, was produced in the 500's, but the date of composition of the Claromontanus Catalogue is thought to be earlier: Harnack considered it to be from the 200's; Zahn assigned it a date around A.D. 300; Julicher placed it in the 300's.²⁰ The Claromontanus Catalogue includes not only a list of books – mainly but not exclusively books of the Bible – but also a list of the number of line-units, or *stichoi*, of which each book consists.²¹ The line-totals are 2,600 for Matthew, 2,000 for John, 1,600 for Mark, and 2,900 for Luke.

Kirsopp Lake, in *The Text of the New Testament*, in a discussion of ordinary *stichoi*-lists, states that a listing of 1,600 for Mark is probably an approximation for 1,616, and that it implies “the presence of xvi. 9-20 in Mark.”²² In that case the Claromontanus Catalogue indirectly attests to the form of the Gospel of Mark used by the Catalogue's author when the Catalogue was composed.

(9) Marinus appears to have been a contemporary of Eusebius of Caesarea. Eusebius of Caesarea wrote an essay to Marinus responding to a series of questions which he had asked. One of the questions to which Eusebius replied was, “How is it that in Matthew, the risen Savior appears ‘late on the Sabbath’ but in Mark ‘early on the first day of the week?’”²³ This question implies that Marinus knew a form of the Gospel of Mark which included Mark 16:9, and apparently did not know of any other form.

This testimony from Marinus, which cannot have been composed after 339 (when Eusebius of Caesarea died), should be tempered by two considerations: (a) that Eusebius may have been reformatting an earlier work, possibly using material from by Origen (who had, it seems, been the teacher of Eusebius' own teacher Pamphilius), which would imply that about a century should be added to the date of Marinus' question and Eusebius' reply, and (b) the very slight possibility that Marinus is a rhetorical device created by the author to introduce subjects about which he wished to inform his readers.

We now turn to three especially notable witnesses: Eusebius of Caesarea, Codex Vaticanus, and Codex Sinaiticus. Before doing so, it will be convenient to become acquainted with the text known as the Short Ending. The Short Ending consists of the following text, with some variations among its supporting witnesses:

20 ~ See www.ntcanon.org/codex_Claromontanus.shtml and www.bible-researcher.com/claromontanus.html and the pertinent comment by Harnack at www.earlychristianwritings.com/info/apocalypsepeter.html). The Latin text of the Claromontanus Catalogue is given in [Some Early Lists of the Books of the New Testament](#) by F.W. Grosheide, © 1948 by E.J. Brill.

21 ~ For an explanation of stichometry, see www.skypoint.com/~waltzmn/Divisions.html#stichoi .

22 ~ p. 61, *The Text of the New Testament*, by Kirsopp Lake, © Billing & Sons 1959, Guildford and London.

23 ~ The best and most easily accessible source for the contents and interpretation of *Ad Marinum* is Dr. James Kelhoffer's essay, *The Witness of Eusebius' ad Marinum and Other Christian Writings to Text-Critical Debates Concerning the Original Conclusion to Mark's Gospel*, available as a downloadable file at www.slu.edu/colleges/AS/theology/fac_jak.php . The text was published in *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 92, © Walter de Gruyter 2001. Burgon also cited *Ad Marinum* extensively (see pp. 41-51 of [The Last 12 Verses of Mark](#)), though with some misunderstanding of certain points.

26

παντα δε τα παρηγγελμενα τοις περι τον Πητρον

Everything that had been told to them, unto Peter

συντομως εξηγγειλαν.

and his companions they related.

Μετα δε ταυτα και αυτος ο Ιησους [εφανε αυτοις]

*And after this Jesus Himself [appeared to them] και απο ανατολης [και] αρχι δυσεως
and, from east [even] unto west,*

εξαπεστειλεν δι' αυτων το ιερον και αφθαρτον
sent forth through them the sacred and imperishable
κηρυγμα της αιωνιου σωτηριας.
proclamation of eternal salvation."²⁴

The Short Ending is found between 16:8 and 16:9 in the Greek MSS L, Ψ, 083 (the piece also known as 0112), 099, and 579, usually accompanied by notes and other interesting features. In MS 274, the Short Ending is in the lower margin; in the text, 16:9-20 follows 16:8 (with an abbreviated lectionary note intervening between the end of 16:8 and the beginning of 16:9, all on one line). All these witnesses display to varying degrees a descent from the Alexandrian transmission-stream. Old Latin Codex Bobbiensis is the one MS which displays the Short Ending without also displaying at least part of 16:9-20; it also has the most unAlexandrian text of all these witnesses.

More shall be said shortly about these MSS and related versional evidence. We now focus upon Eusebius of Caesarea, Codex Vaticanus (B), and Codex Sinaiticus (S).

(10) Eusebius of Caesarea, who served as bishop of Caesarea until his death in 339, issued a composition called *Ad Marinum*, which takes the form of a prolonged session of questions and their answers. Marinus asked a question about how to harmonize Mt. 28:1 with Mk. 16:9. Eusebius' reply to Marinus' question may be paraphrased as follows –

“This could be resolved in two ways. On one hand, the person who rejects the passage itself – the pericope which says this – might say that it does not appear in all copies of the Gospel of Mark. At least, the accurate copies round off Mark's account [or, At least the accurate copies have the subscription, ‘*The end of the account given by Mark*’] with the words of the young man who appeared to the women and said to them, “Do not fear. You are seeking Jesus the Nazarene” and so forth, proceeding to where it says, ‘And having heard, they fled, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.’

“For there the end of the Gospel of Mark is delineated [or, “For there the subscription ‘*The end of the Gospel of Mark*’ occurs”] in almost all the copies. The material that comes afterward seldom appears; it is in some copies but not in all, and may be spurious, especially since it implies a disagreement with the witness of the other Gospels.” This, then, is what someone might say to avoid and altogether dismiss a superfluous question.

“On the other hand, someone else, who dares to set aside nothing at all which appears, by whatever means, in the Gospel-Scriptures, says that the reading, like many others, is double [διπλην], and each of the two must be accepted, since they are advocated by the faithful and pious, not this one instead of that one, or that one rather than this one.

²⁴ ~ see the 27th Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece*, p. 147, for a similar text and apparatus.

“And furthermore, since it is granted that this section is true, it is appropriate to plumb the meaning of the passage. And if we accurately discern the sense of the words, we would not find it contrary to what Matthew said: ‘late on the Sabbath’ the Savior was raised. For we will read Mark's ‘and having risen early on the first day of the week’ with a pause: after ‘and having risen,’ we shall add a comma.

“And we will separate the meaning of what is read next: so, on one hand, we could read ‘having risen’ in regard to Matthew's ‘late on the Sabbath,’ for that is when he was raised. On the other hand, we might join what follows, producing a different meaning, with what is read next: for ‘early on the first day of the week he appeared to Mary Magdalene.’

At any rate, John has also made this clear, and has himself testified that the appearance to the Magdalene was ‘early on the first day of the week.’ So, likewise, in Mark also he appeared ‘early’ to

her. It is not [that] he ‘rose early’ but much earlier, according to Matthew, ‘late on the Sabbath.’ For having arisen at that time, he did not appear to Mary at that time, but ‘early.’ The implication is that two episodes are represented by these phrases: one is the time of the resurrection, which was late on the Sabbath; the other, of the appearance of the Savior, which was early. Mark referred to the later time when he wrote, saying what must be read with a pause, ‘and having risen.’ Then, after adding a comma, one must read the rest – ‘early on the first day of the week He appeared to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons.’²⁵

By means of this reply, Eusebius offers his reader two ways to resolve the apparent discrepancy between Mt. 28:1 and Mk. 16:9. The first way is to dismiss Mk. 16:9, along with all of Mk. 16:9-20, as material which is not in the majority of copies, or at any rate in the most accurate copies. The second way is to interpret Mk. 16:9 so as to understand the phrase “on the first day of the week” as a description of Jesus’ appearance to Mary Magdalene, rather than as a description of Jesus’ resurrection.

Although Eusebius spent many words explaining the second solution, strong evidence that Eusebius favored the first solution is found in his Canon-tables, in which Mk. 16:9-20 is not included.²⁶ The first speaker pictured by Eusebius, therefore, may be taken as a representative of Eusebius’ own view on the subject. However, Eusebius realized, by the nature of Marinus’ question, that Marinus already accepted Mk. 16:9-20 as part of the text of the Gospel of Mark. (This weakens the theory that Marinus is a rhetorical invention.) Because of this, Eusebius provides the alternative solution, and assumes that Marinus will accept it rather than the first solution.

It is difficult to determine from *Ad Marinum* how many MSS were in each group of MSS mentioned by the author. The first speaker makes two complementary claims: first, that Mk. 16:9-20 does not appear in all copies of the Gospel of Mark, and then, that the accurate copies close Mark’s account at the end of 16:8. After this follows the claim that the Gospel of Mark concludes at the end of 16:8 “in almost all the copies.” While these statements can be simultaneously true, their nuances shift considerably: the claim that not all copies of Mark contain 16:9-20 (which is true even if only one MS lacks the passage) is quite

²⁵ ~ on pp. 84-86 of *The Witness of Eusebius’ ad Marinum and Other Christian Writings*, by James Kelhoffer (ZNW, © 2001 Walter de Gruyter), the text is rendered more literally. The reader is encouraged to access Kelhoffer’s essay, which is available at www.degruyter.de/journals/znw/2001/pdf/92_078.pdf.

The point at which the voice of the first hypothetical speaker stops, and Eusebius’ own view begins, is not entirely clear. However, it seems sufficiently plain that the first speaker speaks for Eusebius, and that the comment, “For there appears the subscription ‘The end of the Gospel of Mark’ in almost all the copies. The next part appears seldom, in some copies but not in all,” is an observation made by the author.

²⁶ ~ A margin-note in *f*¹ attached to Mk. 16:9 (about which more shall be said in chapter three) affirms that the text of Mark in Eusebius’ Canon-tables concluded at the end of Mk. 16:8. Although Burgon challenged this evidence because in many copies Eusebius’ Canon-tables include Mk. 16:9-20, Hort correctly argued (on p. 33, *Introduction, Notes*) that the original form of the Eusebian Canon-tables “is but placed in clearer relief by these changes.”

28

different from the claim that almost all copies do not contain 16:9-20. This discrepancy may be due to Eusebius’ use of verbiage he found in an earlier source, to which he added his own observation.²⁷

Some slight support for the idea that *Ad Marinum* embodies, at least in part, an earlier composition by Origen, may be found when one considers that in Eusebius’ descriptions of MSS in *Ad Marinum*, he echoes a phrase which Origen used in a different context: The first speaker pictured in *Ad Marinum* states that the Gospel of Mark ends with 16:8 “σχεδον εν απασι τοις αντιγραφοις” (“in nearly all the copies”). Origen, in the course of commenting on the Bethany-or-Bethabara variant in John 1:28, stated that the reading “Bethany” “σχεδον εν πασι τοις αντιγραφοις κειται,” – “is in nearly all the copies.”²⁸ However the phrase is capable of independent usage.

Unless Eusebius was blindly repeating an earlier source without considering that his own preferred MSS at Caesarea contained Mk. 16:9-20, *Ad Marinum* demonstrates that copies at Caesarea which Eusebius regarded as “the accurate copies,” and which he believed to form a large majority of copies of Mark there, did not contain Mk. 16:9-20. The exact production-date of these copies is unknown, but it certainly was earlier than the beginning of Eusebius’ career at Caesarea.

This does not tell us that these copies were indeed accurate, but that Eusebius esteemed them as such. The basis for his opinion is unknown, but we may imagine that as the successor to Pamphilus, who followed Origen, Eusebius probably regarded a copy as accurate if it was known to have been used approvingly by either of them.

An interesting feature of *Ad Marinum* is that the Short Ending is nowhere mentioned. Eusebius knew of copies which ended at 16:8, and copies which displayed 16:9-20, but he apparently was unaware of copies with the Short Ending. This shall have some significance later in the discussion.

(11) Codex Vaticanus, the oldest extant MS containing Mark 16, is considered by many textual critics to be the most important witness to the Greek text of the New Testament. Produced in about 325, Codex B is the flagship MS of the Alexandrian Text.²⁹

In the New Testament, Codex B arranges the text in three columns per page, with 42 lines per column. Each book begins at the top of a column, and where books end, whatever space is left below the end of the book is left blank, except for the subscription. After a book ends, the next book always begins in the very next column – except at the end of the Gospel of Mark. There, the text of Mark 16:8 concludes on the 31st line, followed immediately by a decorative line, which is followed by the subscription *Kata Markon* slightly farther down the page. The third column on the page is entirely blank. The text of Luke begins at the top of the first column on the following page, in the handwriting of the same scribe who wrote the text of Mark.

27 ~ Burgon thought that Eusebius was here presenting a comment made by Origen: “I suspect, then, that the discussion we have just been listening to, is, essentially, *not an original production* : but that Eusebius, having met with the suggestion in some older writer, (in Origen probably,) reproduced it in language of his own.” – p. 47, The Last 12 Verses of Mark. Hort wrote: “Whether the statement is original or, as Matthaei and Dr. Burgon suggest, reproduced from the lost comment of an earlier writer, as Origen, cannot be decided. **If it was borrowed from Origen, as we strongly suspect that it was**, the testimony as to MSS gains in importance by being carried back to a much earlier date and a much higher authority.” – p. 32, Introduction, Notes (bold print added).

28 ~ Cf. the Greek text provided by Kelhoffer in “*The Witness of Eusebius’ ad Marinum and Other Christian Writings*,” p. 85, and Bruce Metzger’s citation of Origen on p. 96 in “*References in Origen to Variant Readings*,” New Testament Textual Studies Vol. VIII, © 1968 by E.J. Brill, Leiden, Netherlands.

29 ~ The date of 325 is assigned on a paleographical basis, and should thus be understood to be an estimate deduced from the form of its lettering and other features. Another way of expressing this estimate would be to say that Codex B was produced sometime between 300 and 350.

29

The scribal habit of beginning each book at the top of the column immediately following the end of the preceding book is disrupted twice in the Old Testament portion of Codex B – after the end of Nehemiah, and after the end of Tobit. (One could also count the blank space after the book of Daniel, but a blank space is practically inevitable there, for Codex B arranges the OT books in an order in which Daniel is the last book before the NT begins.) In both cases the reason for the blank space is evident. Two blank columns intervene between the end of Nehemiah and the beginning of Psalms, for there the handwriting changes from the lettering of one scribe to that of a different scribe, and there also the format of the text shifts from three-column pages to two-column pages. A blank column appears between the end of Tobit and the beginning of Hosea because here also the work of one scribe ends, and the work of another scribe begins.³⁰

Hort deduced from the evidence at the end of Mark in Codex B that the scribe “has contrary to his custom left the third or remaining column blank ; evidently because one or the other endings was known to him personally, while he found neither of them in the exemplar which he was copying.”³¹

Contrary to an oft-repeated claim originally made by John Burgon, the blank space in B is not “abundantly sufficient to contain the twelve verses.”³² It is, however, fairly close, as the embellished replicas of the page (see Image Two) shows. When, beginning immediately at the end of 16:8, an Alexandrian form of 16:9-20 is written in B’s blank space, using the same writing-style normally used by the copyist, the end of the last line of the third column is reached when 67 letters remain to be written.

This is not, however, sufficient evidence to undermine the theory that the copyist left this space vacant due to his recollection of 16:9-20. If the copyist had to estimate the size of the required space by memory, a slight underestimation accounts for the evidence in B. But it seems more likely that the copyist was hesitant to leave two columns blank, and believed that any competent copyist could, by slightly compressing his lettering, and by slightly lengthening the width of the third column, fit 16:9-20 into the blank space, if he desired to do so.

The theory may be proposed that the Short Ending was in the exemplar of B, and the copyist omitted it, but left room for its inclusion, and that this was the reason for the blank space. However, if the copyist had wished to leave blank space in which at some future time someone could place the Short Ending, he would have had no reason to leave the third column blank. The Short Ending, written in the same writing-style normally used by the copyist, fits snugly into the second column when placed immediately after the end of 16:8.³³ Possibly the copyist intended, by leaving one and only one column blank, to provide a future possessor of the MS with the option of including either the Short Ending, with its lettering slightly stretched, or 16:9-20, with its lettering slightly compressed.

30 ~ See the description of Codex B by Wieland Willker at www-user.uni-bremen.de/~wie/Vaticanus/general.html . At www.ccel.org/s/schaff/hcc1/htm/i.XII.81.htm Philip Schaff cited some attempts made by Dr. Ezra Abbot to dismiss or minimize the implications of the blank space at the end of Mark; Dr. Abbot suggested that the prolonged blank space after Mk. 16:8 is attributable to the same sort of cause which elicited the blank spaces in the OT-portion, and that the blank column after Mk. 16:8 is of the same sort of blank space that occurs below the end of other books. The baselessness of such suggestions is manifest in light of the facts that the handwriting in Luke is the same as that in Mark 16, and the text of Mk. 16 and Luke 1 are found in Codex B on opposite sides of the same page-leaf.

31 ~ p. 29, [Introduction](#), *Notes*.

32 ~ Burgon made this claim on p. 87 of [The Last 12 Verses of Mark](#). Inasmuch as the main text of this book is accompanied by a short letter in which Burgon mentioned that his efforts to obtain a photograph of this page of Codex B had been unsuccessful, it may be imagined that his mistake was due to a misinterpretation of others’ descriptions of the page, or due to errors in the descriptions.

33 ~ This effectively removes whatever basis may be imagined for Dr. William Lane’s claim that “Codex Vaticanus (B) also provides evidence for the existence of the shorter ending,” (a claim made on p. 602, [Commentary on the Gospel of Mark](#) by William L. Lane, Copyright © 1974 by William B. Eerdmans Publishing

30

So, while Codex Vaticanus supports the non-inclusion of 16:9-20, it also provides evidence that its copyist was aware of the existence of 16:9-20, and this evidence is even capable of suggesting that the copyist knew of copies which (like L, Ψ, and some other Alexandrian witnesses) contained both the Short Ending and 16:9-20. It is by no means sufficient or equitable, therefore, to simply cite Codex B as a witness against Mk. 16:9-20, without also mentioning that its copyist, who was older than the MS he produced, has provided evidence of his own awareness of the existence and approximate size of Mk. 16:9-20.

(12) Codex Sinaiticus, which is certainly one of the most important witnesses to the Greek text of the New Testament, was taken from Saint Catherine’s monastery near Mount Sinai in the 1800’s by

Constantine Tischendorf, who gave it the designation Codex S. It is an impressive-looking codex, with four columns on each page (except for in the books of poetry). Currently most of the MS, including the entire NT-portion, is in the British Library.³⁴

Sinaiticus ends the book of Mark at the end of 16:8. Unlike B, S displays no blank column after 16:8; the space left blank underneath the final words of 16:8 is an ordinary and unsuggestive feature. The codex features a blank page between the Gospels and Acts. This is thought to be merely a filler-page; however the possibility remains open that it may have been included not only for aesthetic reasons but as a way to equip the eventual owner of the codex with space on which he could add corrective notes, which could include a passage (or passages) which the copyists had omitted, if he so desired.

S is not a straightforward witness to the contents of its primary exemplar where the end of Mark is concerned. The pages containing Mark 14:54-Luke 1:56 are written on a cancel-sheet, that is, they are replacement-pages, consisting of a four-page bifolium sheet (which may be pictured as something resembling a four-page church-bulletin, folded in the middle). Someone – very probably the *diorthotes*, or supervisor, who oversaw the production of the MS and proof-read its text – wrote this bifolium to replace one in which some severe error or unwanted feature was present, and he wrote it in such a way as to assure that the final line on the fourth page merged smoothly with the following line on the next page of the MS.³⁵

Co., in the *New International Commentary on the New Testament* series) unless one supposes that the B's copyist was working with an exemplar which contained both the Short Ending and 16:9-20, and wished to give to the eventual owner of the MS the option of including one or the other (but not both).

Against the objection that the copyist would not wish to end the text of Mark on the last page of a column, leaving no room for a subscription, we may turn in Codex B to the end of Luke, where the text ends in the next-to-last line of a middle-column ("*Kata Loukan*" enters the lower margin), and to the end of the Epistle to the Philippians, where the book concludes exactly on the last line of a middle column (the subscription is deep in the lower margin), and the Epistle to the Colossians begins at the top of the next column.

A color photograph of Mk. 15:43-16:8 in Codex B, of which Image 1 provided here is a copy, is online at www.bible-researcher.com/vaticanus2.html.

34 ~ Codex Sinaiticus is among the diverse items featured at the British Library's Online Gallery: www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/themes/asianafricanman/codex.html.

35 ~ This is one of several replacement-portions in the New Testament in S. The others are located at Matthew 16:9-18:12 (folio 10), Matthew 24:36-26:6 (folio 15), First Thess. 2:14-5:28 (folio 88), and Hebrews 4:16-8:1 (folio 91). See p. xvi, F.H.A. Scrivener's *Full Collation of the Codex Sinaiticus, Introduction*. (© 1864 Deighton, Bell, and Co.), and p. xix of Kirsopp Lake's introduction to the facsimile of Codex Sinaiticus published in 1911 ("*Description of the Codex*"). Lake states, "It is tolerably clear that [scribe] A originally wrote all the text of the New Testament except Hermas, which was the work of [scribe] B, and that [scribe] D wrote the text on the conjugate leaves, ff. 10 and 15, 29 and 30, 99 and 91, and possibly on part of f. 126." Lake proceeds to describe in detail the basis for this conclusion.

Image One has been removed.

IMAGE ONE.
The end of Mark in Codex Vaticanus.

Image Two has been removed.

IMAGE TWO.

A replica of the last page of Mark in Codex Vaticanus, with almost all of 16:9-20 written in the blank space which appears in the MS after the end of 16:8.

Image Three has been removed.

IMAGE THREE:
A replica of the end of
Mark in Codex Vaticanus,
with all of 16:9-20
(including
“και εν ταις χειρσιν” in
16:18) written in the blank
space which appears in
the MS after the end of
16:8.

That this bifolium is indeed a cancel-sheet is shown by (1) the writer's habit of using the ">" mark as a space-filler, and (2) the writer's orthography, and (3) the writer's treatment of some of the *nomina sacra*. In all these features the cancel-sheets stand apart from the surrounding pages.³⁶ The UBS GNT and the Nestle-Aland NTG provide no indication in the textual apparatus that the text of Mk. 14:54-Lk. 1:56 is from a different hand (and perhaps a different exemplar) than the one which produced the main text of Mark, but technically these pages should be regarded as a supplement. We do not have access to \aleph 's original pages of Mk. 14:54-Luke 1:56.

As we examine this cancel-sheet (which forms an interesting puzzle, as we shall see), we shall investigate three questions: (a) did the non-extant pages conclude the text of Mark at 16:8?, and (b) did the non-extant pages contain the Short Ending?, and (c) did the non-extant pages contain 16:9-20?

The main copyist typically produced columns which contained, on average, 630 letters. Nine such columns would contain about 5,670 letters. Ten such columns would contain about 6,300 letters. The text of Mk. 14:54-16:8 in \aleph 's cancel-sheet contains 5,614 letters. If this exact text were written in the main copyist's normal lettering, it would conclude before the ninth column was filled. Thus if we assume that the cancel-sheet displays exactly the text which the main copyist had intended to write, then it would appear that in the original bifolium, the text of Mark stopped in the ninth column, and the text of Luke either began at the top of column 10, or else column 10 was blank and the text of Luke began at the top of column 11.

However such an assumption is not justified. The producer of the cancel-sheet appears to have accidentally skipped 76 letters in 15:57-16:1 (when he skipped from the second "Μαρια" in 15:47 to the second "Μαρια" in 16:1). He also omitted 12 letters in 16:6 (when he skipped from one "τον" to another one which followed nearby). He wrote out the entire name "Ιησους" in 16:6, instead of following the normal custom of contracting it as a *nomen sacrum*. (This was because he was consciously attempting to fill space, as we shall soon see.) So we may reckon that the exemplar used by the producer of the cancel-sheet contained 84 (76 + 12 - 4) more letters than what we see in the cancel-sheet itself.

IMAGE FOUR.

A replica of the second column of the last page of Mark in Codex Vaticanus, with the entire Short Ending in the second column after the end of 16:8.

Image Four has been removed.

³⁶ ~ George Salmon, referring to all the cancel-sheets in \aleph , observed that "Pilate's name is spelt with ι in the Sinaitic, with αι in these leaves and in the Vatican; Ιωαννης is spelt with one ν by the Vatican scribe, with two by the Sinaitic," on p. 146, Introduction to the New Testament, © 1913 John Murray.

Image Five has been removed.

This indicates that Mk. 15:54-16:8 in the non-extant pages likely contained (barring mistakes of accidental omission or repetition) 5,698 (5,614 + 84) letters. When such a text is written in the main copyist's normal lettering, nine 630-word columns are entirely filled and 28 letters occupy the tenth column. This would allow ample room for the Short Ending in the rest of column 10, but the remaining space (in which 602 letters, written in the copyist's normal lettering, could fit) would be insufficient for the 971 letters in 16:9-20.

Thus the most likely answers to our questions are (a) the non-extant pages probably concluded the text of Mark at 16:8, and (b) it cannot be demonstrated that the non-extant pages did not contain the Short Ending, and (c) the non-extant pages did not contain Mk. 16:9-20, unless the copyist compressed his lettering in such a way that each of the 10 columns of Marcan text contained, on average, at least 667 letters, and we can draw no justification from the evidence in § to imagine that he did this.

The secondary question remains: what elicited the production of a cancel-sheet here? The problem probably was somewhere in Luke 1:1-56. Columns 11-16, where Luke 1:1-56 is displayed, contain the following amounts of letters:

IMAGE FIVE:

A replica of the last two columns of Mark in § on the cancel-sheet which contains Mk. 14:54-Lk. 1:56.

Column 11: 681 letters.
 Column 12: 672 letters.
 Column 13: 702 letters.
 Column 14: 687 letters.
 Column 15: 725 letters
 Column 16: 679 letters.
 Total number of letters: 4,146.

Here we observe that the producer of the cancel-sheet has maintained a high rate of letters-per-column, much greater than the main copyist's average rate of 630. This may be accounted for in two ways:

(1) If, in the original pages, the text of Mark concluded in column nine, and the text of Luke began at the top of column 10, the original copyist may have accidentally repeated a section consisting of about 264 letters, causing these seven columns to contain about 4,410 letters (maintaining his usual rate of letters-per-column).

(2) If, in the original pages, the text of Mark concluded in column 10, and the text of Luke began at the top of column 11, the original copyist may have accidentally skipped a section consisting of about 336 letters, causing these six columns to contain about 3,810 letters. This would imply that in these columns the main copyist's rate of letters-per-column increased slightly from 630 to 635, but this is not implausible.

Both scenarios are possible. In the first scenario, the producer of the cancel-sheet, observing that the text of Mark concluded close to the base of column 9, reckoned that he could easily stretch the lettering in Mark so as to extend the Marcan text into column 10, and then proceed to compress the lettering throughout Lk. 1:1-56, rather than stretch the text in Luke throughout seven columns. In the second scenario, the producer of the cancel-sheet saw that he would conclude the text of Mark in column 10, and that he would begin the text of Luke at the top of column 11.

When we search Lk. 1:1-56 for material vulnerable to careless repetition or omission, we find that Lk. 1:5 and Lk. 1:8 both begin with "Ἐγενετο" after the preceding sentence concludes with the letter ν. In between, when one accounts for the contraction of *nomina sacra*, 1:5-7 consists of 319 letters. We also find that Lk. 1:34 and 1:38 begin identically with "εἶπεν δε Μαριουμ" and that the text in between consists of 311 letters.

The repetition of such a large portion of text would be practically unique; its omission is much more likely. So we may conclude that in the original bifolium, the text of Mark concluded (either at 16:8 or with the Short Ending) in column 10, and that the text of Luke began at the top of column 11, and that a large section – probably 1:5-7 or 1:34-37 – was accidentally omitted. The detection of this parableptic error elicited the cancel-sheet's production.

Before concluding our examination of the end of Mark in § we shall investigate a fascinating feature of this cancel-sheet. The 10 columns containing Mk. 14:54-16:8 appear in columns in which the rate of letters-per-column varies drastically:

Column 1: 635 letters.	Column 2: 650 letters.
Column 3: 639 letters.	Column 4: 707 letters.
Column 5: 592 letters.	Column 6: 593 letters.
Column 7: 604 letters.	Column 8: 605 letters.
Column 9: 552 letters.	Column 10: 37 letters.

The first three columns are written at a rate of letters-per-column only slightly greater than the main copyist's rate. In column four, the rate of letters-per-column skyrockets, and in column five (specifically, at the beginning of 15:19, on the 11th line of column five) the rate of letters-per-line abruptly drops well below the main copyist's normal rate. In column nine it plummets. This is highly unusual.

We may notice that if the producer of the cancel-sheet, after writing columns 1-4, had continued to write columns at a rate of 707 letters each – or even if he had produced columns 5-10 at a rate of 660 letters per column – then columns 5-10 of the cancel-sheet could contain ℵ’s remaining text of Mark along with 16:9-20. Columns 5-10 of the cancel-sheet, containing the text of Mk. 15:16-16:8, hold 2,983 letters. Mk. 16:9-20 contains 971 letters (when one takes into account the contraction of *nomina sacra*). Combined, ℵ’s text of Mk. 15:16-16:8 plus Mk. 16:9-20 would have 3,954 letters. When this is divided by six, we discover that it would all fit into these six columns in each held 659 letters.

This may raise a question in the mind of some observers as to whether the cancel-sheet’s maker considered including Mk. 16:9-20, and began in column four to compress his lettering so as to make this possible, but then changed his mind.

Another explanation of the remarkable variation in the rate of letters-per-column in the cancel-sheet is more plausible, and perhaps significant. The cancel-sheet’s producer may have initially intended to fit the text of Mark into nine columns, and to commence the text of Luke in column 10. This would account for the remarkable lettering-compression in column four. No further compression was necessary after that: the remaining text in his exemplar (if it did not omit a large piece of 15:47-16:1 and “τοὺς Ναζαρηνοὺς” in 16:6, and if it contracted “Ἰησοῦς” in 16:6) consisted of 3,067 letters, which when written at the normal rate of 630 letters per column would conclude in column nine.

Upon reaching 15:19, though, the producer of the cancel-sheet examined his handiwork in column four and considered it aesthetically acceptable. He decided then that it would be better to similarly compress the Lukan text in six columns, rather than stretch its lettering throughout seven columns. So he resolved to undo the effects of column four’s compression, and deliberately began to write at a lower than normal rate of letters per line. This tactic would have worked perfectly, if he had not accidentally skipped 76 letters in Mk. 14:57-16:1. But because of that mistake, he had to settle for making it work imperfectly. In column nine he stretched the lettering very substantially, and uncontracted “Ἰησοῦς” in 16:6. Unfortunately in the same verse he accidentally skipped “τοὺς Ναζαρηνοὺς.” With effort, however, he managed to reach the end of column nine with 37 letters remaining to place in column 10.

This theory, while it can be held only tenuously, seems sensible, inasmuch as it logically accounts for several extraordinary features of the cancel-sheet. If it is correct, it implies that the producer of the cancel-sheet used an exemplar in which the Gospel of Mark ended at the end of 16:8, and that he never considered including either the Short Ending or 16:9-20 in the text of the Gospel of Mark.³⁷

Our description of Eusebius of Caesarea, Vaticanus, and Sinaiticus cannot be sufficient without a consideration of the theory that these three witnesses share a special history. Tischendorf, who made ℵ famous, claimed that one of the copyists who contributed to the production of Codex B also wrote part of Codex ℵ. C.R. Gregory mentioned this in 1912, in a paragraph about ℵ which deserves perpetuation:

“Four scribes wrote this manuscript. One of the four, whom Tischendorf called A, wrote First Chronicles, First Maccabees, the last four leaves of Fourth Maccabees, the whole New Testament save seven leaves, and Barnabas. Without doubt this same scribe wrote some of the books that are missing. The fourth scribe, named D, wrote Tobit, Judith, the first three and a half leaves of Fourth Maccabees, and the seven leaves in the New Testament not written by A. . . . It is odd that another scribe should have written seven scattered leaves. It looks as if there had been mistakes on the leaves and he had supplied more correct ones. Another curious circumstance is the fact that, according to Tischendorf’s view, this scribe D seems to have written all that we have of the New Testament in the great Vatican manuscript of

³⁷ ~ This second conclusion may be questioned on the grounds that the cancel-sheet’s producer, after compressing the lettering in column four, would have been able to fit the remainder of the text (including all of 15:47-16:1 and 16:6), plus the Short Ending, into five columns, if he had continued to compress the lettering so that each column contained no fewer than 646 letters. However, all things considered (such as the absence of the Short Ending in column 10, where there is plenty of room), the probability that this was his initial plan is abysmally low.

which we shall soon have to speak. Should this view be right it would fit in very well with the supposition that the two manuscripts both proceeded from the same place and were among the fifty of Constantine.”³⁸

Gregory’s reference to “the fifty of Constantine” shall be explained shortly. First we should appreciate that Kirsopp Lake refuted Tischendorf’s claim. In 1911 Lake wrote, “Tischendorf’s view that the body of the text of Codex Vaticanus was written by the scribe D of the Codex Sinaiticus is unfortunately indefensible,”³⁹ and he provided adequate evidence of this. Lake did not, however, declare that the theory that these two MSS shared a copyist was altogether unwarranted. He wrote, “There is, if the main body of the text be put aside, a high probability for the view that the two codices came from the same scriptorium. This view is based on the remarkable similarity subsisting between the hands of the scribes who added the superscriptions to Acts in both MSS.”³⁹

Lake insisted on sticking to the view that the subscriptions were by two different copyists, but he conceded, “The similarity is extremely great, and is scarcely explicable unless we assume that both hands come from the same scriptorium, while the differences might conceivably be taken merely to mean that there is a difference of time between the two hands, – that is to say that the $\pi\rho\alpha\xi\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ of Codex Vaticanus was written by a scribe in his youth, and the $\pi\rho\alpha\xi\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ of Codex Sinaiticus by the same scribe in his old age. But whether this be so or not is not really of great importance: the serious thing is that there is in any case good evidence for thinking that the two great codices come from the same scriptorium, in spite of the fact that Tischendorf was wrong in thinking that they were written by the same scribe.”³⁹

In 1938, Herbert J.M. Milne and Theodore C. Skeat, Assistant Keepers in the Department of Manuscripts at the British Museum, published Scribes and Correctors of Codex Sinaiticus. In Appendix I they posed the question, “HAVE B AND \aleph A SCRIBE IN COMMON?” and they did not rule this out, listing several pieces of evidence showing that “the affinities of D are with Hand A of the Vaticanus.” On the other hand they, like Lake, did not consider the point altogether proven: “It would be hazardous to argue identity of the two hands (for one thing D’s use of the long-pronged omega in corrections seems an obstacle), but the identity of the scribal tradition stands beyond dispute.”⁴⁰

In 1999 T. C. Skeat published the results of a prolonged investigation of B and \aleph , proposing that certain features in these MSS indicate, if not demonstrate, that \aleph and B were both produced at Caesarea in about A.D. 331 under the supervision of Eusebius of Caesarea, when Eusebius had been instructed by Emperor Constantine to prepare 50 Bibles for use in Constantinople.⁴¹

According to Eusebius, Constantine had written a letter to him: “I have thought it expedient to instruct your Prudence to order fifty copies of the sacred Scriptures, the provision and use of which you know to be most needful for the instruction of the Church, to be written on prepared parchment in a legible manner, and in a convenient, portable form, by professional transcribers thoroughly practiced in their art. The catholicus of the diocese has also received instructions by letter from our Clemency to be careful to furnish all things necessary for the preparation of such copies; and it will be for you to take special care that they be completed with as little delay as possible. You have authority also, in virtue of this letter, to use two of the public carriages for their conveyance, by which arrangement the copies when fairly written will most easily be forwarded for my personal inspection; and one of the deacons of your church may be intrusted with this service, who, on his arrival here, shall experience my liberality. God preserve you, beloved brother!”⁴²

³⁸ ~ p. 336, C. R. Gregory, The Canon and Text of the New Testament, © 1912 Charles Scribner’s Sons, NY.

³⁹ (thrice) ~ p. xii, “*The Original Provenance and Date of the MS*,” in Lake’s introduction to the 1911 photo-facsimile of Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Sinaiticus Petropolitanus – The New Testament, Leiden.

⁴⁰ ~ see pp. 87-90, Scribes and Correctors of the Codex Sinaiticus, by H.J.M. Milne and T.C. Skeat, including contributions by Douglas Cockerell, publ. 1938 British Museum.

⁴¹ ~ Skeat’s impressive article “*The Codex Sinaiticus, The Codex Vaticanus, and Constantine*,” is in *Journal of Theological Studies*, NS, Vol. 50, Pt. 2, October 1999, © 1999 Oxford Univ. Press.

Eusebius described his response: “Such were the emperor's commands, which were followed by the immediate execution of the work itself, which we sent him in magnificent and elaborately bound volumes of a threefold and fourfold form.”⁴²

The phrase, “of a threefold and fourfold form” has seemed to some interpreters to suggest that the 50 Bibles made under Eusebius’ supervision were formatted with three or four columns per page – which are the formats displayed in B and ℵ. Skeat, however, rationally deduced that Eusebius’ words have been mistranslated, and that what is meant is that Eusebius sent the Bibles three and four at a time, as they were produced in small batches.

Skeat’s theory that ℵ and B were both made by Eusebius for Constantine shall be examined here only briefly. He proposed that ℵ was made before B, and that ℵ was initially regarded as a reject-copy, and was kept at Caesarea for centuries until it was taken to Egypt, while B was more efficiently and economically made, and was sent to Constantinople. The evidence that ℵ was initially considered defective is considerable. The case that ℵ was produced at or near Caesarea appears very strong. The theory that the production of both ℵ and B was overseen by Eusebius, however, resists refutation but is unpersuasive.

The treatment of *nomina sacra* in B is different from that in ℵ. While ℵ appears to have been copied down from dictation, B offers no similar indications. ℵ and B do not contain the same books – and Eusebius, we may imagine, would not invest the resources required to produce even one magnificent codex of the Bible without verifying which books it was expected to contain. The Eusebian Canon-numbers are displayed in the margin in the Gospels in ℵ but not in B. Skeat offers explanations for these differences, but while his explanations are not impossible, they appear as preservatives rather than as natural implications of the evidence.

An alternative theory, which may more elegantly account for the similarities in ℵ and B as well as for the differences between them, is proposed here along the following lines:

Sinaiticus was produced under the supervision of Eusebius of Caesarea, after he had received Constantine’s order for 50 Bibles. Sinaiticus itself, however, was kept at Caesarea. In 339, Eusebius died and a man named Acacius became the new bishop of Caesarea. Shortly thereafter – within a few decades – Acacius was concerned that papyrus copies in the library at Caesarea were rotting away, so he endeavored to transfer the contents of those papyrus copies to more durable parchment. At this time, using these ancient copies as exemplars (probably copies that had been brought to Caesarea from Egypt at a much earlier time), Acacius oversaw the production of Codex Vaticanus, closely following the simple format of the ancient exemplars.

Jerome, in *De Viris Illustribus*, in 393, briefly mentioned Acacius and another man, Euzoius. Acacius’ career is concisely summarized in ch. 98:

“Acacius, who, because he was blind in one eye, they nicknamed ‘the one-eyed,’ bishop of the church of Caesarea in Palestine, wrote seventeen volumes *On Ecclesiastes* and six of *Miscellaneous Questions*, and many treatises besides on various subjects. He was so influential in the reign of the emperor Constantius that he made Felix bishop of Rome in the place of Liberius.”⁴³

In ch. 113 of the same work, Jerome wrote about Euzoius: “Euzoius, as a young man, together with Gregory, bishop of Nazianzus, was educated by Thespesius the rhetorician at Caesarea. And afterwards when bishop of the same city, with great pains he attempted to restore the library, collected by Origen and Pamphilus, which had already suffered injury. At last, in the reign of the Emperor Theodosius, he was expelled from the church. Many and various treatises of his are in circulation, and one may easily become acquainted with them.”⁴³

⁴² (twice) ~ Eusebius’ report is contained in chapters 34-37 of Book Four of *The Life of Constantine*. See the translation by E. C. Richardson at the Internet Medieval Source Book, © Paul Halsall May 1997, at www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/vita-constantine.html.

⁴³ (twice) ~ Jerome’s *De Viris Illustribus* may be read in English at www.newadvent.org/fathers/2708.htm. Acacius is somewhat infamous for his Arian theology.

Walter Bauer, in *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, supplements these statements of Jerome with another, found in Jerome's *Epistle 141, To Marcellus*. Referring to the library at Caesarea, Jerome wrote, "As much of it was in bad condition, Acacius and then also Euzoius, priests of the same church, undertook to preserve on parchment."⁴⁴

Further evidence of the text-conservation efforts of Euzoius is provided in a MS of the works of Philo in the Austrian National Library in Vienna, where, according to David T. Runia, "On the table of contents we read that Euzoius the bishop restored this text on parchment."⁴⁵

Fuller details of the careers of Acacius and Euzoius are in Henry Wace's *A Dictionary of Christian Biography and Literature to the End of the Sixth Century A.D., with an Account of the Principal Sects and Heresies*.⁴⁶ Acacius died in the mid-360's. Euzoius would have to be alive in 380 to be subject to the edict of Theodosius I that bishops not endorsing orthodox creeds should have their offices vacated.⁴⁷ It seems unlikely (though not impossible) that Euzoius would have been an active scribe 49 years earlier when, it is thought, Eusebius of Caesarea received Constantine's order for 50 Bibles. If however we seek to name an individual with the means to work with Eusebius in the 330's, and to produce, on a separate occasion, a codex with an exceptionally ancient text, we find that Acacius fits this description better than anyone else.

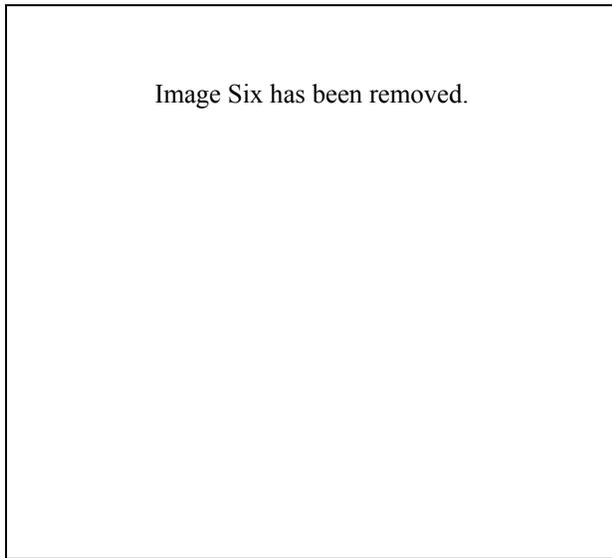


IMAGE SIX:
The End of Deuteronomy in B.

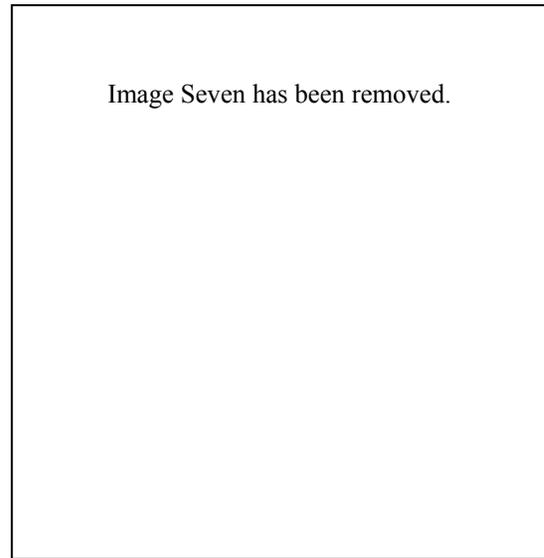


IMAGE SEVEN:
The End of Mark in 8's cancel-sheet.

⁴⁴ ~ The pertinent part of Bauer's work, produced in 1934 © J.C.B. Mohr, Tübingen, can be read in English (translated by Howard Bream and Robert L. Wilken) at www.biblicalstudies.ru/Books/Bauer9.html . A footnote provides the Latin text: "quam ex parte corruptam Acacius dehinc et Euzoius eiusdem ecclesiae sacerdotes in membranis instaurare conati sunt."

It may be imagined that Acacius began the conservation-work with what he considered the most important texts, which to a bishop would likely have been Biblical texts, and that Euzoius applied his efforts to other works.

⁴⁵ ~ Runia's comment is within his essay, "Philo of Alexandria and the Beginnings of Christian Thought, Alexandrian and Jew," *Studia Philonica Annual* 7 (1995): 143-160 © and is online at www.torrey.org/bible/philo&beg.html .

⁴⁶ ~ Wace's book can be accessed in several formats at the CCEL website, for instance at www.ccel.org/ccel/wace/biodict.txt .

⁴⁷ ~ For details about Theodosius and the decree issued in 380, see www.newadvent.org/cathen/14577d.htm .

As further evidence that ℵ and B shared a copyist, we may compare the decoration at the end of Deuteronomy in B to the decoration at the end of Mark (on the cancel-sheet) in ℵ. This evidence was emphasized by T.C. Skeat in his 1999 essay.⁴⁸

There cannot have been very many copyists in the fourth century who would create such similar decorative lines, in which the final line of text was filled by a “running spiral” and a vertical line of dots was placed in the left margin, extending well below the end of the text of the book, ending with the flourish seen in both MSS.

This could be used as evidence that Acacius took part in the production of ℵ in a minor capacity, creating the decorative lines and superscriptions, and then, after his station was raised to bishop, he oversaw the production of Codex B, and either produced many of its pages personally (as Scribe A) or gave himself the smaller task of adding decorations and superscriptions (or both).

From such evidence we may deduce that not only is the possibility that B and ℵ shared a common influence quite real, but that its probability is high. However, discerning a common influence is not the same as determining its effects. We are content to offer a few points in light of the evidence reviewed here:

(1) that the MSS which Eusebius described as the “accurate” copies in *Ad Marinum* may have included the exemplars of ℵ and of B,

(2) If ℵ was produced under the supervision of Eusebius, then the weight of Eusebius and ℵ may be somewhat combined, inasmuch as they would not be historically independent, and the lack of 16:9-20 in ℵ would be due to Eusebius’ provision of its exemplar, and

(3) these witnesses, the definitive extant evidence of a Greek text of Mark ending at 16:8, proceed from an extremely narrow channel of transmission.

Finally, we consider three more patristic witnesses from the fourth century: *Apostolic Constitutions*, Ephrem Syrus, and Didymus the Blind.

(13) Apostolic Constitutions was put together in about 380. It consists of eight books: the first six are based on the earlier *Didascalia Apostolorum*, which was composed in about 250; the seventh book is based on the early second-century text known as the *Didache*, or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, accompanied by other material. The eighth book is on the subject of spiritual gifts, and is partly derived from an otherwise lost writing by Hippolytus on the same subject.⁴⁹

The opening sentences of the eighth book of *Apostolic Constitutions*, presented as if spoken by the apostles themselves, include the following:

“With good reason did He say to all of us together, when we were perfected concerning those gifts which were given from Him by the Spirit: ‘Now these signs shall follow them that have believed in my name: they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall by no means hurt them. They shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall recover.’ These gifts were first bestowed on us the apostles when we were about to preach the gospel to every creature, and afterwards were of necessity afforded to those who had by our means believed; not for the advantage of those who perform them, but for the conviction of the unbelievers, that those whom the word did not persuade, the power of signs might put to shame.”⁵⁰

48 ~ These decorations were pictured on p. 623 of *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. 50, Pt. 2, October 1999, © 1999 Oxford University Press. They may be viewed at www-user.uni-bremen.de/~wie/Vaticanus/ends.html. A further comparison may be made to the decoration in ℵ at the end of Tobit.

49 ~ For introductions to the *Apostolic Constitutions*, see www.sacred-texts.com/chr/ecf/007/0070427.htm and www.1911encyclopedia.org/Apostolical_Constitutions.

50 ~ See www.newadvent.org/fathers/07158.htm for the contents, in English, of the eighth book of *Apostolic Constitutions*.

The author prominently quotes Mk. 16:17-18, and in his additional comments he unmistakably alludes to Mk. 16:15.

(14) Ephrem Syrus not only wrote a Syriac commentary on Tatian's *Diatessaron* before his death in 373, but also composed many hymns. In one of these hymns, Ephrem combined Mark 16:15a and Matthew 28:19b, giving the sense of "Go into all the world [from Mark] and baptize in the name of the Father, and Son, and Spirit [from Matthew]." This is a combination of Mk. 16:15 and Mt. 28:19, but it is not the same combination which appears in the Arabic *Diatessaron*, which (in 55:4-5) includes the words "and preach my gospel to every creature." This may be a result of Ephrem's own use of Mk. 16:15, rather than simply an echo of the *Diatessaron*.⁵¹

(15) Didymus the Blind (c. 313 - c. 398) was appointed the supervisor of the main theological training-school at Alexandria by Athanasius, and served in that capacity during the second half of the 300's.⁵² Despite becoming blind in his childhood, Didymus became an accomplished scholar, and his erudition was admired by Jerome, who visited him in 386. Didymus produced several commentaries on Old Testament books, and some theological works, including *De Trinitate*, which he wrote in 379 or shortly thereafter, to defend the doctrine of the Trinity. In *De Trinitate* II:12 (39.688 in Migne's P.G.), Didymus stated, after quoting I Peter 1:23,

“Εδεδοικει γαρ τον παρακελευσαμενον εν τω κατα Μαρκον Ευαγγελιω Πορευθεντες εις τον κοσμον παντα, κηρυξατε το Ευαγγελιον παση τη κτισει· Ο πιστευσας και βαπτισθεις σωθησεται. Ο δε απιστησας κατακριθησεται.”⁵³

After this, Didymus quotes from Matthew 28:19 and II Cor. 13:14. Clearly, Didymus was recollecting the contents of copies of the Scriptures. And clearly Mark 16:15-16 was included in the text of Mark which Didymus used in Alexandria.

The fourth edition of the UBS Greek New Testament lists Didymus' testimony as dubious. However, this is because the authorship of *De Trinitate* is disputed. The quotation, if not from Didymus then from an author of Didymus' era and area, is quite perspicuous.

(16) Greek and Latin copies known to Augustine (400). In about the year 400, Augustine composed his *Harmony of the Gospels*. In Book III, chapters 24-25 of this lengthy composition, Augustine addressed the Gospels' accounts of events which took place at about the time of the Lord's resurrection; Augustine's purpose, as conveyed by the chapter-title, was to show that the discrepancies between the accounts were superficial. Augustine quotes all of Mark 16:9-20, bit by bit, in the course of his discussion. In chapter 25, Augustine focuses upon the post-resurrection appearance of Christ to the two travelers on the road to Emmaus. After stating that both Luke and Mark mention this appearance, Augustine wrote as follows:

“The latter evangelist reports the same incident in these concise terms: ‘And after that He appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked and went to a country-seat.’ For it is not unreasonable for us to suppose that the place of residence referred to may also have been styled a country-seat; just as Bethlehem itself, which formerly was called a city, is even at the present time also named a

51 ~ See the footnote on p. 132 in the article by Roelof van den Broek, “A Latin *Diatessaron* in the ‘Vita Beate Virginis Marie et Salvatoris Rhythmica,’” in *New Testament Studies*, Vol. XXI, 1975. For more information about Ephrem Syrus see Andrew Palmer's article at syrcom.cua.edu/Hugoye/Vol2No1/HV2N1Palmer.html .

52 ~ See the biography of Didymus the Blind by Glenn Davis at www.ntcanon.org/Didymus.shtml .

53 ~ See http://patrologia.ct.aegean.gr/PG_Migne/Didymus%20the%20Blind_PG%2039/De%20trinitate_.pdf ; this is part of a commendable dissemination of Migne's collection of patristic texts and other works presented at <http://patrologia.ct.aegean.gr/patrologia.htm> . Didymus' authorship of *De Trinitate* is not indisputable; however it is from his era and area.

village, although its honor has now been made so much the greater since the name of this Lord, who was born in it, has been proclaimed so extensively throughout the churches of all nations. In the Greek codices, indeed, the reading which we discover is rather “estate” than “country-seat.” But that term was employed not only of residences, but also of free towns and colonies beyond the city, which is the head and mother of the rest, and is therefore called the metropolis.”⁵⁴

From this paragraph, we may observe that Augustine used a Latin version of Mark which contained Mark 16:9-20, in which verse 12 was rendered in such a way as to convey to Augustine that the two travelers were walking toward a “*county seat*.” We may also observe that Augustine consulted Greek codices, and found the passage in them, and noticed that they did not convey quite the same meaning in 16:12, but instead referred to an “*estate*,” which is one meaning of the Greek term *αγρον*. It seems very reasonable to believe that Augustine’s Greek codices, as well as his Latin copies, were not brand new, and therefore we conclude that in this citation we have found the secure echo of at least two Greek codices, plus the Latin text from which Augustine quoted the entire passage, from the 300’s. At the same time, Augustine provides no hint that he has found any copies of Mark, Greek or Latin, that do not contain Mark 16:9-20, or which contain the Short Ending.

⁵⁴ ~ Augustine’s *Harmony of the Gospels*, Book III, ch. 25, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, Vol. 6; Philip Schaff, editor. Translated by F. Salmond.

Several witnesses listed in this chapter could credibly be assigned dates in the very late fourth century. They are Codex Alexandrinus (A), Codex Washingtonensis (W), the Sinaitic Syriac (Syr^S), the lectionary-system used by Augustine, Greek and Latin copies known to Jerome, and a Sahidic MS named Codex P. Palau Rib. Inv. Nr. 182.¹

In our examination of pertinent witnesses from the fifth century, we shall first consider Greek MSS, then versional evidence, and then patristic evidence, after which we shall consider Codex Bezae.

(1) Codex Alexandrinus (Codex A) is a very significant MS; it is the earliest MS known to preserve the Byzantine text of the Gospels. Codex A contains Mark 16:9-20 as part of the Gospel of Mark in the same format as the rest of the book. The MS is assigned a date of about 400, and is generally thought to have been made in Egypt. When made, it contained not only the Old Testament and New Testament but also the books of First Clement and Second Clement. In its present condition it is missing Mt. 1:1-25:5 and II Cor. 4:13-12:7, having been damaged at some time.

A note, written in Arabic, in this MS asserts that the codex had been made by Saint Thecla, a woman described in various texts (such as *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*) as a contemporary of Saint Paul. However, Samuel Tregelles offered a theory, the gist of which is very plausible, regarding the origin of the note: “The New Testament volume has long been mutilated, and begins now in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, in which chapter the lesson for Thecla’s Day stands. Tregelles thought that Thecla’s name might have on this account been written in the margin above, which has been cut off, and that therefore the Alexandrians or Cairenes or other Egyptians imagined that Thecla had written it.”²

Although Codex A includes Mk. 16:9-20, it did not originally include the Pericope of the Adulteress in the Gospel of John. The pages of John which contained the surrounding text of Jn. 7 and 8 are absent from the codex (having been perhaps removed by a copyist who intended to create a cancel-sheet containing the Pericope of the Adulteress, but who never did so), but a calculation of the potential of the capacity of the missing pages shows that they did not have room for the passage.

(2) Codex Washingtonensis (Codex W) is a very interesting MS of the Gospels, not only because it contains the “Freer Logion” which was mentioned in chapter one, but also because its texts seem to have been pieced together from the remains of assorted exemplars of differing qualities. Bruce Metzger summarizes the situation: “In Matthew and Luke viii. 13-xxiv. 53 the text is of the common Byzantine variety, but in Mark i. 1-v. 30 it is Western, resembling the Old Latin; Mark v. 31-xvi. 20 is Caesarean, akin to p45; and Luke i. 1-vii. 12 and John v. 12-xxi. 25 are Alexandrian.”³ Codex W’s Gospels-text is a patchwork. This does not require us to imagine that it is as old as the severe persecution which occurred in the reign of Diocletian (c. 303) – in which many Christian copies of Scripture were destroyed – but it shows that this codex may echo an exemplar which was put together from the remains of MSS which had been rescued only partially from persecutors.⁴

1 ~ This Sahidic MS., made public in 1972, is currently housed at the Seminario de Papirologia de la Facultad Teologica in Barcelona, Spain.

2 ~ C.R. Gregory thus summarizes Tregelles’ surmise on p. 341 of *The Canon and Text of the New Testament*, © 1907 by Charles Scribner’s Sons, NY.

3 ~ p. 57, *The Text of the New Testament* by Bruce Metzger, © 1992 Oxford Univ. Press, NY.

4 ~ Henry A. Sanders proposed such a theory in *The Washington Manuscript of the Four Gospels*, (c) 1912 The Macmillan Co., NY; see p. 133. Sanders also suggested that the text of W in John 1:1-5:11 might deserve to be treated as if it is a separate MS.

(3) Copies, Especially Greek Ones, Known to Jerome, were mentioned by Jerome when he made a comment about the interpolation known as the “Freer Logion” in *Dialogue Against the Pelagians*, II:15, stating that it was found “in certain exemplars and especially in Greek codices near the end of the Gospel

of Mark.” The composition-date of *Dialogue Against the Pelagians* is 417; therefore these copies were made before that year. The fact that the Freer Logion was present in these copies implies the presence in them of the surrounding text of Mark 16:9-20 as well.

(4) Codex Ephraemi. (Codex C) is dated to about 450. It is a palimpsest; in the 1100’s its Biblical uncial text was washed off so that the parchment-pages could be used instead as material upon which to write a collection of sermons by Ephraem, who was a leader of the church in Syria in the 300’s. The text is for this reason difficult to read. In addition, the MS is quite incomplete; only 145 leaves of the New Testament portion, original consisting of 238 leaves remain. Nevertheless enough of this codex has survived, in sufficient condition, to attest to its inclusion of Mark 16:9-20.⁵

(5) The Sinaitic Syriac (Syr^S) is assigned a production-date of about 400. It was found at Saint Catherine’s Monastery in 1892. Like Codex C, Syr^S is a palimpsest; its pages were unbound, washed, and reassembled to be used (along with similarly recycled parts of another old book⁶) as the material on which to write a collection of profiles of martyrs. Syr^S concludes the Gospel of Mark at the end of 16:8.

The Gospels-text of Syr^S agrees with B and Ⲛ in this regard, and at some other points where B and Ⲛ otherwise stand almost alone: Syr^S does not include Mt. 23:14, Lk. 22:33-34, and Lk. 23:34. This indicates a shared influence at some point in the ancestry of their texts. Yet Syr^S often agrees with the “Western” text rather than the Alexandrian. For example, Syr^S agrees with Latin Codex Bobbiensis in a number of passages: both omit “did not know her until” in Mt. 1:25; both omit “Repent, for” in Mt. 4:17, both omit Mt. 5:47, and both omit (as do Codex D and it^a) Mt. 9:34.⁷ And in Mt. 27:16, Syr^S shares the reading “Jesus Barabbas” with “Caesarean” witnesses.

Cumulative, this strange mixture of readings indicates that first Syriac ancestor of the Gospels-text of Syr^S may have been a “Western” copy in the third century, which found its way to a locale where the Alexandrian Text dominated, and that as a result various Alexandrian readings were adopted over the course of transmission up to the production-date of Syr^S.

The earliest Syriac stratum of this text may have been elicited in part by a suspicion that the Diatessaron, which was widely used in Syria, promoted the Encratic heresy which its creator Tatian endorsed. Theodoret, a leader of the Syriac churches, writing in A.D. 453 claimed that Tatian had not only failed to include Jesus’ genealogies in the Diatessaron, but had cut out “whatever goes to prove the Lord to have been born of the seed of David according to the flesh.”⁸

5 ~ The readings of Codex C in Mk. 16:9-20 are provided in the textual apparatus in the Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece, 27th edition, pp. 148-149.

6 ~ See pp. xvi-xvii in the *Introduction* by Agnes Smith Lewis in The Four Gospels in Syriac Transcribed from the Siniatic Palimpsest by Robert L. Bensly, J. Rendel Harris, and F. Crawford Burkitt, © 1894 Cambridge University Press, 1894, at purl.org/BibleMSS. The other recycled book contained, in Syriac, “Acts of Thomas” and “The Repose of the Virgin Mary.”

7 ~ These shared features and others are pointed out by James Scott Trimm in the online book Textual Criticism of the Semitic New Testament (at www.nazarene.net/hantri/FreeBook/AramaicTextualCriticism.htm). See especially ch. 8). Trimm proposed that some Old Latin texts descend from Syriac MSS.

The Sinaitic Syriac MS was described and its text was published in 1894, in *The Four Gospels in Syriac Transcribed from the Sinaitic Palimpsest* which can be read online at alpha.reltech.org/cgi-bin/Ebind2html/BibleMSS/SyrSin.

8 ~ J. Rendel Harris provides this quotation from Theodoret in Greek and English on p. 13 of *The Diatessaron of Tatian – A Preliminary Study*, pub. C.J. Clay and Sons, 1890.

The text of Syr^S occasionally contains a nuance which emphasizes, or *overemphasizes*, the physicality of Christ. A chief example of this is Mt. 1:16, where Syr^S reads the Syriac equivalent of, “Jacob begot Joseph; Joseph, to whom was betrothed Mary the virgin, begot Jesus who is called the

Christ.” However, there is generally not enough evidence to support the idea that the absence of Mk. 16:9-20 in this witness is due to any mechanism other than its absence from the exemplar. This indicates that in the locale where Syr^S was made, the abrupt ending made a brief incursion into the Syriac version.

(6) Old Latin Codex Bobbiensis, known as it^k, is the only known extant copy of Mark that ends with the Short Ending. Its production-date is generally assigned to the early fifth century; a sixth-century date is also feasible. The Latin text of Mark which it contains is rather quirky; it appears to be descended from the same African Latin text-stream used by Cyprian in the middle of the third century; however it displays some unique and surprising features which must be appreciated if the weight of this witness is to be correctly gauged. Philip Burton, in a study of the Old Latin texts, stated that “k’s text is independent and owes nothing to any other known tradition.”⁹

In Mk. 16, between v. 3 and v. 4, it^k contains a remarkable interpolation: “*Subito autem ad horam tertiam diei factae sunt per totam orbem terrae, et descenderunt de caelis angeli et surgent in claritate vivi Dei simul ascenderunt cum eo; et continui lux facta est. Tunc illae eccesserunt ad monimentum.*”¹⁰ This means, “But suddenly at the third hour of the day there was darkness over the whole circle of the earth, and angels descended from the heavens, and as he was rising in the glory of the living God, at the same time they ascended with him, and immediately it was light. Then the women went to the tomb.”¹¹

This interpolation almost certainly springs from its creator’s familiarity with the pseudepigrapha-text called *Gospel of Peter*, in which the following account of Christ’s resurrection is contained:

“When the Sabbath morning dawned, a crowd came from Jerusalem and the surrounding area that they might see that the tomb had been sealed. But during the night in which the Lord’s day dawned, while the soldiers were stationed in pairs to keep watch, a great voice came from heaven. And they saw the heavens open and two men descend from there, having a great radiance and approaching the tomb. Then, the same stone which had been put in the entrance rolled away from it and gave way partially. And the tomb was opened and both young men went in.

Then, seeing this, these soldiers woke up the centurions and elders, for they themselves were all there to keep watch. And while they were describing what they had seen, again they saw three men coming out from the tomb, two supporting the other and a cross following them. The heads of the two reached up to the heavens and the head of the one they were leading by the hand went beyond the heavens. And they heard a voice from heaven saying, ‘Did you preach to those who sleep?’ Obediently, there was heard from the cross, ‘Yes.’”¹²

⁹ ~ p. 17, *The Old Latin Gospels – A Study of Their Texts and Language*, © Philip Burton, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

¹⁰ ~ p. 146, Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece*.

¹¹ ~ see Metzger, p. 121-122, UBS *Textual Commentary*.

¹² ~ This quote was adapted from the online presentation at gospels.net/translations/akhmimpetertranslation.html. The *Gospel of Peter*, which is assigned a composition-date in the second century, can also be read at www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/gospelpeter.html and information about its background is available at www.earlychristianwritings.com/info/gospelpeter.html.

The composition-date of *Gospel of Peter* may be confidently assigned to the second century. It is referred to in Eusebius’ *Ecclesiastical History*, Book Six, ch. 12, where Eusebius describes the activities of Serapion, who served as bishop in Antioch in about A.D. 200. Eusebius stated that Serapion composed a treatise about *Gospel of Peter* to expose its subtle promotion of false doctrines.¹³

A text containing such an interpolation may be suspected of displaying further signs of editorial creativity. Another such sign is found in it^k in Mk. 16:1, where the names of the women who visited the tomb are absent (perhaps in order to facilitate an easier harmonization with the accounts in the other Gospels). And another is found in 16:8, where the entire phrase, “and they said nothing to anyone” has been excised (so as to not contradict the Short Ending’s statement that the women proceeded to report about their encounter with the angel).

Yet another is found in the words of the angel to the women in 16:7, where the words of the angel have been altered so as to say, “Go tell his disciples and Peter that behold, *I* go before you into Galilee, there you will see *me*, just as *I* told you.” This could be the result of a clumsy but innocent attempt to conform the passage to Mt. 28:10; on the other hand, a docetist could perhaps draw from this the point that the young man at the tomb was Jesus, manifested in a form which the women did not recognize.

Metzger has pointed out other quirks in it^k: in the Short Ending, instead of “cum Petro” the copyist wrote “cum puero,” and, “He twice brings in pagan deities: ‘he calls Elias’ appears as *Helion vocat* (Mark xv. 34), and ‘How much does a man differ from a sheep’ is made into *Quanto ergo differt homo Ioui* (Matt. xii.12)!”¹⁴ “Helion” refers to Phoebus, a sun-deity, and “Ioui” refers to Jove, that is, Jupiter. We may deduce that the copyist was acquainted with neither Christ’s sayings nor the story of his crucifixion.

The text of it^k may fairly be suspected of being a form of Matthew and Mark edited by docetists. The MS itself seems to have been written by a person unfamiliar with Christianity. Yet even such a manuscript is useful, for if it^k’s agreements with the text used by Cyprian in the mid-200’s are indicative of the antiquity of it^k’s basic text-form, a possible implication is that the Short Ending existed in Latin not only in the 400’s, but in the middle of the 200’s.

It^k also provides a link between the *Gospel of Peter* and a transmission-stream containing the Short Ending. The possible significance of this shall be explored later.

(7) Sahidic Codex P. Palau Rib. Inv. Nr. 182, the Marcan part of an Egyptian MS containing Luke and Mark, was produced in about 425. Prior to its publication in 1972, P.E. Kahle’s investigations into the text of Mark in Sahidic MSS led him to observe that only the youngest Sahidic MS of Mark “regards 16.9-20 as part of the original text and indicates no alternative.” Most of the other Sahidic MSS of Mark contain both the Short Ending and 16.9-20, and “indicate by short notes that these are found in some

13 ~ M.R. James provides this extract from Eusebius in *The Apocryphal New Testament*, pub. Oxford, Clarendon Press 1924. It, and references from other patristic references to the *Gospel of Peter*, are at www.earlychristianwritings.com/peter-references.html. For more about Serapion of Antioch one may consult www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/serapion.html.

14 ~ p. 315-316, *The Early Versions of the New Testament*, © 1977 Oxford University Press, Oxford. Yet another quirk of the MS may be observed in Image Seven (identical to the picture at www.bible-researcher.com/bobiensis.html) in which, we observe, the copyist omitted the word “*praedicationis*,” which is placed in the lower margin. Philip Burton mentioned another quirky reading in it^k in Mt. 13:23, where instead of “*seminatur hoc est*” the copyist wrote “*femina turba est*.” – p. 16, *The Old Latin Gospels*, © 2000 Philip Burton, Oxford University Press.

manuscripts.” Kahle expressed a strong suspicion that in earlier Sahidic MSS, Mark ended at 16:8.¹⁵ In 1972, when Hans Quecke published an edition of Sahidic Codex P. Palau Rib. Inv. Nr. 182, comparing its text to that of another Sahidic MS, Kahle’s suspicion was confirmed. In Sahidic Codex P. Palau Rib. Inv. Nr. 182, the text of Mark ends at 16:8.

Thus a history of textual development within the Sahidic transmission-stream may be reconstructed in which the earliest known text of Mark ended at 16:8, followed by a period in which some copies had the Short Ending and other copies had 16:9-20, followed by a period in which they were both retained, followed, finally, by a period in which only 16:9-20 was written.

Although Sahidic Codex P. Palau Rib. Inv. Nr. 182 is the earliest extant Sahidic copy of Mark, older MSS of other NT books in Sahidic exist. The Crosby-Schoyen Codex, for example, which includes the book of First Peter in Sahidic, was made in the 200's.¹⁶ It would be somewhat amazing if Sahidic churches used First Peter without also having the Gospels in their own language. So we may surmise that

Image Eight has been removed.

IMAGE EIGHT:
The End of Mark, with the Short Ending,
in Codex Bobbiensis.

15 ~ See Kahle's article "The End of St. Mark's Gospel: The Witness of the Coptic Versions," *Journal of Theological Studies*, N.S. II (1951), pp. 49-57. A helpful essay by J. Warren Wells about the Sahidic Version and its representatives may be found at sahidica.warpcu.com/SahidicaIntro.htm.

16 ~ A picture and brief description (perhaps inaccurate in some details) of the Crosby-Schoyen Codex are accessible at www.schoyencollection.com/Coptic.htm. A page from an early (mid-300's) papyrus codex of Acts, written in Sahidic, may also be seen at www.katapi.org.uk/BibleMSS/Sahidic.htm.

the Gospels were first translated into Sahidic no later than the 200's. It is from this early stratum of the Sahidic version, which is closely aligned with the Greek Alexandrian text, that Sahidic Codex P. Palau Rib. Inv. Nr. 182 appears to descend.

(8) The Peshitta is the standard Syriac text of the New Testament. The Peshitta does not include Second Peter, Second John, Third John, Jude, and Revelation. It is preserved in over 350 MSS, including some from the fifth and sixth centuries.¹⁷ The Peshitta has been subject to a shifting tide of opinions about its

origin and importance. Until the late 1800's, scholars tended to assume that the Peshitta existed in the third century, on the grounds that a translation produced much later than that would have a fuller canon. It was also thought that because the Peshitta was used throughout Syria by theologically competing groups – by Nestorians and Monophysites – it probably was created well before their schisms were accomplished (as the Nestorian division was in 431), for in that case whatever groups held views opposing those of the Peshitta's translator would tend to consider it tainted.

In 1904 that view was challenged by F.C. Burkitt, who showed that the Syriac writer Ephraem, who died in 373, had never used the Peshitta Gospels. Burkitt theorized that Rabbula (Monophysite bishop of Edessa in 411-435) created the Peshitta. For a while Burkitt's research appeared persuasive (despite its implication that the Nestorians embraced a translation by their nemesis Rabbula), for, among other things, it was supported by a statement in a biography of Rabbula (composed in the 400's): "By the wisdom of God that was in him he translated the New Testament from Greek into Syriac because of its variations, exactly as it was."¹⁸

However in 1951 Arthur Vööbus, having carefully revisited the subject, showed that Rabbula frequently used a Syriac text which was not the Peshitta; it was some other Syriac text.¹⁹

If Rabbula did not create the Peshitta, what text was it that his biographer mentioned? If Rabbula, in the course of translating the NT books in the Syriac canon from Greek into Syriac, conserved some effort by basing his edition of the Gospels on an earlier Syriac version which he trusted, this may suggest that the text of the Curetonian Syriac (of which we shall speak shortly), rather than the Peshitta, was Rabbula's production, alongside other books.²⁰

Since we cannot justifiably attribute the Peshitta to Rabbula, its precise origin remains a mystery, though it must have been produced a considerable time before the middle of the 400's. It is possible that the Peshitta was produced in the 300's and was eventually embraced throughout Syria so thoroughly that

17 ~ F. G. Kenyon names "Add. MS. 14459, in the British Museum, containing the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark," as one of the Peshitta copies from the fifth century, and also says, "At least a dozen more are not later than the sixth century, three of them bearing precise dates in the years 530-9, 534, and 548," - p. 230, Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts, © 1958 by Kathleen Mary Kenyon and Gwendoline Margaret Ritchie, publ. Harper & Row. See also Metzger, Text of the NT, pp. 69-70.

An extensive essay by Andreas Juckel about an early Peshitta MS, Codex Phillipps 1388, produced in about 500, is at syrcom.cua.edu/Hugoye/Vol6No1/HV6N1Juckel.html.

18 ~ This biography of Rabbula is cited in *S. Ephraemi Syri, Rabulae Episcopi Edesseni, Balaei, Aliorumque Opera Selecta*, by J. J. Overbeck.

19 ~ An interesting account of research done on the origin of the Peshitta, and other subjects, written by Steven Ring, can be read at www.srr.axbridge.org.uk/syriac_versions.html. See also the essay at www.bible-researcher.com/syriac-isbe.html.

20 ~ A fragment of a Syriac copy of the Peshitta, displaying Romans 6:12-10:7, is in the Schoyen Collection of MSS (#2530). A picture and brief (and questionable) description of this MS are at www.schoyencollection.com/OtherBible.htm#2530 and an essay by Andreas Juckel, describing it, may be accessed at syrcom.cua.edu/Hugoye/Vol6No2/HV6N2Juckel.html.

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it displaced not only the Diatessaron but also the *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe* promoted in the 400's by Rabbula and Theodoret.

No unmutilated Peshitta MS of Mark lacks 16:9-20.

(9) The Curetonian Syriac, or Syr^C, is so-named because its pieces, after being transported from Egypt to the British Museum, were identified in 1942 by William Cureton as the remnants of an old Syriac version of the Gospels; after careful study he published an edition of the MS in 1858. The MS was most likely produced in the late 400's. The text of Syr^C consists of Mt. 1:1-8:22, 10:32-23:25, Mk. 16:17-20,

Jn. 1:1-42, 3:6-7:37, 14:10-29 (incomplete), and Lk. 2:48-3:16, 7:33-15:21, 17:24-24:44. Thus Syr^C supports the inclusion of 16:9-20 by preserving only 16:17-20 and no other text from the Gospel of Mark. The text of Syr^C often agrees with the text of Syr^S, and the two MSS seem to be different forms of one Old Syriac version.

The contents of Syr^C may constitute the remains of Rabbula's translation of the Syriac NT: he is known to have issued a decree stating, "The presbyters and deacons shall see to it that in all the churches a copy of the *Evangelion de Mepharreshe* shall be available and read."²¹ And in Syr^C this title is found.²² The term "*Evangelion de Mepharreshe*" means simply "the separated Gospels," as contrasted with the combined Gospels in the Diatessaron.

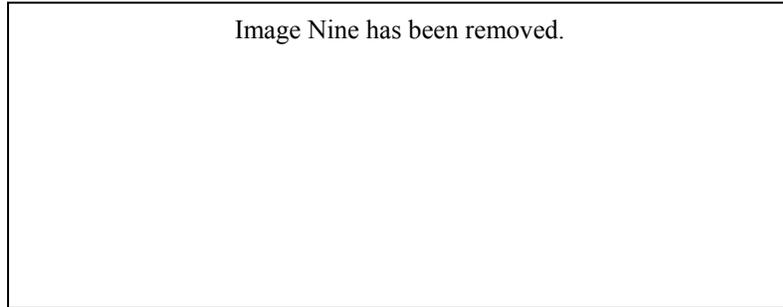


IMAGE NINE:
The title "*Evangelion de Mepharreshe*" in Syr^C.

(10) **Old Latin Codex Veronensis**, called it^b, is a copy of the Gospels, in the order Mt., Jn, Lk, and Mk., written on purple parchment in silver (and, in some places, gold) ink. It is assigned a date around 400. It^b includes Mk. 16:9-20.²³ Some researchers have classified it among the witnesses to the "African" Old Latin.

(11) **The Armenian Version** has perhaps the most complex history of any versional witness to the NT text. Certainly it has the strangest presentations of Mk. 16:9-20.

In the 400's a new Armenian alphabet was made so that an Armenian Bible could be written. (An ancient Armenian alphabet had existed, but it was regarded as an instrument of paganism, resulting in a sort of scripticide in the 300's.) In 389, a man name Mesrop Mashtots was concerned about the dominant use of non-Armenian languages, such as Syriac, in the liturgy and literature in Armenia. By the end of 406 he had developed the Armenian alphabet.

As soon as the Armenian alphabet was completed, popular demand arose for an Armenian version of the Scriptures. The writer Ghazar P'arpetsi describes the scene:

21 ~ This statement is cited by various researchers, including Theodore Zahn on p. 105 of *Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons*, i., 1881.

22 ~ Image Eight, showing a page from Syr^C with the title "*Evangelion de Mepharreshe*," was posted online by Paul Younan.

23 ~ Images of two pages of it^b are accessible from <http://itsee.bham.ac.uk/vetuslatina/GospelMss.htm> .

"Every soul was ardent for instruction in [written] Armenian, glad that they had been released from the darkness – as it were – of the disability of the Syriac into the light. But they were thrown into uncertainty and were hindered by the lack of Bibles; for the holy testaments of the church did not yet exist in Armenian."²⁴

With the approval of Vrampshapuh, king of Armenia, Mesrop – along with a churchman named Sahak – began to translate the Scriptures into Armenian, beginning with the book of Proverbs. Koriwn (390-447) stated that as a result of the efforts of Mesrop and Sahak, "Suddenly, in an instant, Moses, the law-giver, along with the order of the prophets, energetic Paul, with the entire phalanx of the apostles, along with Christ's world-sustaining gospel, became Armenian-speaking."²⁵

However, this initial work was followed by a second production-stage. At some point, four of Mesrop's assistants – Eznik Koghbatsi, Hovsep' Paghatsi, Kiriwn, and Ghewond – were sent to Edessa and to Constantinople. At least two of them attended the Council of Ephesus in 431. When, before the end of 431, they had returned to Armenia, they presented “authentic copies of the God-given book and many subsequent traditions of the worthy church fathers, along with the canons of Nicea and Ephesus, and placed before the fathers the testaments of the Holy Church which they had brought with them.”²⁶

These “authentic copies” were compared to the already-existing Armenian version. Sahak consequently undertook a revision of the Armenian Bible, taking the contents of these newly-available copies into account. C.R. Gregory reports that Eznik Koghbatsi and Hovsep' Paghatsi (Gregory called them John Ekelensis and Joseph Palnensis, using nomenclature from Tischendorf) “were sent to Alexandria to learn Greek thoroughly, and then they translated the whole New Testament from the Greek.”²⁷

Thus we may discern no fewer than three influences on the Armenian version: (1) the Syriac sources on which the first edition (405-412) was based, (2) the Greek sources taken to Armenia in 431, and (3) second thoughts of the Armenian scribes regarding their initial work.

Among over 1,500 Armenian copies of NT text,²⁸ the oldest known copy of Mark is in the Gospels of St. Lazaro (Matenadaran-6200), which was made in 887. It does not contain Mk. 16:9-20. However other Armenian copies, only slightly younger, contain Mk. 16:9-20. In 1937, E.C. Colwell published an essay, *Mark 16:9-20 in the Armenian Version*, in which he presented a table arranging 220 Armenian MSS into three groups: in 88 of these 220 MSS, Mk. 16:9-20 was fully included as part of Mark. In 99 of these 220 MSS, the Gospel of Mark ends at 16:8. The remaining thirty-three MSS were categorized as “ARM. MSS WHOSE INCLUSION OF MK 16 9-20 SHOWS EARLIER OMISSION.”²⁹

However, it must be emphasized that in this third group, the cited “earlier omission” is in the Armenian transmission-line, not necessarily in the MS. For example, the copy listed as MS #2620 – made in 1217 – ends the text of 16:8 near the end the second of two columns of the page; v. 8 is formatted in a “V” shape. Underneath the end of v. 8 are six blank lines. On the next page – which is written on the reverse side of the preceding page – Mark 16:9 begins, and 16:9-20 fills the next three columns of text (consisting of 13 lines each), plus 13 more lines in yet another column. The text of 16:20, like the text of 16:8, is formatted in a “V” shape, after which there is a one-line note. The next page is blank.³⁰

24 ~ quoted on p. 13, [The Bible in the Armenian Tradition](#) © 2001 in text Vreg Nersessian. See also Gevork Nazaryan's summary of the life of Mesrop at www.hyeetch.nareg.com.au/armenians/prominent_p2.html .

25 ~ Koriwn is quoted on p. 13, [The Bible in the Armenian Tradition](#) © 2001 in text Vreg Nersessian.

26 ~ quoted on p. 173, [The Bible in the Armenian Tradition](#) © 2001 in text Vreg Nersessian.

27 ~ p. 406, C.R. Gregory, [Canon and Text of the NT](#).

28 ~ Metzger mentions 1,244 catalogued copies containing text from the NT, and hundreds more in what was formerly the Soviet Union, on p. 82, [Text of the NT](#). Some researchers place the number incredibly higher.

29 ~ *Mark 16:9-20 in the Armenian Version*, by Ernest Cadman Colwell, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 56 (1937) © Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis.

30 ~ This information was helpfully supplied by Dr. Leslie McFall. The MS is at Cambridge.

52

This means that if Armenian MS 2620 had originally lacked 16:9-20, it would have had three blank pages between the end of Mark and the beginning of Luke. Clearly 16:9-20 was not added to this MS at some post-production stage; it contained Mk. 16:9-20 when it was made. A fourth category, MSS WHICH INCLUDE MARK 16:9-20 SEPARATED FROM THE REST OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK, should be made, as well as a fifth category, MSS WHOSE OMISSION OF MARK 16:9-20 SHOWS EARLIER INCLUSION, inclusion, that is, in the transmission-stream, not in the individual MS. In this fifth category must be included the British Library's Additional MS 21,932, in which Mk. 16 ends at the end of 16:8, but the text in verses 7 and 8 has been extensively spread out and double-spaced.³¹

Mark 16:9-20 was probably initially included in the Armenian version by Mesrop and Sahak (in 407-412), but when the Eusebian Canons became known in Armenia, the absence of the passage from the

Eusebian Canons elicited curiosity about it. After 431, the Armenian translators' doubts about the passage grew, until it was removed in a final production-stage. Possibly the translators disagreed among themselves about how to treat the passage, and settled, at least temporarily, on the course of writing the subscription to the Gospel of Mark after 16:8, writing 16:9-20, and then writing the subscription to the Gospel of Mark again.

Egyptian influence upon the Armenian version may be deduced when we examine Armenian MS Ejmiadsin-303, which was produced in 1072. In this MS, 16:9-20 appears at the end of the Gospel of John, and the Short Ending appears, in an unusual but easily recognizable form, at the end of Luke.³²

One of the earliest non-fragmentary Armenian MSS, Armenian MS Ejmiadsin-299, which was made in 989, includes 16:9-20, which is interesting, but not as interesting as the short note that is written in its margin between 16:8 and 16:9 in small red letters: "*Ariston eritzou*," that is, "Ariston the priest" (or, "Ariston the elder"). This will be examined in more detail in the next chapter.³³

(11) Macarius Magnes, the author of the work *Apocriticus* (mentioned earlier in the description of Porphyry and Hierocles), around 405, composed in that book a response to a pagan jibe that involved Mk. 16:18. In his response, Macarius Magnes did not suggest that the objection should be dismissed on the grounds that the passage on which it was based was not found in some MSS. Instead, Macarius Magnes attempted to explain the text in an allegorical way:

"We must not take the words about the 'sickness' and the 'deadly drug' in too literal a sense. Otherwise we shall find them contradicted by two facts. First, those who are unbelievers may likewise recover from deadly drugs Secondly, many unbelievers run away at the first sign of sickness, but we must not therefore argue that those who stay to tend the sick are believers in consequence. Such literal and manward tests will not do, or we shall have people boasting of their faith simply because they have some skill in nursing.

So the 'deadly drug' must be taken in a less literal sense, and this 'death' is like that wherein S. Paul says, 'We are buried with Him in baptism.' Here there is a 'deadly drug' which actually saves men from the tyranny of sin. For to drink this in faith means the death of the savage nature within, without any harm being received. So that which harms unbelievers does not harm the faithful."³⁴

31 ~ See the photograph on p. 19, *The Bible in the Armenian Tradition* © 2001 in text Vreg Nersessian, © 2001 in illustrations The British Library Board and other named copyright holders.

32 ~ See Colwell's description in *Mark 16:9-20 in the Armenian Version*, by Ernest Cadman Colwell, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 56 (1937) © Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis.

33 ~ See the descriptions of the Armenian Version at www.bible-researcher.com/e02-132.html and www.skypoint.com/~waltzmn/Versions.html#Armenian.

34 ~ This is an excerpt boiled down from Macarius Magnes' lengthy reply; for the entire quotation see chapter 24 in T.W. Crafer's presentation of the text (pub. 1919 by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Macmillan Co., NY), online at www.tertullian.org/fathers/macarius_apocriticus.htm#3_16.

53

From this we may conclude that Macarius Magnes found 16:9-20 in his text of Mark, and that he did not question its genuineness, even when it could have been apologetically convenient to do so.

(12) Jerome (347-420), a prolific scholar, not only produced the Vulgate but also wrote many books, commentaries, and letters. As we have seen, he included Mk. 16:9-20 in the Vulgate text of Mark, and in his *Dialogue Against the Pelagians*, II:15, he told his readers that he had found the interpolation "near the end of the Gospel of Mark," and used Mk. 16:14 to pin-point the location of the interpolation, thus showing that he did not regard 16:8 as the end of Mark, and that he fully expected that his readers' copies would contain 16:9-20.

However, one of Jerome's letters, *Epistle 120, To Hedibia*, has been often used as evidence that Jerome knew of many copies of Mark which lacked 16:9-20. Some commentators have misrepresented

this evidence. Dr. Ralph P. Martin, for instance, claimed that Eusebius and Jerome “say that the passage was unknown in all copies of Mark to which they had access,” and W.R. Telford stated that it was lacking in “all Greek manuscripts known to Eusebius and Jerome.”³⁵

A close examination of the contents of Jerome’s letter tells an interesting tale.³⁶ Burgon has pointed out one occasion on which Jerome responded to the questions of a correspondent by sharing with him “The opinions of all the commentators,” in order, he said, “to get rid of your question, and to put you in possession of ancient authorities on the subject.”³⁷ By examining certain details in *To Hedibia* we may deduce that Jerome did essentially the same thing in this letter.

First, in his prefatory remarks, Jerome mildly complains that Hedibia has consulted him when there were learned churchmen near her whose opinions should have been satisfactory. He politely suggests that her questions were sent merely to test his ability. He then states, “In responding to the questions that you put to me, you may know that I do not count on my own erudition and ability, but on the promise of he that said, ‘Open your mouth and I will fill it.’” This reference to Psalm 81:10, on its surface, may be understood as a humble statement of reliance on divine mercy. However it may be a surreptitious or humorous means by which Jerome conveyed that he was about to give ventriloquistic power to the works of others which he had on hand.

Second, after answering Hedibia’s first question (about how one can become perfect, and how a childless widow ought to live), and her second question (about how Mt. 26:29 ought to be interpreted), we come to Hedibia’s third question, and to Jerome’s restatement of it. Her third question is, “What is the reason that the Evangelists spoke about the resurrection and appearance of the Lord differently?”

The reply covering such a question would be a blanket of pages, considering the amount of variations in the Gospels’ accounts of Christ’s resurrection and subsequent appearances. Yet Jerome, instead of taking a panoramic view of the problem, focuses immediately on a specific facet of the question which we have seen before in Eusebius’ *Ad Marinum*:

“Here you ask first why Matthew said that, “But when the evening of the Sabbath had begun to dawn, on the first day of the following week the Lord rose again”, and Mark relates that his resurrection happened in the morning, thus writing, “However when he rose again, on the first day of the week, in the morning Mary Magdalene arrived, from whom he had expelled seven demons: and she departing announced to those who were mourning and weeping with her. And these hearing that he was alive, and that she had seen him, did not believe in him.”

35 ~ p. 152, Ralph P. Martin (Prof. of NT, Fuller Theological Seminary), *Where the Action Is*, © Copyright 1977 Regal Books, Bible Commentary for Laymen Series, Ventura, CA (sixth printing) and p. 144, W.R Telford, *The Theology of the Gospel of Mark*, © Cambridge University Press 1999. (On the following page, Telford states that the Freer Logion was known to Jerome.) Martin wrote, “The last 12 verses printed in the *King James Version* are missing from the two oldest Greek manuscripts, and other important witnesses, including several church fathers, Eusebius and Jerome, say that the passage was unknown in all copies of Mark to which they had access.”

36 ~ Roger Pearse has translated part of *To Hedibia* at www.tertullian.org/fathers/jerome_letter_120.htm.

37 ~ p. 52, *The Last 12 Verses of Mark* by John Burgon, © 1871 James Parker and Co., Oxford & London.

54

This is essentially the same question which Marinus asked Eusebius about a century before Jerome wrote to Hedibia. It would seem, though, that Hedibia expanded it by supplying the text of Mk. 16:9-11, though not in the usual form of the passage: Mary Magdalene, instead of announcing to those *who had been with him*, addresses those *with her*. And those who hear the report, instead of merely not believing *her*, did not believe *in him*.

(Such a form of the text may fortify the connection between Mk. 16:9-20 and *Epistula Apostolorum*, which likewise states that it was the women at the tomb who mourned and wept.)

We now consider Jerome’s answer:

“The solution of this question is two-fold [*duplex*]; for either we do not accept the testimony of Mark, that is carried in few gospels, almost all the Greek codices lacking this passage at the end, especially since it seems to speak various and contrary things to the other evangelists; or this must be

replied: that both speak truly: Matthew, when the Lord rose again on the evening of the Sabbath, Mark however, when Mary Magdalene saw him, that is, on the morning of the first day of the week.

“For so it must be distinguished: for when he had risen again, and being for a short while restricted by the spirit, it must be supposed, on the first day of the week in the morning he appeared to Mary Magdalene. So he had risen again on the evening of the sabbath, according to Matthew; he appeared to Mary Magdalene on the morning of the first day of the week, according to Mark. Which indeed John the Evangelist also signifies, stating that he was seen on the morning of the second day.”³⁸

Clearly Eusebius’ letter to Marinus and Jerome’s letter to Hedibia overlap. Yet significant differences also exist: Eusebius answers four questions, while Jerome answers 12; Jerome supplements the question with a full quotation of Mk. 16:9-11, while Eusebius only provides snippets from Mt. 28:1 and Mk. 16:9, and 16:8.

The variant “and hearing this,” which appears in *Ad Marinum*’s quotation of Mark 16:8, shows that Eusebius’ source is connected in some way to an eastern transmission-stream. This variant was detected by Kelhoffer, who noted that it is supported by Codex W, MS 099, and the Sinaitic Syriac MS.³⁹

Very probably, *Ad Marinum* is mostly an extract which Eusebius took from an earlier composition he had undertaken, inasmuch as he says at the outset (mildly paraphrased), “About the God-breathed Gospels: having already previously labored over two writings consisting of perplexing questions [about passages] near the beginning, and their answers, I am now skipping over the middle parts and proceeding next to the questions that everyone always asks at the end of the same texts.”⁴⁰ Eusebius makes this comment to explain why he is not resolving questions about problematic passages in the same sequence in which they appear in the Gospels: instead of resuming his work from where he left off, so as to answer questions about the middle-sections of the Gospels, he will address questions about the ends, because this is what Marinus, like many others, has requested.

38 ~ This rendering is based mainly on the translation made by Roger Pearse, with aesthetic changes, and with some adjustments made in light of Burgon’s presentation of the same material on pp. 53-54 of *The Last 12 Verses of Mark*. The initial part of Jerome’s Latin text is provided by Hort on p. 33, *Introduction, Notes*: “*Hujus quaestiois duplex solutio est: aut enim non recipimus Marci testimonium, quod in raris fertur evangeliiis, omnibus Graeciae libris pene hoc capitulum non habentibus, praesertim quum diversa atque contraria evangelistis ceteris narrare videatur; aut hoc respondendum.*”

39 ~ See Kelhoffer’s footnote, p.85, *The Witness of Eusebius’ ad Marinum and Other Christian Writings to Text-Critical Debates Concerning the Original Conclusion to Mark’s Gospel*, in *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 92, © Walter de Gruyter 2001. The Peshitta and the margin of the Harklean Syriac are also cited as containing this reading, or something like it, in at least some witnesses in the 27th Nestle-Aland *NTG*, p. 147, where it is also noted that Θ reads κακουσασα, with support from 565.

40 ~ See the Greek text with a more formal translation on p. 84 of Kelhoffer’s *The Witness of Eusebius’ ad Marinum and Other Christian Writings to Text-Critical Debates Concerning the Original Conclusion to Mark’s Gospel*, in *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 92, © Walter de Gruyter 2001.

55

When Eusebius refers to these questions as “The questions that everyone always asks at the end of the same texts,” he may indicate that in the course of earlier engagement with these questions, he has already prepared their resolutions. If Eusebius had already written a composition addressing many questions about the ends of the Gospels, then it may be that earlier composition, rather than *Ad Marinum*, which Jerome utilized when writing his letter to Hedibia. In other words, both Eusebius (in *Ad Marinum*) and Jerome (in *Ad Hedybiam*) may depend on a longer earlier composition by Eusebius.

A further detail in Jerome’s *Epistle 120* is interesting: as Burgon and Kelhoffer have observed, “The problems addressed in questions 3-6 of Jerome’s letter correspond to the order and contents of the *ad Marinum*.”⁴¹ After showing how to harmonize Mt. 28:1 and Mk. 16:9, Jerome preserves the following questions, with answers:

- (4) How can Mt. 28:1 be reconciled with Jn. 20:1-8?
- (5) How can Mt. 28:9 be reconciled with Jn. 20:17?

- (6) How, can Mt. 27:66, where soldiers are assigned to guard the tomb, be reconciled with Jn. 20:8-8, where Peter and John enter the tomb freely?
- (7) How can the statements in Matthew and Mark, to the effect that the apostles were to go to Galilee and see Jesus there, be reconciled with the statements of Luke and John, to the effect that Jesus appeared to them in Jerusalem?
- (8) What does Mt. 27:50-51 mean?
- (9) How can the statement in Jn. 20:22, to the effect that Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, be reconciled with the statement by Luke (in Lk. 24:49 and Acts 1:4) that Jesus would send the Spirit after His ascension?
- (10) What is the meaning of Rom. 9:14-29?
- (11) What is the meaning of II Cor. 2:16?
- (12) What is the meaning of I Thess. 5:23?⁴²

The contents of questions 4-9 may, except for #8, easily qualify as component-parts of an answer to the initial question, “What is the reason that the Evangelists spoke about the resurrection and appearance of the Lord differently?” The eighth question does not require a harmonization, and we would not normally expect it to be listed among answers to Hedibia’s initial question; yet it would not be out of place in a series of inquiries about the closing chapters of the Gospels.

It is one thing to find Jerome utilizing the work of Eusebius, but how shall we explain that Hedibia, a resident of Gaul, not only asked Jerome (in Latin) three of the same questions which Marinus asked Eusebius (in Greek), but also asked them in the same order?

The simplest solution is that such a thing did not happen. Hedibia asked a vague question, and Jerome, in reply, provided an answer which consisted of a series of questions-and-answers taken from Eusebius’ collection of answers to questions about the ends of the Gospels, figuring that whatever Hedibia had in mind in her vague question would likely be among the subjects addressed therein. Jerome included questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 not because Hedibia had asked those specific questions, but because they pertained to her general question and without them the component answers would have had no introductions. The source of these seven questions and their answers in *To Hedibia* is not Jerome; it is probably Eusebius’ earlier work on questions and answers concerning the ends of the Gospels.

41 ~ p. 99, Kelhoffer, *The Witness of Eusebius’ ad Marinum and Other Christian Writings to Text-Critical Debates Concerning the Original Conclusion to Mark’s Gospel*, in *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 92, © Walter de Gruyter 2001.

42 ~ See the summary of *Epistle 120*’s subjects at www.aroundomaha.com/ecf/volume29/ECF00011.htm (with some typographical errors).

56

Two other things may be noticed as we approach some conclusions about the weight of the testimony of Jerome: his use of secretaries and his use of his own recollection of other authors’ compositions. Occasionally in his letters he mentions that he has written by dictation – for instance near the end of his fierce treatise *Against Vigilantius*, no sooner than 406, he says, “I have devoted to the dictation of these remarks the labour of a single night, for my brother Sisinnius is hastening his departure for Egypt, where he has relief to give to the saints, and is impatient to be gone.”⁴³ Likewise in his afterword to *Epistle 117*, from 405, he says, “The letter has been, in fact, dictated off-hand and poured forth by lamp-light so fast that my tongue has outstripped my secretaries’ pens and that my volubility has baffled the expedients of shorthand.”⁴⁴ In 400, his *Epistle 84, To Pammachius and Oceanus* was also made by dictation.⁴⁵

According to Hort, *Epistle 120* “was written at Bethlehem in 406 or 407, when he was about 66 or 67 years old.”⁴⁶ About two years before this, in the third chapter of *Letter 75* written to Augustine, Jerome explained how he had written his commentary on Galatians: he had “followed the commentaries

of Origen in this matter. For that illustrious man wrote five volumes on the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, and has occupied the tenth volume of his *Stromata* with a short treatise upon his explanation of the epistle. He also composed several treatises and fragmentary pieces upon it, which, if they even had stood alone, would have sufficed. I pass over my revered instructor Didymus (blind, it is true, but quick-sighted in the discernment of spiritual things), and the bishop of Laodicea, who has recently left the church, and the early heretic Alexander, as well as Eusebius of Emesa and Theodorus of Heraclea, who have also left some brief disquisitions upon this subject. From these works if I were to extract even a few passages, a work which could not be altogether despised would be produced. Let me therefore frankly say that I have read all these; and storing up in my mind very many things which they contain, I have dictated to my amanuensis sometimes what was borrowed from other writers, sometimes what was my own, without distinctly remembering the method, or the words, or the opinions which belonged to each.”⁴⁷

In light of this open admission by Jerome that he borrowed material from other writers, and that when he recollected them he did not take great care to quote them precisely, it seems extremely dubious to regard Jerome’s statement about the end of Mark in *Ad Hedybiam* as a carefully worded report of Jerome’s independent investigations into the matter. It is more likely that we are looking here at an unfortunately careless example of the plagiaristic and paraphrastic practice which Jerome described to Augustine.

It is easy to picture Jerome, when dictating his reply to Hedibia, conserving much time when faced with her third inquiry by recollecting, among other sources, Eusebius’ *Ad Marinum* or a longer composition from which Eusebius also plucked material. We are convinced that such a scenario, better than any other, explains the corresponding order of questions in the two letters, and the differences in the wording in the two compositions. It is feasible that *Ad Marinum* originally was longer than its extant form, and has been condensed by its preservers, and Jerome quotes several questions-and-answers from its uncondensed form; it is also feasible that Jerome recollected one earlier composition after another,

43 ~ *Against Vigilantius* may be read at the Internet Medieval Sourcebook, at www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/jerome-againstvigilantius.html, © Paul Halsall, September 2000.

44 ~ See Jerome’s *Epistle 117*, translated by W. H. Fremantle in 1893, at www.voskrese.info/spl/jerome117.html.

45 ~ In Jerome’s *Epistle 84* at www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001084.htm, © 2007 by Kevin Knight, Jerome says, “This reply to your letter, my most loving brothers, I have dictated in all haste; and, overcoming my scruples, I have taken up my pen against a man whose ability I once eulogized.”

46 ~ p. 34, *Introduction, Notes*.

47 ~ *Letter 75*, in the collection of Augustine’s Epistles, in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers series, Philip Schaff, editor.

57

mixed in with his own comments, in *Ad Hedybiam*. But regardless of which is the case, the point is not disturbed that Jerome, in *Ad Hedybiam*, was merely perpetuating his spontaneous recollection of a statement in an earlier Greek composition.

Hort fully acknowledged, regarding Jerome’s answer to Hedibia’s third question, “This is certainly not an independent statement” but clarified, “yet it is not likely that a man so conversant with biblical texts as Jerome would have been content to repeat it unmodified, considering the number and importance of the verses in question, had it found no degree of support in the Greek MSS which had come under his own observations.”⁴⁸ When we consider, however, the derivative nature of the order of the questions, and Jerome’s open admission that he borrowed material from others and recited it imprecisely, we are led to conclude that there is little reason to suppose that Jerome felt obligated to perpetuate only statements that agreed with or resulted from his own research. That Jerome would perpetuate material for which he had found no support, and with which he did not necessarily agree, is not surprising when we consider how Jerome perpetuated other authors’ statements and excused himself on the grounds that he was the channel, rather the source, of such statements. As he explained to Augustine in Letter 75:

“I only confess frankly that I read the writings of the fathers, and, complying with universal usage, put down in my commentaries a variety of explanations, that each may adopt from the number given the one which pleases him.”⁴⁹

So: in *Ad Hedybiam* we read, in Latin, Jerome’s recollection of either *Ad Marinum* or the source Eusebius used in *Ad Marinum*. Furthermore, we learn from Letter 75, To Augustine, that Jerome made a point of providing a variety of explanations to his readers -- explanations drawn from the writings of earlier authors, and that Jerome did not feel obligated to verify those statements, or even to include only statements with which he agreed.

When we consider

- Jerome’s use of secretaries,
- Jerome’s reluctance to expend fresh effort on old questions,
- Jerome’s statement to the effect that the Scripture, “Open thy mouth, and I will fill it,” in some way applies to him as he writes this letter,
- Jerome’s inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20 in the Vulgate (in 383),
- Jerome’s use of Mk. 16:14 in *Dialogue Against the Pelagians* II:15 (317), and
- the inclusion of a Q-and-A (within the Eusebian material used by Jerome) about the meaning of Mt. 27:50-51 even though it did not pertain to Hedibia’s question about harmonization,
- Jerome’s frank admission to Augustine, in 404 (two or three years before he wrote *Ad Hedybiam*), that he perpetuated statements by earlier authors, drawn from his recollection of them, without requiring that they be statements with which he agreed,

we must conclude that Jerome perpetuated the Eusebian material without critically reviewing it, in order to efficiently answer Hedibia’s question without giving it more of his time than he felt it deserved. We also conclude, in light of Jerome’s admissions to Augustine, that the probability is high that Jerome’s reference to “almost all the Greek codices” is a loose recollection of Eusebius, not an independent observation by Jerome. Future citations of Jerome’s attestation to the existence of MSS lacking Mk. 16:9-20 should make this clear to the reader.

48 ~ p. 33-34, *Introduction, Notes*.

49 ~ Letter 75, ch. 5, in the collection of Augustine’s Epistles, in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers series, Philip Schaff, editor.

58

(13) The Lectionary-System Used by Augustine, in Hippo, North Africa, in the early fifth century, utilized Mark 16:1-20 as a reading for Easter, alongside Isaiah 53:5-7, Acts 1, and Ps. 145.⁵⁰ Burgon provided two selections from Augustine which he regarded as demonstrative: “Resurrectio Domini nostri I. C. ex more legitur bis diebus [Paschalibus] ex omnibus libris sancti Evangelii.” (*Opp.* v. 977 c)– “Quoniam hoc moris est . . . Marci Evangelium est quod modo, cum legeretur, audivimus.” “Quid ergo audivimus Marcum dicentum?” And he subjoins a quotation from S. Mark xvi. 12. – *Ibid.* 997 F, 998 B.”⁵¹

Hort concurs: “Three of Augustine’s sermons (ccxxxvi I, ccxxxiii *passim*, ccxxxix 2) shew that in his time, early in Cent. V, the narratives of all four evangelists were read at Easter in N. Africa, and that vv. 9-20 was included.”⁵²

(14) Augustine was born in 354, and served as bishop of Hippo (on the coast between Algiers and Tunis), in North Africa, from 395 to 430. In his treatise *On the Soul*, Book II, ch. 23 (sometimes called ch. 17 of the entire work) he uses Mk. 16:18 to make a point about the permissibility of reading dangerous books:

“What else are listening, and reading, and abundantly placing things in one’s memory, than several processes of drinking? The Lord, however, foretold concerning His faithful followers that even “if they should drink any deadly thing, it should not hurt them.” And so it happens that they who read discriminately, and give their approval to whatever is commendable according to the rule of faith, and disapprove of things which ought to be rejected, even if they memorize statements which are declared to be worthy of disapproval, they receive no harm from the poisonous and depraved nature of the sentences.”⁵³

Also in his *Fourth Homily on the First Epistle of John, To the Parthians*, ch. 2, Augustine writes, in the course of commenting on First John 2:28,

“Ye see, brethren: we believe on Jesus whom we have not seen: they announced Him, that saw, that handled, that heard the word out of His own mouth. And that they might persuade all mankind of the truth thereof, they were sent by Him, not dared to go of themselves. And where were they sent? Ye heard while the Gospel was read, "Go, preach the gospel to the whole creation which is under heaven." Consequently, the disciples were sent "everywhere," with signs and wonders to attest that what they spoke, they had seen.”⁵⁴

Thus we see that Augustine used Mk. 16:9-20, and that he, like Ambrose of Milan, took it for granted that his readers heard its contents in the church.

50 ~ see *Dated Lectionary Readings of Augustine of Hippo*, at www.bombaxo.com/augwillis.html based on pp. 22-57, G. G. Willis’ *Saint Augustine’s Lectionary*, Alcuin Club Collection no. 44; London: SPCK, 1962.

51 ~ p. 206, footnote p, The Last 12 Verses of Mark.

52 ~ p. 43, Introduction, Notes.

53 ~ For the English text on which this paraphrase is based, see www.newadvent.org/fathers/15082.htm © 2007 by Kevin Knight.

54 ~ The English text of Augustine’s *Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John*, translated by Rev. H. Browne, M.A., Canon of Waltham and Principal of the Chichester Diocesan College, and revised, with additional notes, by Rev. Joseph H. Myers, D.D., and published for Dr. Dods, by T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1873, is online at mb-soft.com/believe/txuf/august8d.htm.

59

(15) Eznik of Golb, who took part in the translation of the Armenian version, is credited with a quotation of Mk. 16:18 in his composition “*Against the Sects*,” also known as “*De Deo*,” 1:25. However, Eznik’s statement that believers cannot be affected by magic spells, and that they will be protected like Daniel, is not a clear-cut quotation. The similarity between Eznik’s statement and Mk. 16:18 may be fortuitous.⁵⁵

(16) Victor of Antioch produced his *Commentary on Mark* – the earliest known commentary focused on the Gospel of Mark – around the middle of the fifth century. In this commentary, Victor very frequently presents material which originated with earlier writers. Burgon stated, “He comes before us rather in the light of a Compiler than of an Author.”⁵⁶ As evidence of the derivative nature of much of *Victor’s Commentary on Mark*, Burgon noted that Victor’s comments on Mark 15:38-39 are from John Chrysostom’s 88th Homily on Matthew.⁵⁷

Near the end of the commentary, Victor presents a large portion of Eusebius’ comments known from *Ad Marinum*.⁵⁸ Following that, there is, according to Burgon, the following note:

“Notwithstanding that in very many copies of the present Gospel, the passage beginning, ‘Now when [Jesus] was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene,’ be not found, - (certain individuals having supposed it to be spurious,) – yet *WE, AT ALL EVENTS, INASMUCH AS*

IN VERY MANY WE HAVE DISCOVERED IT TO EXIST, HAVE, OUT OF ACCURATE COPIES, SUBJOINED ALSO THE ACCOUNT OF OUR LORD'S ASCENSION, (FOLLOWING THE WORDS "FOR THEY WERE AFRAID,") IN CONFORMITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN EXEMPLAR OF MARK WHICH EXHIBITS THE GOSPEL VERITY: THAT IS TO SAY, FROM THE WORDS 'NOW WHEN [JESUS] WAS RISEN EARLY THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK,' &C., DOWN TO 'WITH SIGNS FOLLOWING. AMEN.'"⁵⁹

Hort contended that this note is a later addition to the commentary, added perhaps by "Peter of Laodicea," to whom some copies of the *Commentary on Mark* credit its production.⁶⁰ Hort's case against the originality of the note consists mainly of five points:

- (1) Some copies of the *Commentary on Mark* do not contain this note.
- (2) In copies of the commentary which name Victor as the author, this note is only rarely found.

55 ~ F.C. Conybeare, in *The Expositor*, 1895, II. 402, claimed that Eznik quoted Mk. 16:18-19. Colwell noted that Eznik's quotation does not conform to the Armenian version's text, and suggested (on p. 384 of "*Mark 16:9-20 in the Armenian Version*"), "It is still possible that Eznik may have been quoting from the Greek, and/or quoting something that was not in the gospels." See a condensed presentation of "*Against the Sects*" (which is known by a few different names) at http://www.tertullian.org/rpearse/scanned/yeznic_refutation.htm .

56 ~ p. 61, *The Last 12 Verses of Mark*.

57 ~ p. 61, *The Last 12 Verses of Mark*. By modern standards, Victor would be considered a plagiarist.

58 ~ on pp. 62-63 of *The Last 12 Verses of Mark*, Burgon demonstrated this by providing a series of verbatim and nearly verbatim parallels between Victor's comments and Eusebius' comments.

59 ~ p. 64-65, *The Last 12 Verses of Mark*. Burgon supplies the Greek text of this comment on pages 288-289, with a qualifying remark that wide variations exist among copies of Victor's commentary.

60 ~ p. 35, *Introduction, Notes*. The contention that a writer in Laodicea would be consulting a cherished Palestinian exemplar seems dubious. The few copies which attribute the *Commentary on Mark* to "Peter of Laodicea" are no more credible than those which attribute it to Cyril of Alexandria. See the comments at www.bible-researcher.com/endmark.html#dissent .

60

(3) Victor makes no comments on the contents of 16:9-20; this "can have but one interpretation: vv. 9-20 must have been absent from his copy of the Gospel."⁶¹

(4) The additional comment "does not qualify Victor's own words but contradicts them,"⁶¹ and

(5) Victor's *Commentary on Mark* has undergone "bold rehandling"⁶¹ at the hands of copyists.

Hort's points may be deflected, in part, as follows:

(1) The lack of attribution of the commentary to Victor is an effect of copyists' awareness that Victor was more of a compiler than an author. Those who preserved Victor's *Commentary on Mark* wished to preserve the statements that he had collected from his authoritative patristic sources; they did not care about Victor's own opinions. (They would all know that Victor was a collector of older material because he explains this at the beginning of the commentary.) Here, and in other points where Victor personally chimed in, copyists may have removed his statement, regarding it as an unwanted new link in a chain made of otherwise more ancient and authoritative material.

(2) In Appendix D of *The Last 12 Verses of Mark*, Burgon lists 52 MSS containing a commentary on Mark of one sort or another. Of these 52 copies (which include MS 304), 19 name Victor as the author. Three copies which name Victor as the author – 12, 37, and 41 – also have this extensive note. No cause-and-effect relationship has been established between the presence of Victor's name as author, and the presence of the extensive note at the end of Mark.

(3) Victor added no further comments on 16:9-20 because his earlier patristic sources offered very little to add. Irenaeus, for instance, quoted Mk. 16:19 but offered no insightful interpretation of it. Furthermore, it is evident that the author of this note possessed a copy of Mark which included 16:9-20, and yet the note-writer failed to add comments on those verses; thus Hort's assumption that a writer's failure to comment on the passage must imply its absence from the writer's copy of Mark is invalid.

(4) Clearly, the note does not contradict Victor's own words, but the words of Eusebius which he has repeated.

(5) The "bold rehandling" by copyists accounts for the frequent condensation of the text of Victor's commentary much better than it accounts for the recurrence of such a precise note. The former could originate independently; the latter could not.

Despite the flimsiness of some of Hort's objections, it remains a possibility that Victor of Antioch did not originally include the final comment on 16:9-20.⁶² However, the preceding note, which parallels *Ad Marinum*, while it contains enough verbatim repetition to identify its source, gives the reader the definite impression that 16:9-20 is to be retained in the text.

With the questionable note, Victor emphatically affirms that although copies known to him lacked 16:9-20, he had discovered the passage in very many copies and in accurate copies, including a Palestinian MS held in high esteem. Without the note in question, Victor culminates his restatement of Eusebius' statements by recommending that 16:9-20 should be retained. Either way, if we hear Victor's voice at all, it is a call to retain 16:9-20.

(16) Prosper of Aquitaine, in the composition *The Call of All Nations*, II:2 (written in about 450), after explicitly citing Matthew 28:18-20, proceeds to write, "According to Mark, he speaks thus to the same

61 (three times) ~ p. 34, *Introduction, Notes*.

62 ~ In medieval MS 2346, Victor's *Commentary on Mark* has no commentary beyond 16:8. For a picture and brief profile of MS 2346, see www.smu.edu/bridwell/publications/ryriecatalog/1_3.htm.

61

Apostles: Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned."⁶³ In the same book, in ch. 3, he again quotes the first part of Mark 16:15.

(17) Codex Bezae, the flagship MS of the Western text of the Gospels and Acts, is listed here as an early fifth-century witness. Some scholars have placed it in the sixth century; at least one other has assigned it to the fourth century.⁶⁴ Its text is generally recognized as a form of the "Western" type which was widely used in the second and third centuries, although many barnacles, so to speak, have become attached to it over a long and interesting voyage.

Codex Bezae is an incomplete Greek-Latin MS in which Greek and Latin pages of the same portion of text face each other on opposite pages; the Greek portion is signified by "D" and the Latin portion is signified by "it^d." At the end of Mark, this form of presentation is abandoned by the codex in its present form. In this MS, the Gospels are arranged Mt.-Jn.-Lk.-Mk., followed (*in its present form*) by the Latin text of the last five verses of Third John.⁶⁵ After a set of facing pages containing Mark 15:43-16:6 in Greek and in Latin, the next page contains the text of Mk. 16:6-15 in Greek. On the following page we find, as we would expect, Mk. 16:6-15 in Latin. However, the Latin text is not the usual "Western" text; the text on this page is essentially a Vulgate text, and the lettering is smaller and neater than usual. On the following page, the text of Mk. 16:16-20 is supplied in Greek and Latin, in two columns, both on the same page, with the Greek text written in vivid blue ink, in small, neat uncials. D.C. Parker has proposed that since this sort of ink was used in MSS of texts copied in Lyons, and since these other MSS were

produced around the 800's, it is safe to say that "Codex Bezae was certainly in Lyons in the ninth century."⁶⁶

Following 16:20 in the Greek column are the words, "εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Μάρκον ἐτελεσθη" – here ends Mark's Gospel. And then, "ἀρχεται πράξεις ἀποστόλων" – here begins Acts of the Apostles.

Likewise after 16:20 in the Latin column, the subscription is "*euangelium scđ marcū explicit*" and then "*incipiunt Actus Apostorum*."⁶⁷

At least three things are clear: (1) Originally, the Greek text of D had Mk. 16:9-20. (2) The original pages, after the page that contains the Greek text of Mk. 16:6-15, after the word "εὐαγγέλιον," have been lost. An unknown quantity of text that included most of III Jn., and quite a bit more, between the end of Mark and the beginning of Acts, has also been lost. (3) The original text of it^d at the end of Mark, from the middle of 16:6 onward, is currently unrecoverable. (The same can be said of 128 leaves out of an original 534 leaves in the MS.)

63 ~ p. 91, St. Prosper of Aquitaine, The Call of All Nations, translated and annotated by P. De Letter; *Ancient Christian Writers* series, #14, J. Quasten and J. Plumpe, editors, © 1952 by Rev. Johannes Quasten and Rev. Joseph C. Plumpe.

64 ~ C.R. Gregory called Codex Bezae "of the sixth century" on p. 351, The Canon and Text of the NT. Metzger wrote that it dated "from the fifth or possibly sixth century," on p. 49, Text of the NT, and he mentioned in the same book (third edition) on p. 250 that "In the opinion of Hermann J. Frede, however, codex Bezae dates from the fourth century." More recently D.C. Parker has proposed that the codex was made in about 400, in Berytus (Beirut).

65 ~ Gregory on p. 352 of Canon and Text of the NT noted that a large portion of text between the end of Mark and the beginning of Acts is absent: "Wilhelm Bousset calculates that there is just room for the Revelation and the three Epistles of John."

66 ~ p. 47, D.C. Parker, Codex Bezae: An Early Christian Manuscript and Its Text, © 1992 Cambridge Univ. Press.

67 ~ Photo-facsimiles of Codex D from F.H.A. Scrivener's Codex Cantabrigiensis, Edited with a Critical Introduction, Annotations, and Facsimiles, (Frederick H. Scrivener, 1864 Deighton, Bell & Co.) are at rosetta.reltech.org/Ebind/docs/TC along with other MSS. A handwritten note in the upper right corner of F. 347b (the page containing the Greek text of Mk. 16:6-15) says, "ff. 398-850 gone from this quire."

62

The original presence of 16:9-20 in it^d may be deduced not only from its original presence in D, combined with the basic correspondence between D and it^d, but perhaps it is indicated also by a feature which J. Rendel Harris contends is one of many instances where the Greek text has been conformed to the accompanying Latin text. He explains:

"In Mark xvi. 11,

καὶ οὐκ ἐπιστεύσαν αὐτῷ,

the Latin is missing: but it must have been

ET NON CREDIDERVNT EI,

where *ei* by the way is feminine, so that the Greek has been corrected: and there is no doubt that the whole Latin sentence simply stands for the single Greek word

ἠπιστήσαν."⁶⁸

(18) Marcus Eremita (Mark the Hermit), after composing various works, died not long after 430. He has been listed among witnesses in favor of the inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20. However I have been unable to access *Patrologia Graecae* LXV. 905 to search his writings to locate the specific citation.

(19) John Chrysostom, bishop of Constantinople, died in 407 after a vigorous career in which he produced many writings, including *Homilies on First Corinthians*. Hort asserted that the evidence that Chrysostom used Mark 16:9-20 consisted of "two doubtful examples only."⁶⁹ The veracity of Hort's

statement may be judged by a presentation of some passages from Chrysostom's *Homilies on First Corinthians*, to which I have added bold print and references:

(1) *Homily III*, part 6 (I Cor. 1:17) – “To teach the wrestlers in the games is the task of a spirited and skilled trainer, but to place the crown on the conqueror's head may be the job of one who cannot even wrestle. So it is with **baptism. It is impossible to be saved without it** [cf. 16:16]; yet it is no great thing which the baptizer does, finding the will already prepared.”⁷⁰

(2) *Homily XIV*, part 2 (I Cor. 4:19) – “If it were a contest and a time for orators, you might reasonably be elated thereby. But since it is a case of **apostles speaking truth, and by signs confirming the same** [16:20], why are you puffed up . . .”

(3) *Homily XXXVIII*, part 5 (I Cor. 15:5) – “‘He appeared,’ says Paul, ‘to Cephas; He appeared to above five hundred brethren, He appeared to me also.’ **Yet surely the Gospels says the contrary, that He was seen of Mary first.** [16:9] But among men He was seen of him first who did most of all long to see Him.”⁷⁰ Hort declined to quote this passage for his readers and called it a “supposed reference” which “may be either taken directly from Mc xvi 9 or deduced from Jo xx 1-18.”⁶⁹ However, in the very next paragraph, where Chrysostom cites John 21:14, he specifically names John as the source he is quoting. Chrysostom had no reason not to do likewise in the preceding paragraph, if he had been making a deduction.

68 ~ see p. 103, J. Rendel Harris, *A Study of Codex Bezae*, in ch. 10, “*Further Cases of Latinization*,” Texts and Studies, 1893, ed. J. Armitage Robinson, Cambridge. Harris' theory of thorough Latinization of the Greek text of D has not withstood close scrutiny; however this example may be one of several isolated cases of the phenomenon.

69 (twice) ~ p. 40, *Introduction, Notes*.

70 (three times) ~ adapted, with minor alterations, from the translation by Talbot W. Chambers, 1889.

63

Chapter 4: Some External Evidence from the Mid-400's and Later

All extant Greek MSS made in or after the fifth century contain Mk. 16:9-20, unless they have undergone damage at the end of Mark – except for MS 304, which is the second witness we shall examine in this chapter.

(1) **Margin-notes in *f*¹ and Related Manuscripts** are cited in the UBS *Greek New Testament's* apparatus as witnesses which “*add vv. 9-20 with asterisks, obeli or critical note in ms*”¹ Initially it may appear that these MSS should be regarded as testimony against the inclusion of 16:9-20. It is not unusual for commentators to refer to these MSS as if they all have “scribal notes stating that older Greek copies lack them,” as Metzger wrote in his *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. Some Egyptian witnesses in this group of witnesses will be examined later. Here, we may begin with a look at MSS 20 and 215 (both from the 11th century), which both state,

εν τευθεν εως του τελους εν τισι των αντιγραφων ου κειται. εν δε τοις αρχαιοις, παντα απαραλειπτα κειται.

From here to the end forms no part of the text in some of the copies. In the ancient copies, however, it all forms part of the text.”²

If we initially supposed that the author of this note had seen some copies without Mk. 16:9-20, and had also seen some ancient copies which included it, no one would question our logic, until a further fact is introduced: this note is not located in these MSS at the beginning of 16:9; it is located, as Burgon noted, “*in the wrong place* in both of them, viz. *at the close of ver. 15*, where it interrupts the text.”⁴⁻² In

light of this, it is clear that we should not assume that an informative annotation implies an informed annotator; it may, as in the case of 20 and 215, merely indicate that the annotator has mechanically replicated the note from his exemplar.

Some MSS – specifically, 1, 205, 205abs, 209, and 1582 (1582 is dated to 989) – contain the following note, with inconsequential variations:

“Εν τισι μεν των αντιγραφων εως ωδε πληρουται ο ευαγγελιστης ·
εως ου και Ευσεβιος ο Παμφιλου εκανονισεν·
Εν πολλοις δε και ταυτα φερεται.”³

“*Now in some of the copies, the evangelist’s work is finished here, as is also Eusebius Pamphili’s canonization. But in many, this also appears.*”

1 ~ p. 196, GNT 2nd ed., see also p. 189, GNT, 4th ed. Besides the notes in the f^1 MSS, which probably all echo a single source, in MS 1241 (at St. Catherine’s Monastery) the last line of Mark 16:8, which is also the last line on the last page in a folio, is centered on the line. Contra the UBS-2 apparatus, 1241 does not have any trace of asterisks, obeli, or a critical note here. The format, however, probably reflects the copyist’s memory of a similarly formatted MS. In “*Six Collations of New Testament Manuscripts*,” edited by Kirsopp Lake and Silva New, the authors observed that “The end of f. [folio] 55 is εφοβουντο γαρ written in the centre of the line. The scribe has not done this elsewhere.” (p. 111, Harvard Theological Studies XVII, © 1932 Cambridge University Press.) On the same page of the same study, 1241 is observed to read “ειπον” in 16:7 (agreeing with \aleph B) and κυριος ιησους in 16:19 (agreeing with Irenaeus).

2 (twice) ~ see p. 118, Burgon, The Last 12 Verses of Mark, text and footnote. Hort states that this note is also found, and likewise displaced between v. 15 and v. 16, in MS 300, on p. 36 of *Notes on Select Readings*.

3 ~ cited on p. 107, footnote, Kelhoffer, The Witness of Eusebius’ Ad Marinum and Other Christian Writings, in *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 92, © Walter de Gruyter 2001. See also p. 148, Nestle-Aland 27th NTG, where the text is inexact. Also noted in Burgon, The Last 12 Verses of Mark, p. 119. The Greek text provided here corresponds to the annotation at the top of the page in MS 1, pictured on p. 130 (Plate 34) of Aland & Aland’s Text of the New Testament, © 1989 William B. Eerdmans and E.J. Brill.

64

It would appear that the author of this note (but not necessarily the copyists who perpetuated it) had first-hand knowledge that some copies lacked 16:9-20, that the Eusebian Canons made no allowance for 16:9-20, and that many MSS contained 16:9-20. However, this note sums up part of a note (described earlier) found in various copies of Victor of Antioch’s *Commentary on Mark*, and may be an abbreviated version of it, to which has been added the detail about the Eusebian Canons.

Further evidence tends to augment that theory: in another group of MSS – 15, 22, 1110, 1192, and 1210 – a note states,

“Εν τισι των αντιγραφων
εως ωδε πληρουται ο ευ-
αγγελιστης · Εν πολλοις
δε και ταυτα φερεται.”⁴

“*In some of the copies, the evangelist’s work is finished here. But in many, this also appears.*”

This very closely resembles the preceding note, minus the phrase about the Eusebian Canons. The format of MS 22 is particularly interesting: the words εφοβουντο γαρ finish Mk. 16:8, and in the right-hand margin next to those words is the word “τελος,” written in red, indicating the end of a lection-unit. After this, below the last line of 16:8, the note is written in red. Then the text of 16:9 begins.⁵

In addition to the notes in these MSS, a note in the margin of MS 199 states, εν τισι των αντιγραφων ου κειται τουτο αλλ’ ενταυθα καταπαυει, “*In some of the copies this does not occur, but it stops here.*”⁶

Now let us reconsider Metzger’s statement that “Not a few manuscripts which contain the passage have scribal notes stating that older Greek copies lack it.”⁷ It is unfortunate that this statement

has been worded in a way that allows readers to imagine that the scribal notes say, “The older Greek copies lack it.” Metzger’s statement should be understood to mean that the scribal notes refer to MSS older than the MS in which the scribe wrote the note. None of the notes state that “the older copies” omit 16:9-20. Instead, we may organize the notes’ contents as follows:

One MS (#199) says only that some copies do not contain 16:9-20.

Ten MSS (#1, 15, 22, 205, 205abs, 209, 1110, 1192, 1582, and 1210) say that some copies do not contain 16:9-20 but many copies do contain it.

Two MSS (#20 and 215 (plus #300, which is not given full consideration only because it may be a direct copy of one of the other two) say that some copies do not contain 16:9-20 but the ancient copies do contain it.

None of these MSS say that the more ancient copies do not contain 16:9-20.

Some points may be drawn from this evidence:

(a) The notes do not state that 16:9-20 is spurious.

(b) The notes do not state that 16:9-20 may be spurious.

(c) The notes tend to affirm the reliability of 16:9-20, rather than to draw it into question, by stating that either the ancient copies contain the passage, or that more copies contain it than omit it.

4 ~ as described by Wieland Willker in his online Textual Commentary on the Greek Gospels, Vol. 2b, 5th ed., © 2007 Wieland Willker, Bremen. The words are formatted here as they appear in MS 22.

5 ~ This is described by Burgon on p. 119 of The Last 12 Verses of Mark, and, in more detail, by Kelhoffer on p. 108, The Witness of Eusebius’ ad Marinum.

6 ~ MS 199 is thus cited by Kelhoffer on p. 107 of The Witness of Eusebius’ ad Marinum, depending on Aland, Schluss, note 3, p. 443. Burgon, on p. 120 of The Last 12 Verses of Mark, states that Birch, an earlier researcher, cites 199 but “has only this: εν τισι των αντιγραφων ου κεινται [?] ταυτα.”

7 ~ p. 123, Bruce Metzger, Textual Commentary on the New Testament, ©1971 by the United Bible Societies.

65

(d) While the note in 199, and the note in 20 and 215, may originate from independent sources, the rest of the notes appear to descend from a common ancestor, very likely one which was based on the comment by Victor (or Pseudo-Victor). We may thus reduce the number of independent witnesses among these MSS from “not a few” to “a few.” This conclusion is supported by the textual relationship between the f^1 MSS.

(2) **MS 304**, produced in the 1100’s, is sometimes cited as another Greek witness, besides \aleph and B, which omits 16:9-20. Kurt and Barbara Aland wrote, “As late as the twelfth century in the minuscule 304 the gospel ends at 16:8.”⁸ However, Dr. Maurice Robinson of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, having viewed a microfilm of MS 304, offered the following description:

“The primary matter is the commentary. The gospel text is merely interspersed between the blocks of commentary material, and should not be considered the same as a ‘normal’ continuous-text MS. Also, it is often very difficult to discern the text in contrast to the contents Following $\gamma\alpha\rho$ at the close of 16:8, the MS has a mark like a filled-in “o,” followed by many pages of commentary, all of which summarize the endings of the other gospels and even quote portions of them. Following this, the commentary then begins to summarize the $\epsilon\tau\epsilon\rho\nu\ \delta\epsilon\ \tau\alpha\ \pi\alpha\rho\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \mu\alpha\rho\kappa\omicron\upsilon$, presumably to cover the non-duplicated portions germane to that gospel in contrast to the others. There remain quotes and references to the other gospels in regard to Mary Magdalene, Peter, Galilee, the fear of the women, etc. But at this point the commentary abruptly ends, without completing the remainder of the narrative or the parallels. I suspect that the commentary (which contains only Mt and Mk) continued the discussion and

that a final page or pages at the end of this volume likely were lost I would suggest that MS 304 should not be claimed as a witness to the shortest ending”⁹

MS 304 did not escape the notice of Burgon in the 1800’s; he wrote, “The text of S. Mark is here [i.e., at the end of Mk. in 304] interwoven with a Commentary which I do not recognize. But from the correspondence of a note at the end with what is found in Possinus, pp. 361-3, I am led to suspect that the contents of this MS. will be found to correspond with what Possinus published and designated as “Tolosanus.””¹⁰ This should be compared to a comment by Hort: “The third commentary printed by Poussin comes likewise to an end at v. 8 in the Toulouse MS employed by him. But it is not yet known whether other MSS attest a similar text; and at all events the Toulouse scholia are here almost identical with those that are attributed to Theophylact, which certainly cover vv. 9-20.”¹¹

Until a detailed record of 304’s contents can be made, and compared to other MSS, especially 366 and 2482, and especially the text mentioned by Hort, it would be premature to confidently assert that Mk. 16:9-20 was absent from MS 304 when the MS was made. 304’s text of Matthew and Mark is Byzantine. Perhaps it would not be reckless to predict that 304 will turn out to be an incomplete copy of notations made by Theophylact and supplemented with a Byzantine text.

(4) Ethiopic MSS, descended from a translation made in Ethiopia sometime between the 300’s and 600’s, all contain Mk. 16:9-20. Bruce Metzger made this clear: “It has often been stated that three Ethiopic manuscripts, now in the British Museum, lack the last twelve verses of Mark. This statement, made originally by D. S. Margoliouth and reported by William Sanday in his *Appendices ad Novum Testamentum Stephanicum* (Oxford, 1889), p. 195, is erroneous.”¹²

8 ~ p. 292, *The Text of the New Testament*, by Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, © 1989 William B. Eerdmans and E.J. Brill.

9 ~ as quoted in Wieland Willker’s online [Textual Commentary on the Greek Gospels](#), Vol. 2b, 5th ed., © 2007 Wieland Willker, Bremen.

10 ~ p. 283, Burgon, [The Last 12 Verses of Mark](#), Appendix D.

11 ~ p. 35, [Introduction, Notes](#). Burgon’s “Possinus” and “Tolosanus” are Hort’s “Poussin” and “Toulouse MS.”

12 ~ p. 123, [Textual Commentary](#) © 1971 UBS.

66

Metzger made this point in different words in [The Early Versions of the New Testament](#): “The present writer, having examined the ending of Mark in sixty-five Ethiopic manuscripts, discovered that none, contrary to statements made by previous investigators, closes the Gospel at xvi.8, but that most (forty-seven manuscripts) present the so-called shorter ending directly after vs. 8, followed immediately by the longer ending (verses 9-20).”¹³

Metzger combined his own results with the research of William F. Macomber, who “examined 129 additional Ethiopic manuscripts of Mark. Of the total of 194 (65 + 129) manuscripts, all but two (which are lectionaries) have Mark xvi. 9-20, while 131 manuscripts contain both the Shorter Ending and the Longer Ending.”¹⁴ In light of this, the influential statement by Robert G. Bratcher and Eugene A. Nida that Mark 16:9-20 is omitted “by important codices of the Armenian, Ethiopic, and Georgian versions”¹⁵ should be dismissed as far as the Ethiopic version is concerned.

The evidence described by Dr. Metzger implies that no un mutilated Ethiopic MS of Mark ever lacked 16:9-20. It also suggests that by the time the Gospel of Mark was translated into Ethiopic, the Short Ending was being used as a liturgical flourish to conclude a lection-unit which would otherwise conclude at the end of 16:8; at first the Short Ending (with the variant “appeared to them”) was in the margin but it was inserted between 16:8 and 16:9 in the later Ethiopic MSS.

(5) 2386, a Gospels-MS from the 1100’s, was cited in the 2nd edition of the UBS [Greek New Testament](#) as a witness for the non-inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20.¹⁶ However, as Bruce Metzger made clear in his [Textual Commentary](#), 2386 “is only an apparent witness for the omission, for although the last page of Mark closes with εφοβουντο γαρ, the next leaf of the manuscript is missing, and following 16.8 is the

sign indicating the close of an ecclesiastical lesson ($\tau\lambda = \tau\epsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$), a clear implication that the manuscript originally continued with additional material from Mark.”¹⁷

(6) **1420** has been cited as a witness for the non-inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20. For instance, James Kelhoffer wrote, “Sinaiticus (S) and Vaticanus (B) end promptly with εφοβουντο γαρ (Mark 16,8). The same is true for 304, 1420 and 2386.”¹⁸ However a footnote on the same page must be read to gain an accurate appreciation of the evidence regarding 2386 and 1420: “A page is missing after Mark 16,8 in 1420 and in 2386.”¹⁸ 1420 lacks Mk. 16:9-20 due to mutilation; it is missing *two* pages after 16:8.

(7) **Arabic Lectionary 13**, an Arabic lectionary-text stored at the Vatican Library, was cited in the 1800’s as a witness for the non-inclusion of 16:9-20. However, Metzger explains: “Since, however, through an accidental loss of leaves the original hand of the manuscript breaks off just before the end of Mk 16.8, its testimony is without significance in discussing the textual problem.”¹⁹

13 ~ p. 234, Bruce Metzger, The Early Versions of the New Testament, © 1987 Oxford University Press.

14 ~ p. 275, Bruce Metzger, The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration, © 1992 Oxford University Press.

15 ~ p. 506, A Translator’s Handbook on the Gospel of Mark by Robert G. Bratcher and Eugene A. Nida, © 1961 by the United Bible Societies, published by E.J. Brill, Leiden.

16 ~ p. 196, GNT, © 1966, American Bible Society *et al.*

17 ~ p. 122, Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, © 1971 by the United Bible Societies, Stuttgart.

18 (twice) ~ p. 98, Kelhoffer, *The Witness of Eusebius’ ad Marinum and Other Christian Writings to Text-Critical Debates Concerning the Original Conclusion to Mark’s Gospel*, in *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 92, © Walter de Gruyter 2001.

19 ~ p. 123, footnote, Textual Commentary.

67

(8) **Hesychius of Jerusalem**, according to Aland & Aland, was “a monk, from ca. 412 a presbyter in Jerusalem.”²⁰ In his *Homily on the Resurrection*, he wrote, “ομοιωσ δε και το παρα τω Μαρκω γεγραμμενον. ‘ο μεν ουν Κυριος – εκ δεξιων του θεου.”²¹

In a composition called “*Collection of Difficulties and Their Solutions*,” in a section focused on the appearances of angels to the women at the tomb, Hesychius writes as follows:

“The Lord appeared in various ways; [he appeared] to one of these who happened to be rather weak, and to another more mature. The Lord apportioned the manifestation of himself in a way appropriate [to their capacities]. For which reason Mark, having narrated briefly the [events] up to the one angel, ended his account.”²²

But lest we conclude that Hesychius’ copy of Mark ended without 16:9-20 (and without 16:8, which records an occurrence after the appearance of the angel), we should consider Hort’s description of this piece of evidence:

“Another work attributed to Hesychius (*Quaest.* lii in Cotel. *M.E.G.* iii.45) has been supposed to imply the absence of vv. 9-20, by saying that Mc “ended his narrative when “he had told in a summary manner the particulars down to the mention of the one angel.” But the context shews that the writer is speaking exclusively of the appearances to the women, and has especially in view the absence of the additional incident supplied by Lc xxiv 24: moreover in *Quaest.* l, p. 40, he uses a phrase founded on xvi.19.”²³

Thus Hesychius of Jerusalem may be considered a witness for the inclusion of 16:9-20.

(9) **Severus of Antioch** worked in the early 500's. He was excommunicated at the Council of Constantinople in 536.²⁴ Severus is apparently identified by Dionysius Bar-Salibi as the author of a homily which has also been attributed to Hesychius of Jerusalem.²⁵

Severus (if we favor the identification made by Dionysius Bar-Salibi) summed up the part of *Ad Marinum* which pertains to Mk. 16:9-20. He mentions that “the more accurate copies” end at the words, “for they were afraid,” and that “in some copies, this is also added” – after which he provides the text of 16:9. Severus proceeds to present the same objection posed by Eusebius: “This, however, seems to contradict to some extent what we before delivered” (referring to Mt. 28:1). Then Severus provides the same resolution that was provided by Eusebius: “We must be careful intelligently to introduce a comma after, ‘Now when He was risen’ and then to proceed, - “Early in the Sabbath. . . .”²⁶

Severus thus utilized Eusebius' comments, but rather than perceive and adopt Eusebius' own position, Hesychius advocated that 16:9-20 be retained.

20 ~ p. 179, Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, © 1989 William B. Eerdmans and E.J. Brill.

21 ~ p. 29, footnote, Burgon, *The Last 12 Verses of Mark*. Burgon cites the location of the reference, in a collection which mainly consists of the works of Gregory of Nyssa: “Greg. Nyss. *Opp.* iii. 415.”

22 ~ cited by Kelhoffer in *The Witness of Eusebius' ad Marinum*, ZNW, © 2001 Walter de Gruyter, accessing the Greek text presented by Aland, derived from Hesychius' *Collectio Difficultatum et Solutionum*, in section 1440 in the text in P.G. 93,1391-1448.

23 ~ p. 34, *Introduction, Notes*.

24 ~ p. 193, Aland & Aland, *Text of the New Testament*.

25 ~ see p. 41, footnote, Burgon, *The Last 12 Verses of Mark*, and Kelhoffer, p. 103, *The Witness of Eusebius' ad Marinum*.

26 ~ see pp. 57-59, Burgon, *The Last 12 Verses of Mark*, and , in the same book, Appendix C, pp. 267-268.

68

(10) **Theophylact of Ochirida**, in Bulgaria, whose writings are assigned a date of 1077, wrote,

“Codex 26 continues: Some of the interpreters say that the Gospel according to Mark is finished here [i.e., at 16,8], and that the [words] that follow are a subsequent addition. It is necessary to interpret this [passage; i.e., 16,9-20] without doing any harm to the truth.”²⁷

Not long after this, Euthymius Zigabenus wrote almost exactly the same thing, in more generalized terms.²⁸

Burgon provides, in addition, the following quote from Theophylact:

“Αναστας δε ‘ο Ιησους· ενταυθα στιξον,
ειτα ειπε· Πρωι πρωτη σαββατου εφανη
Μαρια τη Μαγδαληνη. Ου γαρ ανεστη
πρωι· (τις γαρ οιδε ποτε ανεστη;) αλλ’ εφανη
πρωι κυριακη ημερα (αυτη γαρ η πρωτη του
σαββατου, τουτεστι, της εβδομαδος,) ην
ανω εκαλεσε μιαν σαββατων”

To which Burgon adds, “It must be superfluous to point out that Theophylact also, – like Victor, Jerome, and Hesychius, – is here only reproducing Eusebius.”²⁹

(12) **Epiphanius of Salamis** was born in Judea in about 315, began his career as bishop of Salamis (on Cyprus) in 376, and died in 403, after a busy career that included visits to Egypt, Antioch, Rome, and Constantinople. Hort asserted that Epiphanius used Mk. 16:9-20, and cited “*Haer.* 386, 517” to

demonstrate Epiphanius' use of the passage.³⁰ Epiphanius' book about heresies is frequently referred to as the *Panarion*, or "Medicine-chest."

We may wonder, then, why "Epiphanius^{1/2}" has been cited as a witness for the non-inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20. Apparently, in about 373, in his book *Ancoratus* ("The Well-Anchored"), Epiphanius wrote,

Τεσσαρα εισιν ευαγγελια κεφαλαιων
χιλιων εκατον εξηκονταδυο.

"The four Gospels contain 1162 sections."³¹

This is, however, an observation about the "Ammonian Sections" issued by Eusebius; it cannot be considered actual support, on Epiphanius' part, for the non-inclusion of 16:9-20.

(13) Nestorius (c. 381-c. 451), after becoming a prominent preacher at Antioch, became the bishop of Constantinople in 428, but on account of heretical teachings he was deposed at the Council of Ephesus in 431. During those One of his opponents, Cyril of Alexandria, quoted Nestorius and made a brief reply. Burgon presents this material (from *Adversus Nestorium* II:6); first comes the statement by Nestorius, using Mk. 16:20:

εξελθοντες γαρ, φησι, διεκηρυσσον
τον λογον πανταχου. του Κυριου
συνεργουντος, και τον λογον
βεβαιουντος, δια των επακολουθησαντων
σημειων."

27 ~ as cited by Kelhoffer, p. 103, *The Witness of Eusebius' ad Marinum*, where the Greek text is also provided.

28 ~ Kelhoffer provides the Greek text of Theophylactus and Euthymius Zigabenus on p. 12 of *The Witness of Eusebius' ad Marinum*.

29 ~ p. 266, *Last 12 Verses of Mark*, Appendix B.

30 ~ p. 40, *Introduction, Notes*.

31 ~ Burgon provides the citation and the Greek text on p. 132 of *The Last 12 Verses of Mark*.

69

And Cyril of Alexandria replies:

τη παρ' αυτου δυναστεια χρωμενοι,
διεκηρυττοντο και ειργαζοντο τας
θεοσημειας οι θεσπεσιοι μαθηται."³²

Thus it is clear that Nestorius used Mk. 16:9-20.

(14) Leo the Great, bishop of Rome, quoted Mk. 16:16 in *Epistle CXX*, a letter to Theodoret of Cyrus dated June 11, 453. In this Latin letter, Leo wrote, "So great salvation is of no avail to unbelievers, as the Very Truth said to His disciples: 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned.'"³³

(15) The Georgian Version was, according to Kirsopp Lake, "unquestionably translated from the Armenian."³⁴ Precisely which Armenian, though, is unclear; the Old Georgian occasionally retains what appear to be traces of the first edition of the Armenian version, but in other respects, it agrees with the finalized Armenian version (the post-431 edition). In addition, after the Georgian church separated from the Armenian church in the 600's, the Georgian version was revised. Later still, the liturgical text used by the Georgian church was established based on a Greek text compiled by Euthymius, who died in 1028.³⁵

Some Georgian MSS do not contain Mk. 16:9-20, and some do. The oldest known Georgian MS, the Adysh MS (made in 897), does not contain the passage. B.H. Streeter (relying on a statement by R.P. Blake) stated, "In the oldest MS. of the Georgian version, which is dated 897, the Gospel ends at xvi. 8.

But the “Longer Conclusion” (as the last twelve verses are usually styled) is added as a sort of Appendix to the Four Gospels after the end of John, having apparently been copied from another text.”³⁶ However, Dr. Jost Gippert of the University of Frankfurt, after examining a facsimile of the Adysh MS, has assured me that Blake’s statement is not correct: the Adysh MS contains Mark 13:34-37 after the end of John, not 16:9-20.

The Opiza MS (913) does not contain Mk. 16:9-20 either, and this is a strong piece of evidence that the Georgian version originally lacked the passage, inasmuch as the Opiza MS includes a note by its copyist, stating that the MS was copied from an exemplar “which was faultless with regard to the text.”³⁷ However, the Tbet’ MS (995) contains Mk. 16:9-20. Other copies of comparable age – such as the Jrutchi Gospels, made in 936, and the Parhal Gospels, made in 973 – either have not received the attention of text-critics, or else were simply not mentioned despite being comparable in age to the Adysh and Opiza copies.

32 ~ p. 29, Burgon, The Last 12 Verses of Mark. Burgon credits Matthaëi with the detection of this citation.

33 ~ p. 88, The Letters and Sermons of Leo the Great, by Rev. Charles Lett Feltoe, © 1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Vol. XII, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers series, Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, editors.

34 ~ p. 44, K. Lake, The Text of the New Testament, © 1959 Billing & Sons, Ltd.

35 ~ This history of the Old Georgian version’s transmission is presented on pp. 205 and 209 of Aland and Aland’s The Text of the New Testament, © 1989 William B. Eerdmans and E.J. Brill.

36 ~ p. 335, B.H. Streeter, The Four Gospels, © 1924, 1961 Macmillan & Co. Ltd.) This claim has been perpetuated by other authors.

37 ~ According to a brief description of the Opiza MS provided at

www.opentext.org.ge/art/monastery/athos/2218et1.html . See

georgianmanuscripts.caucasus.net/en/man_history.asp for an essay briefly describing the Jrutchi Gospels and the

Parhal Gospels, and mentioning Georgian palimpsests from as early as the 400’s, including some with Biblical text.

70

(16) The Palestinian Syriac (or “Aramaic”) is named as if it is a Syriac witness, but it is Aramaic, and is independent of the Syriac witnesses.³⁸ Metzger describes its surviving representatives: “Known chiefly from a lectionary of the Gospels, preserved in three manuscripts dating from the eleventh and [early] twelfth centuries. In addition fragments of the Gospels, in a continuous text, are extant, as well as scraps of Acts and of several of the Pauline epistles.”³⁹

The precise origins of the Palestinian Aramaic version are unknown. A production-date in the 400’s or early 500’s seems reasonable. Its text cannot be classified as Byzantine or as Alexandrian. It supports the inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20.

(17) The Harklean Syriac (A.D. 616), was issued by Thomas of Harkel, who used an extremely literal translation-method. In the Gospels, the Harklean Syriac has a Byzantine character, and includes Mk. 16:9-20, while the Short Ending is retained in the margin.⁴⁰

According to Kirsopp Lake, “From the colophons it is found that Thomas worked at the library of the Enaton, near Alexandria, with the aid of ‘accurate and approved’ Greek mss, which he found there.”⁴¹

(18) The Old Latin witnesses not yet described individually are important evidence because they descend from ancestor-manuscripts which displayed Latin translations made before the Vulgate (i.e., before 383). The Old Latin MSS which display their original voice about the end of Mark include the following:

Codex Aureus (“aur”), copied in the 600’s (or perhaps 700’s), contains Mk. 16:9-20.⁴²

Codex Colbertinus (“c”), though a relatively young MS made c. 1200, contains a Gospels-text derived from an Old Latin copy. It contains Mk. 16:9-20.

Codex Rhedigerianus (“I”), copied in the 600’s, contains Mk. 16:9-20.

Codex Sangallensis (“n”), was copied c. 400 and has not been well-preserved. Its extant text of Mark ends with 16:13, which sufficiently shows that the MS originally included the entire contents of 16:9-20. Frederic Kenyon claimed that the text of *Codex Sangallensis* is “closely akin to that of *a*” (“*a*” = *Codex Vercellensis*).⁴³

Codex Sangallensis is supplemented by Old Latin MS “o,” a fragment which, it seems, was written (perhaps in the 600’s) to replace a damaged page. It has Mk. 16:14-20.

Codex Monacensis (“q”) was made c. 600.⁴⁴ It has Mk. 16:9-20, followed by a subscription denoting the end of Mark in Latin and in Greek. The non-Vulgate character of its text may be clearly demonstrated by considering some differences in 16:19-20 –

38 ~ See the brief description by George Kiraz in an essay at rosetta.reltech.org/TC/vol01/Kiraz1996.html and the article at www.skypoint.com/members/waltzmn/Versions.html#CPA.

39 ~ p. 71, Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*. See www.schoyencollection.com/aram-heb-syr.htm#036 for a photo and brief description of an early Palestinian Aramaic MS with text from Matthew.

40 ~ p. 196, UBS *GNT*.

41 ~ p. 42-43, K. Lake, *The Text of the New Testament*, 6th ed. © 1959 Rivingtons, London.

42 ~ The 27th edition of *NTG*, p. 714, assigns this witness to the seventh century. For a picture of the first page of Matthew in *Codex Aureus* (“Golden Book”), where an interesting note appears, see www.soton.ac.uk/~enm/codexau.htm. Its first page of Mark can be accessed at www.vetuslatina.org.

43 ~ p. 205, F. Kenyon, *Handbook*.

44 ~ F. Kenyon places it in the “sixth or seventh century,” (p. 205, *Handbook*) and the index in the 27th N-A *NTG*, assigns it a date of “VI/VII” (p. 715).

71

VULGATE	MONACENSIS
<i>assumptus</i>	<i>receptus</i>
<i>dextris</i>	<i>dexteram</i>
<i>cooperante</i>	<i>diuuante</i>
<i>sermonem</i>	<i>uerbum</i>
<i>sequentibus</i>	<i>prosequentibus</i> ⁴⁵

(19) **MS 2427** (“**Archaic Mark**”) is described by K. Aland and B. Aland as a MS produced in the “fourteenth century.”⁴⁶ It was used as a “consistently cited witness of the first order” in the 27th edition of the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece*.⁴⁷ However, in light of research by Stephen Carlson, it appears that 2427 was based to a considerable extent on the Greek text which was published by Philipp Buttmann in 1860.⁴⁸ Several features unique among Greek MSS to 2427 are either shared by Buttmann’s text, or are accounted for by the use of Buttmann’s text as an exemplar.

- In 2427, the first part of Mk. 6:2 is missing, as if the copyist accidentally skipped from *καί* to *καί*. In Buttmann’s printed text, these two *καί*’s appear at the ends of two consecutive lines.
- In 2427, Mk. 7:2 is followed immediately by 7:5: “*τους αρτους. και επερωτωσιν.*” The missing words are in parentheses in Buttmann’s text.
- In 2427, Mk. 7:9 lacks “*και ελεγεν αυτοις.*” So does Buttmann’s text.
- In 2427, Mk. 13:14 lacks “*ο αναγινωσκων νοειτω,*” which is in parentheses in Buttmann’s text.
- In 2427, Mk. 14:14 is missing “*ειπατε τω οικοδεσποτη οτι ο διδασκαλος λεγει που εστιν.*” This is exactly one line of Buttmann’s text.
- In 2427, Mk. 16:18 lacks the distinctive Alexandrian variant, “*Και εν ταις χερσιν.*”⁴⁹

In addition, research published in 1988 by Mary Orna and Tom Mathews detected Prussian Blue – a pigment which is not known to have existed until its creation in the early 1700’s – in one of the paintings in 2427.⁵⁰

45 ~ This comparison is based on the reading of the photograph of the last page of Mark in Codex Monacensis at <http://itsee.bham.ac.uk/vetuslatina/largemss/13%20monacensis.jpg> and the text of 16:19-20 on p. 137 of Eberhard Nestle’s 1906 *Novum Testamentum Latinae*. Philip Burton noted that c, ff², and q read *ad dexteram* or *a dextera*, against the Vulgate *a dextris*, on pp. 47-48, *The Old Latin Gospels - A Study of Their Text and Language*. © Philip Burton 2000.

46 ~ p. 158 (caption to Plate 51), Aland & Aland, *Text of the New Testament*.

47 ~ p. 47, *Introduction*, N-A NTG, 27th ed.

48 ~ Carlson has summarized the results of his research in the article “*Archaic Mark (MS 2427) and the Finding of a Manuscript Fake*,” which is online at the SBL Forum at www.sbl-site.org/Article.aspx?ArticleId=577. A comment from Carlson about the connection between 2427 and Buttmann’s text by Carlson at the *textualcriticism* online discussion-group elicited my own comparison of 2427 and Buttmann’s text.

49 ~ The data in these comparisons is drawn from the collation of 2427 in the article “*Chicago’s “Archaic Mark” (2427) - A Reintroduction to its Enigmas and a Fresh Collation of Its Readings*,” by Margaret M. Mitchell and P.A. Duncan, in *Novum Testamentum* 48. 2006, pp. 1-45, and the text of *Novvm Testamentvm Graece, Ad Fidem Potissimvm Codices Vaticani B Recensvit, Varias Lectiones Codicis B, Textvs Recepti, Editionvm Griesbachii Lachmanni Tischendorfii Integras Adiecit, Philippvs Bvttmann*, pub. 1860 (editio quinta 1886).

50 ~ In the April 23, 1988 issue of *Science News*, an article states that Dr. Tom Mathews of New York University and Mary V. Orna of the College of New Rochelle conducted tests of samples of paint from 2427, using “polarized-light microscopy and X-ray diffraction” to “clearly identify the compounds in the pigments” used in the illustrations in 2427. See also the report and picture at jchemed.chem.wisc.edu/Journal/Issues/1997/Apr/abs373.html.

72

(20) Over 1,200 Byzantine Manuscripts. This enormous group of Greek MSS, found in a variety of locales, includes not only many late minuscules but also a substantial number of middle-aged uncials, and minuscules so ancient that they are almost sure to represent uncial exemplars, as well as minuscules which, though classified as Byzantine, contain variants which indicate that they were produced outside the mainstream of Byzantine transmission. All unmutated copies in this group of MSS support the inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20. They include the following:

E – (700’s). An uncial text of the Gospels.

F – (800’s). An uncial text of the Gospels, severely mutilated but apparently retaining 16:20.

G – (800’s). An uncial text of the Gospels.

H – (800’s). An uncial text of the Gospels, mutilated but retaining Mk. 16:15-20.

K – (800’s). A well-preserved uncial text of the Gospels. A member of “Family II.”

M – (800’s). An uncial text of the Gospels, with margin-notes in Greek, Arabic, and Slavonic.

S – (989, dated in colophon). An uncial text of the Gospels.

U – (800’s-900’s). An uncial text of the Gospels.

X – (900’s). An uncial text of the Gospels with commentary (for Mt., Lk., and Jn.) in minuscule lettering. The Gospels are arranged Mt.-Jn-Lk.-Mk.

Λ (#566) – (800’s). A text of the Gospels with Mt. and Mk. in minuscule lettering, and Lk. and Jn. in uncial lettering. At the end of Mt., a note states, “Gospel according to Matthew: written and corrected from the ancient manuscripts in Jerusalem: those kept in the holy mountain: in 2514 lines, 355 chapters.” And at the end of Mk: “Gospel according to Mark: written and corrected likewise from the carefully prepared ones in 1506 lines, 237 chapters.”⁵¹

Π – (800’s). A slightly damaged uncial text of the Gospels. This codex displays a form of text which appears to be related to, and older than, the text in Codex A.

Σ – (500’s). The “Rossano Gospels,” an uncial text of Mt. and Mk., written with silver ink on purple parchment, with colorful illustrations.⁵²

Ω – (800's). An uncial text of the Gospels.
 89 (1006). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 115 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels, damaged, with some non-Byzantine readings.
 126 (1000's). A minuscule text of the Gospels, with some non-Byzantine readings.
 160 (1123). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 164 (1039). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 174 (1052). A minuscule text of the Gospels, damaged especially in Jn.
 230 (1013). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 262 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels, with some unusual readings.
 278 (1072). A minuscule text of the Gospels, with some Armenian notations.
 338 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 348 (1022). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 371 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 399 (800's-900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 411 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 461 (835). A minuscule text of the Gospels, clearly dated to 835.
 468 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels, stored on the island of Patmos.

51 ~ p. 362, C.R. Gregory, Canon and Text of the NT. Notes at the end of Lk. and Jn. say, "Gospel according to Luke: written and corrected likewise in 2677 lines, 342 chapters," and "Gospel according to John: written and corrected likewise from the same copies in 2210 lines, 232 chapters."

52 ~ Codices O (of Mt.) and N (mutilated) share the same purple-parchment format displayed in Σ, and are thought to be related to it.

73

496 (1300's). A minuscule text of the Gospels with significant non-Byzantine variants.
 504 (1033). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 516 (c. 1000). A minuscule text of the Gospels, with gold ornamentation.
 548 (c. 900). A minuscule text of the Gospels, obtained from the Mar Saba Monastery, northeast of Bethlehem.
 607 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels, stored at Jerusalem.
 652 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1076 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1079 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1097 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1120 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1143 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1166 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1172 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1203 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels, stored at St. Catherine's Monastery, Mt. Sinai.
 1225 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels, stored at St. Catherine's Monastery, Mt. Sinai.
 1340 (1000's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1357 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1378 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1392 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1421 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1458 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1556 (1068). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1709 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
 1720 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.

1816 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
2142 (800's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
2181 (1054). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
2193 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
2195 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
2224 (800's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
2290 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
2324 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.
2369 (900's). A minuscule text of the Gospels.⁵³

53 ~ Data selected from pp. 37-202, Kurzgefasste Liste Der Griechischen Handschriften Des Neuen Testaments, by Kurt Aland, © 1963 Walter De Gruyter & Co., Berlin, and from F.H.A. Scrivener's lists of MSS in A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament, 4th edition, 1894 George Bell & Sons. The latter is online at www.ccel.org/ccel/scrivener/ntcrit1.html.

74

The numerical superiority of the Byzantine MSS is spectacular. As Kurt Aland wrote, "The longer ending of Mark 16:9-20 is found in 99 percent of the Greek manuscripts."⁵⁴ If all these copies could be shown to be descended from a revision of the Greek text, in approximately the way that the thousands of Vulgate copies are descended from a revision of the Latin text, their weight would be reduced. Precisely such a theory was advocated by Westcott and Hort in 1881. Lucian of Antioch was named as the prime suspect, so to speak, responsible for a revision of the Greek text sometime between 250 and 312.⁵⁵ A key point in Hort's theory was the absence of unique Byzantine readings (which Hort called "Syrian" readings) prior to the posited revision; this indicated, it seemed, that unique Byzantine readings – particularly conflate readings, which seemed to combine the contents of Alexandrian and "Western" exemplars – had been invented in the course of the revision. On this premise, Hort wrote, "All distinctively Syrian readings must be at once rejected."⁵⁶

However, in 1984 Harry A. Sturz published *The Byzantine Text-Type and New Testament Textual Criticism*, in which he presented evidence that a significant amount of uniquely Byzantine variants (over 100) were supported by at least one early papyrus MS. In a world where Hort's theory was true, such variants should not exist. Sturz did not thus prove that the entire Byzantine Text of a single book of the New Testament existed before the late third century. However, his data strongly indicates that the Byzantine Text is a stratified text which contains ancient readings that are neither Alexandrian nor "Western." Whatever revision produced the Byzantine Text must have involved not only Alexandrian and "Western" exemplars but at least one other source of variants, which may be called "Proto-Byzantine."

So, if the Byzantine Text is the result of a revision, the inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20 in Byzantine witnesses echoes the ancient materials available to the reviser. That these ancient materials were not Alexandrian is shown by the persistent absence of "καιναις" in 16:17 in Alexandrian witnesses, contrasted with its persistent presence in Byzantine witnesses. This is also shown by the persistent presence of the phrase "και εν ταϊς χειρσιν" in Alexandrian witnesses in 16:18, contrasted with its persistent absence in Byzantine witnesses. The Byzantine text of Mk. 16:9-20 also disagrees with the "Western" and "Caesarean" forms of the passage. We must therefore conclude that if the Byzantine Text

is the result of a revision, the reviser found Mk. 16:9-20 in his Proto-Byzantine materials (while observing that Mk. 16:9-20 was also present in other locales in different and independent forms). But we do not know, and have no way of knowing, if the hypothetical reviser found this passage in one exemplar from one locale, or in several exemplars from several locales.

The only Greek-speaking locale where Mk. 16:9-20 was not readily accepted as part of the Gospel of Mark by the end of the 400's was Egypt.

(21) The Note “Ariston Eritzou” in Armenian MS Ejmiadsin-229 (now referred to as Matenadaran 2374) was publicized by F.C. Conybeare in 1891. This MS, made in 989, contains Mk. 16:9-20 immediately following 16:8, in normal Armenian lettering. Between 16:8 and 16:9 – the MS's text is double-spaced – is a short note, in red lettering: *Aristou eristou*. This means, “Of Aristo the elder.” Who was this person?

54 ~ p. 292, Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, The Text of the New Testament, © 1989 William B. Eerdmans and E.J. Brill.

55 ~ Hort did not firmly identify Lucian as the person responsible for the Byzantine Text; he merely stated that “Of known names his [i.e., Lucian's] has a better claim than any other to be associated with the early Syrian revision.” (Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek, p. 138, reprint by Hendrickson Publishers, © 1988, first printing 1882 © Harper & Brothers, New York). However, some modern researchers, such as Dr. Philip Comfort, have presented the theory of the Lucianic Recension as if it is a proven fact.

56 ~ p. 119, Introduction.

75

According to Eusebius of Caesarea in *Ecclesiastical History* III:39, Ariston (or Aristion) was a contemporary of John mentioned by Papias. As related in chapter one, Eusebius states that Papias “*hands on other accounts of the sayings of the Lord belonging to Aristion, who has been mentioned above, and the traditions of John the Elder,*” and, “*We must now point out how Papias, who lived at the same time [i.e., the same time that Philip's four daughters were said to be living in Hierapolis], relates that he had received a wonderful narrative from the daughters of Philip. For he relates that a dead man was raised to life in his day. He also mentions another miracle relating to Justus, surnamed Barsabbas, how he swallowed a deadly poison, and received no harm, on account of the grace of the Lord.*”⁵⁷

The note in Armenian Ejmiadzin-229 may descend from an older MS in which the same note was placed in the margin alongside 16:18. Alongside 16:18, the note would reflect an understanding that (a) the phrase about drinking deadly poison without harm referred to the incident in which Justus Barsabbas survived poison-drinking, and (b) Papias had received this story from Aristion. A copyist who was aware that 16:9-20 was disputed, when finding this note, interpreted it to mean that the disputed section had been written by Aristion the elder, and for this reason when he perpetuated the note, he placed it at the beginning of 16:9.

Support for this theory may be provided by an observation made by Theodor Zahn in 1909: in a manuscript at Oxford, there is “a marginal gloss to Rufinus' translation of Eusebius, H.E. iii. 39.9, though inserted by a later hand, which connects Aristion's name with the story taken by Eusebius from Papias, that Justus, called Barsabbas (Acts i. 23), once drank a deadly poison, but was preserved by the grace of the Lord from all harmful effects.”⁵⁸

Eusebius' presentation of Papias' stories raises a question about the source of Papias' information: the daughters of Philip were the source of a person who was raised from the dead, but they are not identified as the source of the story about Justus. A few paragraphs before Eusebius mentioned Papias' story about Justus, Eusebius provided a quotation from Papias in which Aristion was mentioned:

“*If anyone chanced to come who had actually been a follower of the elders, I would inquire as to the discourses of the elders, what Andrew or what Peter said, or what Philip, or what Thomas or James, or what John or Matthew or any other of the Lord's disciples; and the things which Aristion and John the*

elder, disciples of the Lord, say. For I supposed that things out of books did not profit me so much as the utterances of a voice which liveth and abideth."⁵⁹

In paragraph seven of *Ecclesiastical History* III:39, Eusebius writes, "Papias, of whom we are now speaking, acknowledges that he received the discourses of the apostles from those who had been their followers, but says that he was himself an actual hearer of Aristion and of John the elder. Certainly he mentions them by name and sets forth their traditions."⁶⁰

Almost immediately after this, Eusebius mentions Papias' stories. The first one, about "the resurrection of a dead body," is stated to have been received from the daughters of Philip; the source of the second one, about Justus, is not identified. It would be a very simple and natural thing, once the question was raised, for a copyist to conclude that the story about Justus originated with Aristion. It would thus seem that the words "Aristou eritzou" in Armenian MS Ejmiadzin-229 are a misplaced scribal note of very little significance.

⁵⁷ ~ p. 315, *Apostolic Fathers*, Lightfoot-Harmer-Holmes, © 1989 Baker Book House Co., Grand Rapids, and the Fragments of Papias beginning at www.ccel.org/fathers/ANF-01/papi/fragmentsofpapias.html which accesses Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* III:39.

⁵⁸ ~ p. 474, T. Zahn, *Introduction to the New Testament* Vol. II, © 1909 Charles Scribner's Sons. Zahn also mentions (p. 485) that the MS of Rufinus in question is at Oxford and refers readers to the Dec. 1895 issue of *The Expositor*, p. 415 for more details.

⁵⁹ ~ p. 50, *A New Eusebius*, edited by J. Stevenson, © 1960 S.P.C.K., presenting *Ecclesiastical History* III:39:4.

⁶⁰ ~ p. 51, *A New Eusebius*, edited by J. Stevenson, © 1960 S.P.C.K., presenting *Ecclesiastical History* III:39:4.

76

However, while Papias indicates that Aristion was living in Asia Minor during Papias' lifetime, another tradition suggests that Aristion lived at, or near, Rome at an earlier period – a period which included the production-date of the Gospel of Mark. In the spurious text called *The Acts of Peter*, which was composed in Greek no later than 200,⁶¹ a character named Aristion is introduced in an account of Peter's trip from Jerusalem to Rome. The gist of the pertinent part of the account is as follows:

God revealed to Simon Peter that Simon Magus had strayed into false teachings, and was gaining many followers in Rome. Peter therefore departed Jerusalem, went to Caesarea, and promptly boarded a ship that was going to Rome. Peter told the captain, named Theon, about Jesus, and about the reasons for his voyage. Theon was baptized en route, and Christ briefly appeared as a shining youth, saying "Peace be unto you." Peter shared the eucharist with Theon. Then a steady wind transported the ship to Puteoli (the harbor-city mentioned in Acts 28:13-14).

At Puteoli, Theon visited the inn where he usually stayed. The innkeeper's name was Ariston. Theon told Ariston about Peter and his mission. Ariston – already a Christian – replied that he was eager to meet Peter, because after Paul had departed to Spain, Simon Magus had led many people astray in the city of Rome. Ariston and Theon went to Peter. Ariston fell at Peter's feet and informed him that the work of Paul in Rome had been undone by Simon Magus. At this point the story continues as follows:

Ariston said, "*I trust in the Lord, who has commanded you to come to us, sending you as his messenger, and who has considered us worthy to see His great and wonderful works by your means. So I beg you, hurry to the city, for I left the brothers who have stumbled, whom I saw fall into the devil's temptation, I fled here, saying to them, 'Brothers, stand firm in the faith, for it must be that within these two months the mercy of our Lord will bring His servant to you.'* For I, in a vision, had seen Paul saying to me, 'Ariston, flee out of the city.' Hearing this, I believed without delay and went forth in the Lord, although I had an infirmity in my flesh, and I came here. Day by day I stood upon the seashore asking the sailors, 'Has Peter sailed with you?' But now by the abundance of God's grace I entreat you: let us go to Rome without delay, lest the teaching of this wicked man prevail further."

As Ariston said this with tears, Peter gave him his hand and raised him up from the earth. Peter, also groaning, said with tears, "He who tempts all the world by his angels has preceded us, but He who

has the power to save His servants from all temptations shall quench his deceits, and put him beneath the feet of those who have believed in Christ whom we preach.”

So, despite Theon’s invitation to rest and eat, Peter headed to Rome. Then: “*Theon delivered everything on board to be sold for the price which he thought good. Then he followed Peter to Rome; whom Ariston brought unto the abode of Narcissus the presbyter.*”⁶²

In this tale, Ariston is clearly a prominent and faithful member of the Christian community at Rome, and he was known to both Paul and Peter. Could an Armenian copyist be aware of such an early tradition? The idea that Ariston the Elder was somehow responsible for Mk. 16:9-20 was initially well-received in the early 1900’s,⁶³ but it has been allowed to be overshadowed by an alternative. Bruce

61 ~ See the introduction and translation of *Acts of Peter* at www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/actspeter.html .

62 ~ This rendering is based on the translation of *Acts of Peter* at www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/actspeter.html . Notice the mention of Narcissus; cf. Romans 16:11.

63 ~ Henry Barclay Swete wrote, referring to the Armenian note, “Mr Conybeare with much probability suggests that the person intended is the Aristion who is mentioned by Papias as one of the disciples of the Lord,” on p. cxi, *The Gospel According to Mark*, © 1909 Macmillan and Co., Limited. Frederic Kenyon also expressed a favorable (though not assertive) view of the idea that Mk. 16:9-20 “was added, to round off the narrative, by Aristion,” on pp. 173-174 of p. 173-174, *Handbook to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, © 1912 Macmillan and Co., Limited, London.

Image Ten has been removed.

IMAGE TEN: A page from Armenian MS Ejmiadzin-229 (Matenadaran 2374).
The note "Aristou Eritzou" is written after the end of 16:8 and the beginning of 16:9.

This picture appeared in Henry Barclay Swete's commentary on Mark, opposite page cxi, published by Macmillan & Sons in 1909. It was first brought to the attention of European and American scholars by F.C. Conybeare in 1891. Conybeare, however, inaccurately described, and incorrectly interpreted, some features of this page.

In a note that Swete included in his 1909 commentary (p. cxi), Conybeare stated that the last line of 16:8 "is filled up with the vermilioned flourishes which indicate that the Gospel proper of Mark is ended." However, as can be seen in the left column on the same page, these flourishes merely denote the end of a paragraph. Conybeare also claimed, referring to the copyist of the manuscript, "That he regarded Mark proper as ending with verse 8, is further shewn by the large circular boss consisting of concentric circles of colour added against the end of verse 8 between the columns." However, as E.C. Colwell pointed out in 1937 (on p. 384 of the *Journal of Biblical Literature*), however, the boss, like the flourishes, occurs "elsewhere in the codex at the end of paragraphs within gospels."

78

Metzger, referring to the identification of the individual named in Armenian MS Ejmiadzin-229 as Aristion the Elder who was mentioned by Papias, wrote, "The identification has been contested by, for example, B.W. Bacon and Clarence R. Williams, who took the Ariston to be Aristo(n) of Pella, who, according to one interpretation of a statement by Moses of Chorene, was the secretary of the Evangelist Mark."⁶⁴

Such a theory, however, would require a copyist who was both remarkably well-read and remarkably dense – someone who had read the writings of Eusebius, and the writings of Moses of Chorene, and who misunderstood them both.

Moses of Chorene was an Armenian assistant of Mesrop in the first half of the 400's. In the course of his busy career, he visited Edessa, Constantinople, Alexandria, and Rome. Moses of Chorene mentions a writer named Aristo of Pella (a city in the Decapolis), stating that he served as the secretary for the Armenian king Ardasches when Ardasches was sent into Persia by Roman Emperor Hadrian (117-138). After this, Moses of Chorene describes Ardasches' death. Then he reports that Hadrian "established in Jerusalem a community of pagans and Christians whose bishop was Mark."⁶⁵

The last part of Moses of Chorene's report is based on Eusebius of Caesarea's *Ecclesiastical History*, Book Four, in which Eusebius (a) cited Aristo of Pella as the source of a report about the Bar-Kochba Revolt,⁶⁶ and (b) mentioned that after Hadrian's decree to expel all Jews from Jerusalem, "As the church there was now composed of Gentiles, the first one to assume the government of it after the bishops of the circumcision was Marcus."⁶⁶ A hasty reading of Moses of Chorene's account, it is claimed, could have produced the impression that Aristo of Pella was the secretary, not of king Ardasches, but of the Gentile bishop of Jerusalem named Mark.

However, why would a copyist have confused Aristo of Pella and Mark the bishop of Jerusalem, with Aristion the Elder and Mark the Gospel-writer? Even granting that the names Aristo and Aristion are spelled identically in Armenian, anyone aware of the texts in which the two individuals are mentioned would naturally conclude that two distinct individuals are being described. In addition, in Moses of Chorene's statement about Mark, bishop of Jerusalem, it is perfectly clear that this is not the author of the Gospel of Mark. Thus the statement by Moses of Chorene gives no impetus to connect Aristo of Pella to Mark the Evangelist, while also giving to all sane readers three strong reasons not to make such a

connection: the explicit statements, derived from *Ecclesiastical History* Book 4, that the Mark who was a contemporary of Aristo of Pella was a Gentile, and that he served as bishop of Jerusalem, and that he did so during the reign of Hadrian. Therefore the probability that the annotator of Armenian MS Ejmiadzin-229 intended for his note to refer to Aristo of Pella is extremely remote.

We may conclude that the person who wrote the annotation in Armenian MS Ejmiadzin-229 – whether this was this MS' copyist, or the copyist of some ancestor-MS, – thought that Aristion the Elder was the source of Mk. 16:9-20.⁶⁷ Why would he do this? Nothing in Papias' statements about Aristion provides an impetus to connect Aristion to the Gospel of Mark. Some tradition in which Aristion is connected to Rome, and is situated so as to be capable of affecting the text of Mark, must have been known to the annotator. Precisely such a tradition exists in *Acts of Peter*.

64 ~ p. 163, *The Early Versions of the New Testament*, by Bruce M. Metzger, © 1987 Oxford University Press.

65 ~ p. 118, the article by B. W. Bacon in *A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, by John Chisholm Lambert.

66 (twice) ~ See the text of *Ecclesiastical History* at www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf201.iii.ix.vi.html.

67 ~ On pp. 382-385 of "Mark 16:9-20 in the Armenian Version" (*Journal of Biblical Literature* vol. 56, © 1937 Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis), E.C. Colwell suggested that alternative that "*Ariston Eritzou*" might be nothing more than the signature of the copyist who wrote the text of Mark down to the end of 16:8. This cannot be proven incorrect, but it would be remarkable if an Armenian scribe just happened to have this name and this title.

79

Along with the description of Ariston in *Acts of Peter*, we should consider a list found in *Apostolic Constitutions*, Book 7, ch. 4, (from c. 380) titled, "*Who Were They That the Holy Apostles Sent and Ordained?*"⁶⁸ After lists of successive bishops of Jerusalem (James, Simeon, and James), and of Caesarea (Zacchaeus, Cornelius, and Theophilus), and of Antioch (Euodius and Ignatius), and of Alexandria (Anianus and Avilius), and of Rome (Linus and Clement), and of Ephesus (Timothy, and John), this entry appears:

"Of Smyrna: Aristo the first, after whom Strataeas the son of Lois, and the third Aristo."

This list, written to give readers the impression that the apostles themselves wrote it, is quite spurious. Yet it seems safe to say that its author had done his homework, and that this list, while certainly embellished, has a substantial historical core. If we deduce that the "Lois" referred to is the grandmother of the NT character Timothy, then it would appear that Strataeas was an uncle or, if the term "son" is loosely used, a brother of Timothy. This does not seem like the sort of detail that an author would casually invent. In the opening sentences of Pionius' *Life of Polycarp* (from the late 300's) we find a statement that Paul visited Smyrna and visited Strataeas there, having met him previously in Pamphylia.⁶⁹

The evidence about Aristo allows a speculation in which Aristo's career took three stages. First, as a young man, he was a leader of the church in Smyrna. Second, he moved to Rome, and was active in the Christian church at Rome while Paul and Peter were there. (It is conceivable that he is the Aristobulus mentioned in Romans 16:10.) Third, he returned to Asia Minor, where in his old age he encountered Papias and shared memories of the apostles. If, then, the annotation in Armenian MS Ejmiadzin-229 was intended to refer to Aristo as the source of Mk. 16:9-20, and is not merely a misplaced comment on 16:18's phrase about poison-drinking, then it was probably made with the understanding that Aristo had served not only in Asia Minor, but also earlier, in Rome, when the Gospel of Mark was composed and published.

We note here that B.H. Streeter's claims that in Armenian MS Ejmiadzin-229, Mk. 16:9-20 begins "after a break, indicating that the scribe regarded what follows as a sort of Appendix,"⁷⁰ and that the words "of the Presbyter Ariston" are written "in the margin of the first line,"⁷⁰ are both misleading. The only "break" between 16:8 and 16:9 is of the same sort which typically occurs in the MS between paragraphs, and "*Aristou eritzou*" does not appear in the margin; it is between the last two lines of 16:8

(to the right of the last bit of 16:8), beginning and ending well within the column in which the text itself is situated.

(22) Bohairic MS Huntington 17, a copy of the Gospels made in 1174, which is the oldest known Bohairic text of Mark, stands apart from almost all the rest of the Bohairic evidence. F. C. Kenyon, relying on the groundbreaking presentation of the Bohairic Version made by George Horner in 1905, wrote, “The last twelve verses of Mark are contained in all Bohairic MSS.; but two copies (Hunt. 17 and

68 ~ The text of Book VII of *Apostolic Constitutions* (the first part of which is based on the *Didache*, an early treatise on Christian church-practices and ethics) can be accessed at www.piney.com/DocAposConstitu2.html.

69 ~ J. B. Lightfoot’s rendering of Pionius’ *Life of Polycarp* is available online at www.ter tullian.org/fathers/pionius_life_of_polycarp_01_text.htm.

70 (twice) ~ p. 345, B.H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, 10th impression, © 1961 Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London. Streeter’s errors are baffling when one sees that on the same page, he refers to the photographic reproduction of the MS, published by F. Macler in 1920. A photograph of the page is pictured opposite p. cxi. in Henry B. Swete’s commentary on Mark; see Appendix C.

80

Brit. Mus. Or. 1315) give in their margins a short alternative ending which is practically identical with that found in L.”⁷¹ We shall refer to this again in the following chapter. Here, we focus on an additional feature: H. B. Swete, using Horner’s findings, informed his readers that in Bohairic MS A (“MS A” refers to Huntington 17), “At the end of v. 8, in the break, as if referring to the last twelve verses, is a gloss [in Arabic] ‘this is the chapter expelled in the Greek.’”⁷²

We may deduce from this that in the year 1174, in the region of Egypt where Bohairic was used, the Short Ending accompanied the end of 16:8 but was not incorporated into the text of Mark; it was probably intended to be used as a liturgical flourish. We may also deduce that an Egyptian writer of Arabic, sometime after 1174, believed that Mk. 16:9-20 was absent in a Greek copy or copies, and that the passage was absent in those copies because it had been excised.

(23) Manuscripts with the “Jerusalem Colophon” include 565 (produced in the 800’s), a major witness to the “Caesarean” text of Mark. 565 is a minuscule MS of the Gospels, made with purple parchment. It is sometimes called “Empress Theodora’s Codex;” this cannot be a true reference to the famous wife of Byzantine Emperor Justinian I, but may refer to a less famous woman named Theodora who died in 867.⁷³

Kirsopp Lake commented about this MS: “Cod. 565 comes from Houmisch Khan in Pontus and has an important colophon at the end of Mark, εγραφη και αντεβληθη ομοιως εκ των ιεροσολυμων αντιγραφων.

“This “ομοιως” refers the colophon back to a series found in Λ and some other MSS already listed, of which the important sentence is:— το ευαγγελιον κατα Ματθαιον αγραφη και αντεβληθη εκ των [εν] Ιεροσολυμοις (?) παλαιων αντιγραφων των εν τω αγιω ορει αποκειμενων.

“In a note in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. I p. 445, I drew attention to the fact that this αγιον ορος can hardly mean anything except Mount Sinai, as the title was not used of Jerusalem and the colophon is too early for it to mean Mt Athos. It therefore means that the MSS which possess it represent older MSS which came from Jerusalem and were copied on Mt Sinai.”⁷⁴

Metzger mentioned that the Jerusalem Colophon is found in MS 157 and in “Λ, 20, 164, 215, 262, 300, 376, 428, 565, 686, 718 and 1071.”⁷⁵ 157 is an ornamented minuscule Gospels MS, with a text that is frequently non-Byzantine, apparently made for Byzantine Emperor John II. It has the “Jerusalem

colophon” at the end of each Gospel – “copied and corrected from ancient exemplars from Jerusalem preserved on the holy mountain.” Three of the MSS in this list – 20, 215, and 300 – share the misplaced note, described earlier in this chapter, “*From here to the end forms no part of the text in some of the copies. In the ancient copies, however, it all forms part of the text.*” We may deduce from this that some ancestor of 565, 20, 215, 300, and 1071, and perhaps an ancestor of all the MSS which share the Jerusalem colophon, was compared to ancient copies on Mount Sinai – that is, at St. Catherine’s monastery – which were identified there as ancient copies from Jerusalem; these copies contained Mk. 16:9-20.

71 ~ p. 184, Handbook to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament, © 1912 Macmillan and Co., Limited, London). Huntingdon 17, at the Bodleian Library, is from A.D. 1174.

72 ~ p. cvii, footnote, Henry Barclay Swete, The Gospel According to St. Mark, © 1909 Macmillan & Co., Ltd.

73 ~ See the description of 565 by Robert Waltz at www.skypoint.com/members/waltzmn/Manuscripts501-1000.html#m565 .

74 ~ p. liii-liv, Kirsopp Lake, Codex 1 of the Gospels and Its Allies, © 1892 Cambridge Univ. Press, Vol. VII, No. 3 in *Text and Studies*, J. Armitage Robinson, editor.

75 ~ p. 63, Text of the New Testament.

81

(24) Saint Patrick, the famous fifth-century missionary to Ireland, composed two works which use material from Mark 16:9-20: *The Letter to Coroticus*, and *Confession*. Patrick was born in or around 390, began his work in Ireland in about 430, and died in about 460.⁷⁶

In *Letter to Coroticus* 20, in the course of denouncing Coroticus for attacking a group of new Christian converts, Patrick wrote, “I bear witness before God and his angels that it shall be just as he signified to me, unskilled though I am. That which I have set out in Latin is not my words but the words of God and of apostles and prophets, who of course have never lied. He who believes shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be damned. God has spoken.”⁷⁷ His citation takes an interesting form: there is no reference to baptism here.

In *Confession* 40, Patrick strings together a series of Biblical passages: “We are strictly bound to spread out our nets, so that an abundant multitude and a crowd should be caught for God and that there should be clergy everywhere who should baptize and preach to the needy and expectant masses, just as the Lord says in the gospel, he warns and teaches in the text, *Go therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things, whatever I have taught you.* And in another place he says, *Go therefore into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature; whoever believes and is baptized will be saved but whoever does not believe will be damned.* And in another place: *This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony for all nations and then the end will come.*”⁷⁸

Patrick’s quotations here are from Matt. 28:19-20a, Mark 16:15-16, and Matt. 24:14. Here his citation of Mark 16:16 is more precisely worded than the one in *Letter to Coroticus*. R.P.C. Hanson provides some insight about the Latin text of the Gospels which Patrick used: “The main source of Patrick’s thought and teachings on matters religious was however the Latin Bible. This was not the Latin Bible which dominated the Middle Ages in the West, Jerome’s translation, called the Vulgate,” and “There is no clear evidence that Patrick knew or used Jerome’s Vulgate. But he certainly knew the Latin Bible used by the British church supremely well.”⁷⁹

Patrick’s citations should be regarded as echoes of an Old Latin text which was in use in Ireland in the mid-400’s.

(25) The Life of Saint Samson of Dol. Samson of Dol became a bishop in Britain in 521. Stories of his life, attributed to his contemporaries, are preserved in a manuscript at Citeux (used by Mabillon in *Acta Sanctorum*) and in manuscript Andeg.719, used by Dom Plaine. The texts appear to perpetuate material

from the late 500's or early 600's. In Book I, ch. 16, Samson survives an assassination attempt in the following way, after the would-be assassin has secretly arranged for poison to be set before him: "Trusting in the promise of the Lord, mindful of the word of the Gospel where Christ says concerning His faithful who trust in Him, 'If they shall drink,' He says, 'any deadly thing it shall not hurt them,' and so on, he entered the refectory very glad . . . and making the sign of the cross over his own vessel, without any wavering of mind he drank it dry and never felt the slightest heartache from it."⁸⁰

This is a further demonstration that the Old Latin used in Britain contained Mark 16:9-20.

⁷⁶ ~ see p. 24-25, Hanson, R.P.C., The Life and Writings of the Historical Saint Patrick, © 1983 R.P.C. Hanson, published by the Seabury Press, New York. An English translation of Patrick's *Letter to Coroticus* by John Skinner is online at <http://www.ancienttexts.org/library/celtic/ctexts/p02.html>.

⁷⁷ ~ from p. 74, Hanson, R.P.C., The Life and Writings of the Historical Saint Patrick, © 1983 R.P.C. Hanson, published by the Seabury Press, New York.

⁷⁸ ~ from p. 108, Hanson, R.P.C., The Life and Writings of the Historical Saint Patrick, © 1983 R.P.C. Hanson, published by the Seabury Press, New York. An English translation of Patrick's *Confession* is online at <http://www.ancienttexts.org/library/celtic/ctexts/p01.html>.

⁷⁹ ~ pp. 44-45, Hanson, R.P.C., The Life and Writings of the Historical Saint Patrick, © 1983 R.P.C. Hanson, published by the Seabury Press, New York.

⁸⁰ ~ based on the translation at <http://www.lamp.ac.uk/celtic/Samson.htm>.

82

Chapter 5: External Evidence With the Double-Ending

We now turn to witnesses, mainly Egyptian, which display both the Short Ending and 16:9-20. Six Greek MSS are in this group; we shall describe each one.

(1) **Codex Regius**, "L," made in the 700's, "is said to have been written by an Egyptian scribe."¹ After the end of 16:8 (το γαρ being the sole contents of the last line of text in the first column on a two-column page), the next column begins with a note, framed in dashes:

Φερετε που
και ταυτα

Which is followed by the Short Ending in the following form:

Παντα δε τα παρη
γγελμενα τοις
περι τον Πετρον
συντομως εξη
γγιλαν – μετα
δε ταυτα και αυτος
ο ις, απο ανατολης
και αχρι δυσσεως
εξαπεστιλεν δι
αυτων το ιερον
και αφθαρτον κη
ρυγμα – της αιω
νιου σωτηριας.

Immediately following this, similarly framed, are the words,

εστην δε και
ταυτα φερο
μενα μετα το
εφοβουντο
γαρ –

>>>>

[ευαγγελ]ιον
[κατα μα]ρκον
[παντα δε τα πα
ρηγγελμενα τοις
περι τον πετρον
συντομως. εξηγ
γειλαν : Μετα δε]
ταυτα. και αυτος
ις απο ανατολης
αχρι δυσσεως εξα
πεστειλεν δι αυ

3 ~ See Plate 29 (Plate 29) of Aland and Aland's The Text of the New Testament for a photo of the last page of Mark in Codex L, upon which this data is based.

4 ~ see p. cvi, Henry Barclay Swete, The Gospel According to St. Mark, © 1909 Macmillan & Co., Ltd, London.

84

των το ιερον και
αφθαρτον κηρυ
γμα της αιωνιου
σωτηριας αμην”

Which is followed, in smaller letters, by:

εστιν δε και ταυτα
φερομενα μετα
το εφοβουντο γαρ

After which the contents of 16:9-20 begin, proceeding to the middle of v. 10, where the fragment itself ends.⁵ Swete mentioned that F. C. Burkitt had observed that the non-extant portion of this fragment between the end of 16:8 and the beginning of the Short Ending would have room for the note “φερεται που και ταυτα” if it was written in the same kind of smaller lettering used in the note that introduces 16:9-20.⁵

Once again we are confronted with the phrase “εστιν δε και ταυτα φερομενα μετα το εφοβουντο γαρ” introducing 16:9-20, and it is possible that 083, when intact, also shared the phrase “φερεται που και ταυτα” with Codex L. From this evidence, Swete concluded, “We must suppose that these manuscripts, notwithstanding other features which attest independence, drew at this point from the same relatively early archetype.”⁶ The Egyptian provenance of this influence upon those three MSS is demonstrated by a unique feature in the next two witnesses.

(4) **Codex 099** (formerly called “p”), from the 600’s, presents the Short Ending as follows after the end of Mk. 16:8:

[Παντα] δε τα
[παρη] γγελμενα
τοις περι τον
[Πετρον] συν
τομως εξηγ
γειλαν.
μετα δε ταυτα

και αυτος ο $\overline{\iota\varsigma}$
εφανε αυτοις
απ ανατολης
του ηλιου και αχρι
δυσεως εξεπε
στειλεν δι αυ
των το ιερον
και αφθαρτον
κηρυγμα της
αιωνιου σωτη
ριας αμην.

5 (twice) ~ see p. cv, Henry Barclay Swete, The Gospel According to St. Mark, © 1909 Macmillan & Co., Ltd, London.

6 ~ The quotation from Dr. Swete is from p. cvii, The Gospel According to St. Mark, © 1909 Macmillan and Co., Ltd.

85

This is followed by a repetition of the last half of 16:8:

ειχεν γαρ αυτας
τρομος και εκ
στασις και ου
δενι ουδεν ει
πον εφοβου $\overline{}$
το γαρ.

And this is followed immediately by the beginning of 16:9:

Αναστας δε

And there the fragment itself ends.⁷

The format of 099 must be compared to the format used in the Greek-Sahidic lectionary *l*-1602, which was made in the 700's; this lectionary has two columns on each page, one in Greek and the other in Sahidic. It preserves both the Short Ending and 16:9-20. Before the Short Ending, *l*-1602 has the note, "Εν αλλοις αντιγραφοις ουκ εγραφη ταυτα." Then it begins, like 099, at the middle of 16:8, at the words "ειχεν γαρ," and proceeds from there to present the rest of 16:8 and 16:9-20.⁸

While those five Egyptian witnesses thus seem to be historically linked in a rather close way, two other Greek MSS are formatted differently.

(5) MS 579 is a Gospels-text made in the 1200's. Metzger states that it displays the Byzantine text in Matthew, while "in the other Gospels it preserves an extremely good Alexandrian text which often agrees with B, S, and L. Like MS. L, it contains the double ending of Mark."⁹

In 579, 16:8 is followed by the Short Ending, and the Short Ending is followed by 16:9-20. 579 includes "και εν ταις χειρσιν" in 16:18.¹⁰

(6) MS 274 is a minuscule Gospels-text made in the 900's. In its text of Mk. 16, the end of 16:8 (το γαρ) and the beginning of 16:9 (αναστας δε) are on the same line, with an abbreviated lectionary-note in between. In the right-hand margin is an abbreviated note (in uncial lettering) which when uncontracted says "το αυτ. και εις το ορθρος της αναληψεως" meaning that though the second morning-reading ends at the end of 16:8, the rest (that is, from the beginning of 16:9 onward) is to be read at the morning prayer-time on Ascension-Day.¹¹

In the left-hand margin alongside the line of text where the end of 16:8 and the beginning of 16:9 appear, there is an asterisk-mark, resembling an “x” with dots arranged around it, north-south-east-west.

7 ~ see p. cvi, Henry Barclay Swete, The Gospel According to St. Mark, © 1909 Macmillan & Co., Ltd, London. A small trace also remains: “πιω[σιν].”

8 ~ Data drawn mainly from pp. 147-148 of the Nestle-Aland NTG, 4th edition. A photo of lectionary 1602’s text of 16:19-20 is featured as Plate 60 on p. 203 (or p. 199) of Kurt & Barbara Aland’s The Text of the New Testament, © 1987 William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

9 ~ pp. 63-64, Metzger, The Text of the New Testament, 3rd ed. © 1992 Oxford University Press.

10 ~ as cited on p. 197, The Greek New Testament, 2nd ed., © 1966 United Bible Societies.

11 ~ A photograph of 274, with a brief description, is contained in Dr. Bruce Metzger’s The Text of the New Testament, Plate XI, © 1964 Oxford University Press. The translation of the margin-note was provided by Dr. Earl Kellett of the Center for New Testament Textual Studies in New Orleans. Curiously, Ⲛ, B, L, the second presentation of 16:8 in 099, and 274, despite having different line-lengths, each end Mark 16:8 with the five letters τογαρ at the beginning of a line.

86

At the left-hand side of the bottom of the page, a column of five more such asterisks appear. Beside these asterisks, filling much of the lower margin of the page, is the Short Ending written in uncial-lettering as follows:

παντα δε τα παρηγγελμενα τοις $\bar{\pi}$ τον
πετρον συντομως εξηγγειλαν· Μετα δε ταυτα κ
αυτος ο $\bar{\iota}\zeta$ απο ανατολων. κ αχρι δυσεως εξαπεσ
τειλ $\bar{\iota}$. δι αυτων το ιερον κ αφθαρτον κηρυγμα
της αιωνιου $\bar{\sigma}$ ριας α μη η ν : —

Inasmuch as 274 is a MS intended for be used in liturgical reading, it seems that the Short Ending was intended to be read after 16:8 as a liturgical flourish that would conclude a lection-unit which would otherwise end with 16:8.

An interesting pattern emerges when we compare the form of the Short Ending in these Greek MSS to its form in their versional allies:

Armenian MS Ejmiadzin-303 says, at the end of Luke: ¹²

“And it all in summary they related to those who were with Peter. After that Jesus himself, from the Orient to the setting of the sun, sent [them] forth. And he placed in their hands the divine, imperishable preaching for the eternal salvation of all creatures eternally. Amen.”

The text from which Armenian MS Ejmiadzin-303’s form of the Short Ending descended did not have the word εφανε (“appeared”). Codex L and 274 also do not include εφανε.¹³ Also, Ejmiadzin-303 agrees with 099, echoing ηλιου. Another interesting feature is that the close of the Short Ending in Ejmiadzin-303 appears to borrow the phrase “in their hands” from the beginning of 16:18; similarly the closing phrase seems to interject verbiage from 16:15 into the text.

The Ethiopic Version, which tends to have a text that is mixed Alexandrian/Byzantine, includes dozens of copies which display the Short Ending between 16:8 and 16:9. They agree with 099’s reading “εφανε αυτοις” and “ηλιου.”

The Sahidic Version, the earliest copies of which possess a distinctly Alexandrian text, while the later copies have a mixed text, features some MSS that display the double-ending. They agree with 099 at both points.

The Bohairic Version, which tends to have an Alexandrian character, includes two MSS in which the Short Ending is in the margin near 16:8. They agree with 099 for the inclusion of “εφᾶνη αυτοις,” but not for the inclusion of “ηλιου.”

Old Latin Codex Bobbiensis, meanwhile, agrees with Ψ and Greek-Sahidic *I*-1602 by reading “*adparuit*,” thus supporting “εφᾶνη.”¹⁴

From this we may deduce that the Short Ending originally lacked an explicit reference to Jesus’ personal manifestation of Himself to the disciples, and that a copyist inserted “εφᾶνη” to compensate for this, either spontaneously selecting the word, or else borrowing it from 16:9. This implies that although

12 ~ See Colwell’s description in *Mark 16:9-20 in the Armenian Version*, by Ernest Cadman Colwell, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 56 (1937) © Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis.

13 ~ The 2nd edition of the UBS GNT cites 274^{mg} as a witness for the inclusion of εφᾶνη, on p. 198, but as Plate XI in Metzger’s The Text of the New Testament shows, this is erroneous.

14 ~ This data is drawn from the apparatus of the 27th Nestle-Aland NTG, p. 147.

87

Codex Bobbiensis is the oldest witness to the Short Ending, the form of the Short Ending displayed in Codex L is earlier than the form displayed in it^k. It is not impossible that the creator of the form with εφᾶνη (which was later expanded to εφᾶνη αυτοις, cf. 16:14) knew 16:9, and borrowed the word εφᾶνη from there to insert in the Short Ending.

If it^k represents a text that was in use in the mid-200’s, then the form of the Short Ending in L is earlier yet. Thus, by extrapolation, it is shown that the Short Ending was extant in the early 200’s, and possibly earlier. We shall explore the possible significance of this later.

The evidence just reviewed elicits an important question: in the Egyptian witnesses which contain the Short Ending and 16:9-20, *why does the Short Ending always come first?* The answer is not difficult to see when one considers Ψ, 099, 274, Sahidic *I*-1602, the two Bohairic MSS with the Short Ending in the margin, and the Ethiopic Version. The Short Ending was placed beside the end of 16:8 because there, and not after 16:20, it could serve a useful purpose when the text was publicly read: the Short Ending rounded off a lection-unit on a positive note. The theory that a lection-unit in an Egyptian lectionary otherwise concluded at the end of 16:8 is proven by the presence of the *telos*-sign in Ψ.

(7) The Askew Codex of Pistis Sophia is an indirect witness to the Double Ending. “Askew” is the last name of the doctor from whom the British Museum purchased this Sahidic text in 1785. G.S.R. Mead describes the pertinent section of the document:

“On the last page is an appendix, somewhat in the style of the Mark-conclusion, beginning quite abruptly in the middle of a sentence and presumably part of a larger whole. The contents, measurements and writing make it almost certain that it formed no part of the original copy. At the very end two lines surrounded by ornamentation are erased. These may have contained the names of the owner or scribes, or possibly a general subscript title.”¹⁵

Mead provides a translation of this remnant-text, calling it “A Later Postscript” at the end of the manuscript:

“ . . . the righteous [man]. They went forth three by three to the four zones of heaven and they proclaimed the goodness of the kingdom in the whole world, the Christ inworking with them through the words of confirmation and the signs and the wonders which followed them. And thus was known the kingdom of God on the whole earth and in the whole world of Israel as a witness for all the nations which are from the rising unto the setting [of the sun].”¹⁶

Hort referred to this as “a detached fragment of a translation of some apocryphal Acts of Apostles (for illustrations see Lipsius in Smith and Wace’s *Dict. Chr. Biogr.* i. 19ff.)”¹⁷ The production-date of the Askew Codex is usually assigned somewhere between the 300’s and the 500’s. Although the production-date of *Pistis Sophia* itself is much earlier (200’s), the date in the 500’s is the pertinent date regarding the “Postscript,” because it does not seem to have ever been a part of *Pistis Sophia* itself.

15 ~ G.S.R. Mead, *Pistis Sophia, Translated with Commentary*, © 1921 J.M. Watkins, London. Mead’s introduction is online at gnosis.org/library/pistis-sophia/ps003.htm .

16 ~ G.S.R. Mead, *Pistis Sophia, Translated with Commentary*, © 1921 J.M. Watkins, London. This portion is presented online at gnosis.org/library/pistis-sophia/ps154.htm . I wish to thank Dr. Maurice Robinson of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary for putting me on the scent of this witness.

17 ~ p. 39, Introduction, *Notes*.

88

Mead was of the opinion that “We may then take it as sufficiently established that Greek originals underlay the whole contents of the Askew Codex,”¹⁸ and if we agree with this assessment, then a Greek text from which the “Postscript” was taken must be older than the Askew Codex.

Turning to the contents of the “Postscript” in the Askew Codex, it is clear that “*the Christ inworking with them through the words of confirmation and the signs and the wonders which followed them*” is derived from Mk. 16:20. Also, the opening statement, “*They went forth three by three to the four zones of heaven and they proclaimed the goodness of the kingdom in the whole world,*” when considered with the closing phrase, “*as a witness for all the nations which are from the rising unto the setting [of the sun],*” aligns so closely with the contents of the Short Ending as to preclude the possibility that the similarities are merely coincidental, especially when considering the form of the Short Ending in 099, in Sahidic copies, and in Armenian MS Ejmiadzin-303, where “the west” has been colloquially changed to “*the setting of the sun.*”

18 ~ p. xxviii, G.S.R. Mead, *Pistis Sophia, Translated with Commentary*, © 1921 J.M. Watkins, London. Mead's introduction is online at gnosis.org/library/pistis-sophia/ps003.htm.

Chapter 6: Lectionary Evidence

Hort wrote in 1881, "All or nearly all the various extant [lectionary] systems, Eastern and Western, so far as they are known, contain vv. 9-20: many or all of them probably, the Constantinopolitan certainly, represent with more or less of modification the systems of Cent. V or even in part Cent. IV; and these in their turn were probably in most cases founded on earlier local systems."¹

Research conducted after 1881 has revealed that at least one lectionary-system was used in Jerusalem which did not incorporate Mk. 16:9-20; this lectionary-system was adopted in Armenia and may have lowered the pressure on early Armenian scribes to conform their liturgical works to the Byzantine Text.² Nevertheless the prominent use of Mk. 16:9-20 in lectionaries in diverse locales attests to a basic acceptance of the passage in those locales, though this does not imply (nor need to imply) that local lectionary-systems ceased to develop as soon as they incorporated Mk. 16:9-20.

Hort mentions three examples of lectionaries which use Mk. 16:9-20: "In the extant Constantinopolitan Lectionaries and other records, and therefore probably in the Antiochan system, Mc xvi. 9-20 is read on Ascension Day," and, "The Jacobite Copts read vv. 9-20 on Ascension Day," and "The Jacobite Syrians on Tuesday in Easter-week."³ The use of Mk. 16:9-20 on "high days" of the church-calendar poses an intimidating problem. Kurt and Barbara Aland, while strongly opposing the idea of early, developed lectionaries, stated that "The Church had long associated certain feasts with certain scripture passages – almost inevitably for Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost, as well as for particular dominical feasts (cf. the early evidence of the papyri) – but when and how a fixed lectionary system was developed for the whole Church is not at all clear."⁴ The inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20 in readings for a "high day" implies that the passage was accepted at or very near the earliest stage of lectionary-use.

Hort proposed that after the Byzantine Text became popular, "It could rarely happen that a church would fail to read them [i.e., 16:9-20] publicly at one or both of these seasons [i.e., Easter and Ascension Day], so soon as it possessed them in the current copies of the Gospel itself: an accepted change in the Biblical text, bestowing on it a new narrative which touched the Resurrection in its first verse and the Ascension in its last, would usually be soon followed by a corresponding change in public reading."⁵

It is difficult to find a historical perch upon which Hort's theory can rest. Hort himself wrote, "Chrysostom alleges "the law of the fathers" (Hom. In Act. ix, Opp. iii 102 B) as the authority for the arrangement of lessons; which cannot therefore have been introduced in his own memory."⁶⁻⁵ Chrysostom died in 407, so this pushes the establishment of the lections of the "high-days" in the Constantinopolitan lectionary-system into the early 300's at the latest. Yet, according to Hort's theory of the origin of the

1 ~ p. 43, Introduction, *Notes*. 4-a ~ p. 42, Introduction, *Notes*. The more recent statement made in 1991 by James Brooks (on p. 272 of The New American Commentary Vol. 23: Mark, © 1991 Broadman Press, David S. Dockery, General Editor) that the Gospel of Mark ends at 16:8 “in most Greek lectionaries (apparently because the lectionaries reflect older texts),” is false.

2 ~ For more about this Armenian lectionary, see www.bombaxo.com/renoux.html . For information about other lectionaries, see www.bombaxo.com/lectionaries.html .

3 ~ p. 43, Introduction, *Notes*.

4 ~ pp. 164-165, The Text of the New Testament, © 1987 William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

5 (twice) ~ p. 42-43, Introduction, *Notes*.

In the pseudepigraphical “Apocalypse of Paul” (a form of which seems to have been known by Origen), as Paul is taken on a tour of hell, he observes a man standing in fire up to his knees, while a demon lacerates the man’s mouth with a razor. Paul’s angelic escort explains, “He whom you see was a lector; he read to the people; but he himself did not keep the commandments of God.” (p. 291 and 311-312, Apocalyptic Literature – A Reader, edited by Mitchell Reddish, © 1995 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., Peabody, MA.)

90

Byzantine Text, the Byzantine Text did not widely circulate (or even exist) until shortly before that period. If Eusebius’ statement that Mk. 16:9-20 is to be given any credibility at all, then the Byzantine Text would have to have been competing with local texts.

In such a setting, would any bishop readily introduce a new text – *this* text, with its statements about the rebuke delivered to the apostles, and about speaking in tongues, and about handling serpents, and about drinking poison – at the expense of the previously-used passage? Would he do so at Easter or Ascension-Day? And, if so, would a congregation happily embrace such a text?

We may consider the following incident in which a liturgical alteration was attempted: “In 512 Emperor Anastasius attempted to introduce the expanded Trisagion into Constantinople and gave instructions to this effect to the cantors of Hagia Sophia. When the people were assembled in the church on Sunday and suddenly heard the theopaschite Trisagion, they broke into a tumult during which the cantors were shouted down by the orthodox formula and were even attacked physically.”⁶

The lectionary evidence is consistent with the idea that Mk. 16:9-20 was accepted as Scripture from the very earliest stage of lectionary development in most areas. Lectionaries in Antioch, North Africa, Syria, Egypt, and Palestine offer practically the strongest support for the genuineness of Mk. 16:9-20 that they could.

Important lectionaries with the lections drawn from the Gospels include the following, with descriptions drawn from Scrivener’s A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament, pp. 328-366.⁷

#1 - (900’s), mutilated, written in uncials.

#2 - (900’s), mutilated, written in uncials.

#24 - (900’s), mutilated, written in uncials. Contains the lections for Saturdays and Sundays.

#34 - (900’s), three volumes, written in large uncials, probably made at Mount Athos.

#36 - (900’s), written in uncials.

#40 - (900’s), written in uncials.

#46 - (800’s), written in gold and silver uncials on purple parchment.

#60 - (1022), contains “many valuable readings (akin to those of Codd. ADE).”

#63 - (800’s), mutilated at the beginning and the end, written in uncials.

#65 - (800’s), written in uncials. A palimpsest.

#66 - (800’s), mutilated at the end. A palimpsest.

#111 - (900’s), written in uncials, one column per page.

#115 - (900’s), written in uncials.

#116 - (900’s), written in uncials.

#123 - (900’s), written in uncials. “Very correctly written, without points.”

#130 - (800’s), written in uncials. “Very beautiful.”

- #135 - (700's), written in uncials. A palimpsest.
- #139 - (900's), mutilated at the beginning, written in uncials.
- #150 - (995), written in uncials. "Its text presents many instructive variations."
- #155 - (900's), written in uncials. A palimpsest.

6 ~ Hans-Joachim Schulz, p. 24, The Byzantine Lectionary, © 1986 Pueblo Publishing Co., NY; English translation by Matthew J. O'Connell.

7 ~ See pp. 328-266 of F.H.A. Scrivener's A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament, 4th edition, 1894 George Bell & Sons. The numbers in the list have been updated according to Gregory's system, and were compared to the list in Kurt Aland's Kurzgefasste Liste Der Griechischen Handschriften Des Neuen Testaments. See also the list and descriptions at www.skypoint.com/members/waltzmn/Lectionary.html.

91

- #171 - (900's), mutilated at the beginning, written in uncials.
- #173 - (1046), written in uncials. Features a "very curious colophon" in gold uncials.
- #179 - (900's), written in uncials. "Some unusual readings."
- #213 - (1000's? 1200's?), "The last page has Mark xvi. 9-20."
- #259 - (1319), "remarkable for its wide departures from the received text."
- #286 - (800's), written in gold uncials. This is the "Golden Gospels-lectionary" at St. Catherine's Monastery. Assigned a date in the 800's but possibly written by Theodosius III in the early 700's. Opens with the readings for the first five days of Easter-week.
- #317 - (600's or 700's), severely mutilated and fragmented, written in uncials. A palimpsest with Syriac overwriting.
- #377 - (900's), written in uncials.
- #390 - (1000's or earlier), written in uncials.
- #541 - (900's), written in uncials.
- #542 - (900's), written in uncials.
- #563 - (700's), written in uncials. "Brought from Constantinople."

Although the apparatus in the 2nd edition of the UBS GNT cited lectionary #961 (dated in Kurt Aland's Kurzgefasste List to the 1100's) as a witness for "*add vv. 9-20 and short ending*,"⁸ that citation is incorrect.⁹

Two Egyptian lectionary-copies should be mentioned here:

P. Duke inv. 814 - (700's), which consists of two fragments of what appears to be a Sahidic lectionary, contains Mk. 16:7 on one side of a fragment, with Lk. 22:5 on the other. The other fragment contains the Short Ending on one side and Lk. 22:25 on the other side.¹⁰

#1602 - (700's), written in uncials. Favors the Alexandrian Text in Matthew and Mark. Has the Short Ending and Mk. 16:9-20, in a format congruent to that in MS 099,¹¹ as described in chapter five.

8 ~ p. 196, Greek New Testament, © 1966 UBS.

9 ~ See the explanation of this mis-citation in the article at www.skypoint.com/members/waltzmn/Lectionary.html .

10 ~ See the photographs of Sahidic fragment P. Duke. inv. 814, with a brief description, at scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/records/814.html .

11 ~ See the description in the list at www.skypoint.com/members/waltzmn/Lectionary.html .

PART TWO: INTERNAL EVIDENCE

Chapter 7: “Efobounto Gar”

Many commentators have expressed their agreement with Hort’s view about the implications of the abruptness with which 16:8 comes to an end: “It is incredible that the evangelist deliberately concluded either a paragraph with *εφοβουντο γαρ*, or the Gospel with a petty detail of a secondary event, leaving his narrative hanging in the air.”¹

However, as N. Clayton Croy has shown in The Mutilation of Mark’s Gospel, a substantial number of more recent commentators (not all of whom were well-informed about the nature of the external evidence), including Raymond Brown, Ned Stonehouse, Morna Hooker, Gilbert Bilezikian, Paul Danove, and Daniel Wallace, have argued that the abrupt ending was deliberate, and that it was intended to challenge the reader. Exactly what the reader was challenged to do is a matter of debate among these scholars.

Was the author intended to be challenged, by the reference to Galilee in 16:7, to read again the parts of the Gospel of Mark where events are situated in Galilee? This does not explain the existence of 16:8. Such a thing would also require Mark to have made this point intelligible to only a very small number of people, effectively excluding all those who only heard its contents read to them.

Did the author decide not to include narratives about Jesus’ post-resurrection appearances in order to invite his readers to believe the news that Jesus was risen on the basis of the evidence in Mk. 1:1-16:8? On one hand, this could challenge reader to believe the news without seeing evidence that it was true, but on the other hand, the entire book of Mark was written to people who had seen no other evidence of its veracity (except, in some cases, personal experience of the trustworthiness and/or spiritual authority of Peter and Mark). Readers would be challenged to believe, without proof, the news that Jesus was risen, with or without the inclusion of narratives about His post-resurrection appearances.

Did the author intend, as Willi Marxsen proposed, to encourage his readers to expect that the *parousia*, the second coming of Christ, would be manifest first in Galilee?² The implausibility of this is evident when one considers that (a) Jesus’ appearance in Galilee was promised specifically to the apostles in 14:28, not to the church as a whole, and (b) readers of Mark had no reason to interpret the command to go to Galilee, framed as part of a narrative of events which occurred in the days immediately following Jesus’ crucifixion, as if it was intended to be followed decades later, when the Gospel of Mark was produced.

Among the difficulties involved in the theory that Mark intentionally finished his Gospel at the end of 16:8, one of the most severe is that such an ending undercuts the authority of the very apostle from whom the text derived its authority in the early church: without 16:9-20, not only does the text contain no account of Jesus’ post-resurrection appearances, but it contains no account of Peter’s restoration:

Peter's part in the story ends in 14:66-72; he denies Christ three times and departs weeping. Peter never hears the angel's instructions to go to Galilee, for the women, according to 16:8, did not tell the angel's message to anyone.

1 ~ p. 46, Introduction, Notes. Hort's view was still dominant in 1943, when Henry C. Thiessen wrote, though with some exaggeration, "Few, if any, scholars hold that Mark originally ended at vs. 8; instead, all hold that there was another section after that verse, but that it was lost at an early date." (p. 149, Introduction to the New Testament, © 1973 by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.)

2 ~ Marxsen presented this theory on pp. 141-142, Introduction to the New Testament, English translation by G. Buswell © 1968 Basil Blackwell, Oxford. Marxsen also proposed that the Gospel of Mark was written in Galilee.

93

Another difficulty involves the way in which Mark, when he presents predictive statements made by Jesus which are imminently fulfilled, describes their fulfillment explicitly. Mark does this so often that it may be called a characteristic feature of Marcan narration. Mark 10:33-34, for example, is fulfilled in step-by-step detail. The predictive aspect in 11:2-3 is fulfilled completely in 11:4-6. Jesus' words in 14:13-15 come true in 14:16. After Jesus predicts that "one of the twelve" will betray Him in 14:20, Mark adds, in 14:43, "one of the twelve" when describing Judas Iscariot, even though Judas Iscariot has already been introduced; the reason for the insertion of the phrase is to make explicit the fulfillment of Jesus' prediction. And, in Mark 14:30, Jesus predicts that Peter will deny Him three times before the rooster crows – a prediction which is fulfilled step-by-step in 14:66-72.

The reader is thus led to expect an explicit fulfillment of the angel's prediction that Jesus will be seen in Galilee. With the abrupt ending, however, the expected fulfillment never comes. We may conclude either that Mark intended to spring a trap upon his readers, or that Mark intended to continue his account beyond 16:8 by describing a meeting where Jesus was seen by Peter and the rest of the disciples.

We must also consider Mark's statement about the women in 16:8b: "They said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid." Such a bare statement presents a paradox to readers: in order for Mark to know that they had said nothing to anyone, they would have had to have told someone – in which case, the question arises: why would Mark, though he knew that the women had told about the angel's message, deliberately end his account by saying that the women had not told anyone about the angel's message? The logical answer is that Mark did not do so deliberately.

Finally, we consider the grammatical and stylistic difficulties posed by the ending "εφοβουντο γαρ." R. R. Ottley, in 1926, listed several examples of sentences ending with γαρ in ancient Greek writings, including Homer's *Odyssey* 60:612, Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* 1564, Euripides' *Medea* 1272, 1276, Euripides' *Orestes* 251, Euripides' *Iph. Aul.* 1355, and, in the Septuagint, Genesis 14:3, Genesis 18:15, Isaiah 16:10, and Isaiah 29:11.³

According to N. Clayton Croy, a search of the most recent version of *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, a collection of almost all ancient Greek texts and some medieval ones, reveals "1,884 sentences ending in gar-period; 786 sentences ending in gar-question mark."⁴ Yet Croy also notes that short sentences that end in γαρ "often have the parenthetical quality of an aside,"⁴ and he shows that sentences ending in γαρ-period are rare in narratives; they are much more common in dialogues.

Ending a sentence in a narrative with γαρ is rare; ending a book with γαρ is rarer. Commentator James Edwards referred to "Plotinus' *Ennead* (32.5), Musonius Rufus' *Tractatus XII*, and Plato, *Protagoras* 328c"⁵ as texts which end in γαρ.

There is no serious grammatical difficulty involved in the ending "εφοβουντο γαρ." It seems that finishing a Greek sentence with the word "γαρ" was analogous to ending a sentence in English with the word "however." It is rare; it does sometimes occur, however. In MSS A, K, and Π, αυτον is absent after εφοβουντο γαρ in Mk. 11:18, showing that an early copyist had no problem with a phrase that ended in γαρ.⁶

3 ~ Cited by Kelly Iverson in “*Irony in the End: A Textual and Literary Analysis of Mark 16:8*” which is accessible at www.bible.org/docs/soapbox/scholars/irony.htm#P47_16422 . The footnotes make it obvious that *Enneads* 32:5, when it proceeded directly from the hand of its author, did not intentionally end with $\gamma\alpha\rho$.

4 (twice) ~ p. 48, [The Mutilation of Mark’s Gospel](#), © 2003 by Abingdon Press.

5 ~ p. 501, footnote, James Edwards, [The Gospel of Mark](#), Pillar Commentary series, © 2002 William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. Edwards here cites an article by Lincoln which appeared in the [Journal of Biblical Literature](#) in 1989.

6 ~ See the author’s Greek Uncial Archetype of Mark, at www.textexcavation.com/marcanarchetypescans.html .

94

The stylistic problem, however, is more severe. While three examples have been found of authors who wrote books that end with $\gamma\alpha\rho$ (Plotinus, Musonius Rufus, and Plato), two of these authors lived after Mark, and in the case of Plato’s *Protagoras*, the $\gamma\alpha\rho$ -phrase is used to soften an earlier statement; the $\gamma\alpha\rho$ in Mk. 16:8 is not used in such a way. In addition, we may note that the arrangement of the text of Plotinus’ *Enneads* probably is the result of an organization of Plotinus’ writings undertaken by Porphyry his assistant.⁷ N. Clayton Croy describes the feathery nature of the witness of Plotinus: “As van der Horst himself acknowledges, the writings of Plotinus have been cut up and rearranged by his pupil, Porphyry. This “final *gar*” example actually did have a continuation prior to being edited. The 32nd treatise of Plotinus, therefore, is a dubious example of *gar* ending a book.”⁸

The only example of a book pre-dating the Gospel of Mark and ending in $\gamma\alpha\rho$ is Plato’s *Protagoras* 328c, where $\gamma\alpha\rho$ ends a speech, in which the speaker made a clarifying note. The use of $\gamma\alpha\rho$ to conclude a speech is not comparable to the use of $\gamma\alpha\rho$ to conclude a narrative. The $\gamma\alpha\rho$ -phrase at the end of *Protagoras* 328c serves to soften the preceding point; it is as if the speaker said, “As children of criminals, these boys are likely to become criminals; they are young, however.” Used in such a way, the $\gamma\alpha\rho$ -phrase in Mk. 16:8 would be completely redundant: “The women fled from the tomb, trembling and amazed; they said nothing to anyone; they were afraid, however.” On the other hand, if the $\gamma\alpha\rho$ -phrase is the result of an interruption, the meaning of the closing sentence becomes something like this: “The women fled from the tomb, trembling and amazed; they said nothing to anyone; they were afraid; however—,” which is much closer to the sort of softening effect that is observed in *Protagoras* 328c, or would be, if the sentence had been completed.

Gilbert Bilezikian, in his dissertation (published as [The Liberated Gospel](#)), wrote, “Considered from the viewpoint of dramatic composition, the conclusion of the Gospel at 16:8 is not only perfectly appropriate but also a stroke of genius.”⁹ He compared Mark’s ending to the conclusions of *Prometheus Bound*, *Oedipus the King*, and *Phoenissae*, which end with the fate of some characters unresolved. However, these works, besides all being plays, and besides all being tragedies, were based on a framework of events well-known to their audiences. These tragedies were composed to convey a lesson to their audiences, but not to inform them about historical events. In addition, *Oedipus the King* and *Phoenissae* are components in a story-arc that extends over the course of several plays; in this respect they are unlike the Gospel of Mark. We conclude that a view of the abrupt ending at 16:8 as a “stroke of genius” does not adequately take into consideration Mark’s purpose, or the setting of his initial readers, or the non-theatrical nature of Mark’s account, or the lack of evidence of an intent on Mark’s part to produce a sequel.

C. H. Turner echoed Hort’s sentiment about the abrupt ending of 16:8: “It is incredible that any Gospel should have come to an intentional close on the words ‘for they were afraid.’”¹⁰ None of the theories which have been proposed to promote the idea that Mark deliberately stopped writing at the end of 16:8 have a solid foundation; they all require exceptionally complex and/or exquisitely subtle motivations which tend to be contrary to Mark’s purpose, setting, and sources.

7 ~ The *Enneads* of Plotinus were written c. A.D. 250. The text is at classics.mit.edu/Plotinus/enneads.html. R.H. Gundry referred to *Enneads* 5.5 as a “possible exception” to the failure of $\gamma\alpha\rho$ to ever end a book, but added, “the comparative rarity with which $\gamma\alpha\rho$ ends sentences, paragraphs, and sections still favor an original continuation beyond 16:8.” (p. 1011, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross*, © 1993 Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.)

8 ~ p. 49, N. Clayton Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark’s Gospel*, © 2003 by Abingdon Press.

9 ~ pp. 134-135, *The Liberated Gospel*, © 1977 Baker Book House.

10 ~ p. 85, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, by Cuthbert Hamilton Turner, published by SPCK.

95

Mark wrote his Gospel-account for a practical reason: to commit to writing the messages about Jesus which Peter had proclaimed. Without accounts of the appearances of Christ after His resurrection, the Gospel of Mark lacks an important component of Peter’s message which would have been known in the Christian community in Rome, and which is attested in First Peter 3:22 and in the sermons of Peter as recorded in the book of Acts. We conclude that all the rationales for the abrupt ending which have been attributed to Mark have been superimposed upon him, and that Mark did not intend for $\epsilon\phi\theta\upsilon\sigma\upsilon\upsilon\tau\omicron$ $\gamma\alpha\rho$ in 16:8 to be the end of his Gospel-account.¹¹

11 ~ For an analysis of eleven ways in which the abrupt ending has been interpreted as deliberate, see pp. 27-107 of N. Clayton Croy's *The Mutilation of Mark's Gospel*, © 2003 by Abingdon Press. Croy concludes that none of the proposed interpretations is satisfactory. See also pp. 501-504 of James Edwards' *The Gospel According to Mark*, in the Pillar NT Commentary series, © 2002 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids.

Chapter 8: The Style of the Long Ending of Mark

by Bruce Terry

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The question of authorship of verses 9 through 20 of the last chapter of Mark cannot be decided on the basis of textual evidence, since they are omitted by some good manuscripts and included by other good ones. Rather it must be determined, if possible, on the basis of style: if these last twelve verses are in Mark's style, then the view that they were written by Mark is preferable; if they are in a different style, then the view that they were written by someone else is preferable.

Textual critics usually object to Mark's authorship of these verses on the basis of supposed differences of style between them and the rest of the Gospel of Mark. However, an in depth study of the stylistic features in question reveals that almost all of them can be found elsewhere in Mark. For convenience of discussion, these features may be categorized under four headings: juncture, vocabulary, phraseology, and miscellaneous.

Objections Based on Juncture

Five objections have been raised concerning the juncture of verses 8 and 9. It is claimed that the connection between these verses is awkward because: (1) the subject of verse 8 is the women, whereas Jesus is the presumed subject of verse 9; (2) the other women of verse 1-8 are forgotten in verses 9-20; (3) in verse 9 Mary Magdalene is identified even though she has been mentioned only a few lines before; (4) while the use of *anastas de* ("Now rising") and the position of *proton* ("first") are appropriate at the beginning of a comprehensive narrative, they are ill-suited in a continuation of verses 1-8; and (5) the use of the conjunction *gar* ("for") at the end of verse 8 is very abrupt.

With regard to juncture, it may be noted that the transition between verses 8 and 9 does seem awkward. An exact parallel containing all the features of this juncture cannot be found elsewhere in Mark; however, the various features may be found in different transitions between sections in Mark. In fact, the first two features are found together several times. There are at least five other verses in Mark which meet the following conditions: (1) the verse must begin a new section; (2) Jesus must be the presumed subject (referred to only as "he"); (3) the previous verse must not refer to Jesus; (4) the previous verse must have a subject other than Jesus; and (5) the subject of the previous verse must not be mentioned in the new section. Mark 2:13; 6:45; 7:31; 8:1; and 14:3 all meet these conditions. Thus the first two objections listed are not valid. Although this section does begin with these stylistic features, they are also found together five times elsewhere in Mark.

The third objection listed is that Mary Magdalene is identified in verse 9 as "from whom he had cast seven demons" even though she has been mentioned as recently as verse 1. However, it should be noted that this is not, strictly speaking, an identifying phrase; it is rather a type of flashback that gives additional information about Mary Magdalene. This same type of flashback is found at least four times

elsewhere in Mark. In Mark 3:16 we find that Simon was surnamed Peter by Jesus, although Simon had been mentioned several times previously. We know this is a flashback because John 1:42 tells us it happened when Simon Peter first met Jesus. In Mark 3:17 we find that James and John were surnamed Boanerges, which means sons of thunder, although they too had been previously mentioned. In Mark 6:16 we find that Herod had beheaded John the Baptist, even though Herod had been previously

97

mentioned only two verses before. And in Mark 7:26 we find the additional information that the woman who was the subject of the previous verse was a Greek, a Syrophenician by race. Thus we see that the stylistic feature of giving additional information in a type of flashback about someone previously mentioned is not foreign to Mark. Therefore, the third objection is not valid either.

The fourth objection to the juncture between this last section of Mark and the previous one is that the use of *anastas de* ("Now rising") and the position of *proton* ("first") in verse 9 are ill-suited in a continuation of verses 1-8, even though they would be appropriate at the beginning of a comprehensive narrative. It is only necessary to point out that verse 9 is not a continuation of the section found in verse 1-8; it is the start of a new one. The resurrection of Christ is established by two great facts: the empty tomb and His appearances. Without the appearances of Christ, the empty tomb testifies only to a missing body. Without the empty tomb, the appearances are only those of a ghost or spirit. But together they prove the validity of the resurrection. Even so, the section of verses 1-8 relates the discovery of the empty tomb; the last section starting in verse 9 relates the appearances of the risen Christ. Mark does not mix the two proofs. Thus the words in question are appropriate to verse 9, because it starts a new section. The fourth objection is not valid either.

Perhaps the most serious objection with regard to juncture is that verse 8 ends with the conjunction *gar* ("for"), which is a very abrupt ending. The final clause of verse 8 ("for they were afraid") has only two words in Greek. Since the word *gar* cannot stand at the beginning of a sentence in Greek, it is found at the end of the sentence, which is a feature not found elsewhere in Mark. Some have suggested that there was more to the sentence but this has been lost. But even though there are no other two word clauses containing *gar* in Mark, there are three word clauses (Mark 1:16; 11:18) and four word clauses (Mark 1:38; 3:21; 5:42; 9:49; 14:70; 15:14; 16:4) that contain *gar*. Thus Mark did know how to use *gar* in short sentences.

Actually, as stated before, the transition between verses 8 and 9 does seem awkward. This is primarily due to the use of a participle as a sort of resume of what has already been stated in the previous section. Although the resurrection had been mentioned in verse 6, it is mentioned again with a participle ("rising") to begin the section on Christ's appearances. This is a rare feature, being found elsewhere in this Gospel only in Mark 14:66. This verse, which begins the section relating how Peter denied Jesus three times, begins with a participle ("being") placing Peter in the courtyard, a fact which had already been mentioned in verse 54. It may be noted in passing that the servants who were slapping Jesus in verse 65 are now forgotten (a feature which parallels the second objection once again). Thus even this rare feature is found elsewhere in Mark. Although all the stylistic features of this section are not found together elsewhere in Mark, they are found elsewhere in Mark and thus this juncture is Markan in style.

Objections Based on Vocabulary

Three objections to the Markan authorship of these last twelve verses are raised on the grounds of vocabulary. They are: (1) sixteen words used in this section are not used elsewhere in the Gospel of Mark; (2) three of these words are used more than once in this section; and (3) this section does not contain some of Mark's favorite words: *eutheos* or *euthus* (both meaning "immediately") and *palin* ("again").

The main objection to the Markan authorship of these verses based on vocabulary is that sixteen words used in this section are not used elsewhere in the Gospel of Mark. The sixteen words are: *poreuomai* ("go," three times, vv. 10, 12, 15), *pentheo* ("mourn," v. 10), *theaomai* ("see," twice, vv. 11,

14), *apisteo* ("not believe, disbelieve," twice, vv. 11, 16), *heteros* ("another, different," v. 12), *morphe* ("form," v. 12), *husteron* ("afterward," v. 14), *endeka* ("eleven," v. 14), *parakoloutheo* ("follow, accompany," v. 17), *ophis* ("serpent, snake," v. 18), *thanasimos* ("deadly," v. 18), *blapto* ("hurt, harm," v. 18), *analambano* ("receive up, take up," v. 19), *sunergeo* ("work with," v. 20), *bebaioo* ("confirm," v. 20), and *epakoloutheo* ("follow, attend," v. 10).

98

In all fairness, however, it should be pointed out that eight of these sixteen do have their word root used elsewhere in Mark. *Poreuomai* may not be used before this section, but its compounds are used 25 times elsewhere (*eisporeuomai*—8 times; *ekporeuomai*—11 times; *paraporeuomai*—4 times; *prosporeuomai*—once; *sumporeuomai*—once); in fact *poreuomai* itself is a variant reading in Mark 9:30. It is certainly no surprise to find this word used three times in this section. *Apisteo* is not found elsewhere in Mark, but its noun form *apistia* ("unbelief") is found not only in this section (v. 14), but twice elsewhere (6:6; 9:24). *Morphe* is not found elsewhere in the four Gospels, but *metamorphoo* ("transfigure, transform") is found in Mark 9:2. *Parakoloutheo* and *epakoloutheo* are found only here in Mark, but *akoloutheo* is used 19 times in Mark and *sunakoloutheo* twice. *Thanasimos* occurs only here in the New Testament, but *thanatos* ("death") is found six times in Mark and *thanatoo* ("put to death") twice. *Analambano* is found only here in the Gospels, but *lambano* is used 21 times in Mark. And although *sunergeo* occurs only here in the Gospels, *ergazomai* is found once and *ergon* twice in Mark.

In addition, it should be pointed out that three of these sixteen words are found only in the post-resurrection accounts in the story of Jesus' life (i.e., in the Gospels plus Acts 1). They are *apisteo* ("disbelieve"), *endeka* ("eleven"), and *analambano* ("take up"). It is therefore not unusual to find these words only here in Mark because of the subject matter.

But in spite of the fact that the presence of several of these words is explainable, it still remains that there are sixteen words which are used only in these twelve verses in Mark. Nothing can be inferred about the genuineness of this section of Mark from the presence of any one of these words; rather, it is the large number of them which calls the style of the passage into question. However, looking at the twelve verses of Mark 15:40-16:4, one finds not just sixteen such words, but twenty to twenty-two, depending on textual variants. This shows that the author knew quite well how to use in a brief passage many new words which he had not previously used. The words used in Mark 15:40-16:4 but not used elsewhere are *Salome* ("Salome," twice, vv. 40, 1), *sunanabaino* ("come up with," v. 41), *epei* ("because, since," v. 42), *paraskeue* ("preparation," v. 42), *prosabbaton* ("the day before the sabbath," v. 42), *Arimathaia* ("Arimathea," v. 43), *euschemon* ("honorable, respected, prominent," v. 43), *prosdechomai* ("wait for, look for," v. 43), *thnesko* ("die, be dead," v. 44), *palai* ("any while, some time," v. 44; some Greek manuscripts have a different reading—*ede*, "already"—reflected in the RSV and NASV text, but both the Nestle and UBS Greek texts have *palai*), *doreomai* ("give, grant," v. 45), *eneileo* ("wrap, wind," v. 46), possibly *katatithemi* ("lay," v. 46; several Greek manuscripts have the simple verb form *tithemi*—the 25th edition of the Nestle Greek text has *katatithemi* while the 26th edition joins the UBS Greek text in reading *tithemi*), *latomeo* ("hew," v. 46), *petra* ("rock," v. 46), *proskulio* ("roll," v. 46), *diaginomai* ("be past, be over," v. 1), *aroma* ("spices," v.1), *apokulio* ("roll away," v. 3), *anakulio* ("roll away, roll back," v. 4), and *sphodra* ("very, exceeding, extremely," v. 4).

Thirteen of these sixteen words found only here in Mark are used only once. But this is not as unusual as might be thought. In the 661 undisputed verses in Mark, there are 555 words that are used only once (WUOO) in this book; however; the distribution of words used only once is not uniform in Mark. For example, the first twelve verses of chapter 1 contain 16 words used only once in Mark, and the first twelve verses of chapter 14 contain 20, even though both of these chapters have ratios that are less than 1 such word per verse.

The distribution of words used only once in Mark across the chapters can be seen in the following chart, which was compiled from the statistics for infrequently used words found in Kubo's Reader's Lexicon.

Chapter	Number of Words Used Only Once	Number of Verses	Hapax Legomena	Ratio WUOO/Verses
1	39	45	6	.86
2	16	28	3	.57
3	13	35	1	.37
4	42	41	2	1.02
5	25	43	4	.58
6	46	56	3	.82
7	41	36 *	6	1.14
8	23	38	2	.61
9	43	48 *	10	.90
10	40	52	5	.77
11	14	32 *	2	.44
12	46	44	5	1.05
13	40	37	3	1.08
14	70	72	5	.97
15	53	46 *	5	1.15
16:1-8	4	8	0	.50
Subtotals	555	661	62	.84
16:9-20	13	12	1	1.08
Totals	568	673	63	.84

* Verses are missing from chapters 7, 9, 11, and 15 due to textual variants.

For chapters, the ratio of words used only once to verses varies between a low of .37 in chapter 3 and a high of 1.15 in chapter 15. The ratio of 1.08 for the long ending of Mark is well within this range, being exceeded by chapters 7, 13, and 15.

Number of Sections	Number of Words Used Only Once per Section	Number of Verses per Section	Total Hapax Legomena	Ratio WUOO/Verses
Long Ending				
4	Range: 1-6; Ave. 3.25	2-5	1	.33-2.00 Ave. 1.08
Rest of Mark				
37	Range: 0-12; Ave. 3.32 (chapters 1-16) (chapters 12-16)	2-5	16	.00-2.40 Ave. .88 Ave. 1.10
29	Range: 1-16; Ave. 6.38	6-9	15	.13-2.29 Ave. .90
17	Range: 1-15; Ave. 8.24	10-13	15	.09-1.30 Ave. .74
7	Range: 8-30; Ave. 15.29	15-23	16	.53-1.36 Ave. .84

The analysis can be further clarified by using the sections found in the UBS Greek New Testament rather than chapters. There are four such sections in the long ending of Mark and ninety sections in the undisputed part of Mark. These sections contain between zero and thirty words each that are used only once in Mark, the longer sections on the average containing more such words. For sections, the ratio of words used only once to verses varies between a low of .00 for six sections (1:14-15; 3:31-35; 8:27-30; 13:1-2; 14:1-2; and 14:51-52) and a high of 2.40 in the section found in 15:16-20. The highest ratio of 2.00 for a section (verses 19-20) in the long ending of Mark is well within this range, being exceeded by sections in chapters 12 (verses 38-40 with 2.33), 14 (verses 3-9 with 2.29), and 15 (verses 16-20 with 2.4 and verses 42-47 with 2.33).

The four sections in the long ending of Mark range from two to five verses in length. Following is a summary table of the results of the analysis, grouped by section size, comparing the long ending to the rest of Mark.

When the four sections of the long ending are compared with other sections in Mark that are two to five verses long, it is seen that they fall within the ranges of the undisputed sections of Mark. The average mean of words used only once per section of 3.25 compares favorably with the average in the rest of the book of 3.32 for similar sized sections. The average ratio of 1.08 words used only once/verses of the long ending is greater than the average of .88 for the whole book but comparable to the average of 1.10 for the last five chapters. This latter figure means that, for twelve verses composed of sections this size in the last five chapters of Mark (around the climax), the number of words to be expected that are used only once would be thirteen, which is exactly what is found!

By way of contrast, the shorter ending of Mark, although only about 2 verses long, contains 9 words not used in Mark, giving a ratio of 4.5, over 4 times that of the long ending and almost twice that of 15:16-20, which has the highest ratio of any section in Mark!

A second objection to the Markan authorship of these verses is that three of the sixteen words in question (*poreuomai*, *theaomai*, and *apisteo*) are used more than once. But an examination reveals that this is also characteristic of Mark's style. An analysis of words that are used more than once within a twelve verse span of text and only within that span in Mark reveals that there are 77 such words in the undisputed verses of Mark plus 5 proper nouns. If the selection is limited to a six verse span (the largest span actually used in 16:9-20), the number of words drops to 58 plus 3 names. The following chart shows the distribution:

Twelve Verse Spread		Six Verse Spread		
Times Used	words	names	words	names
2 times	53	2	42	1
3 times	14	2	11	1
4 times	4	1	4	1
5 times	5	-	-	-
6 times	1	-	1	-

The long ending of Mark has a unique-words-used-more-than- once to verse ratio of .25. For chapters this ratio varies from 0 for chapter 10 (with no such words) to .25 for chapter 2 (7 such words in 28 verses). For sections it varies from 0 to 1. The most notable section is 2:18-22 with a ratio of 1 (5 such words in 5 verses: *nesteuo* "fast" [6 times], *numphios* "bridegroom" [3 times], *palaios* "old" [3 times], *neos* "new" [twice], and *askos* "wineskin" [4 times]). This five-verse section also contains at least 7 words that are used only once in Mark, including 2 hapax legomena. Other examples of such words

throughout Mark include the following: *sporos* ("seed," Mark 4:26, 27), *sunthlibo* ("throng, press," Mark 5:24, 31), *telones*

101

("tax-collector, publican," Mark 8:9, 20), and *huperetes* ("servant, officer, guard, attendant," Mark 14:54, 65). Thus, this objection is not valid.

A third objection is that this section does not contain some of Mark's favorite words: *eutheos* or *euthus* (both meaning "immediately") and *palin* ("again"). This is to overlook the fact that not only do the last twelve verses of Mark not contain these words, the last fifty-three verses do not contain them. Looking at Mark as a whole, there are 650 sets of twelve consecutive verses, not considering the last twelve verses. Out of these, 373 sets do not contain *euthus* or *eutheos*; that is, more than 57% do not have them. Also, 399 sets do not contain *palin*; that is, more than 61% do not have this word. And finally, it may be noted that 229 sets do not contain *euthus*, *eutheos*, or *palin*; that is, more than 35% do not contain any of these words. It is hardly an objection to say that the last twelve verses are in the same category with more than one-third of the sets of twelve consecutive verses in the rest of the book.

Having examined the three objections based on vocabulary and found that all three are actually stylistic features found elsewhere in Mark, it is not inappropriate to point out some evidence from vocabulary in favor of the Markan authorship of these verses. There are several words in these last twelve verses which may be classified as Markan in some special sense. Defining this category as words which are used elsewhere in Mark as much or more than they are used in any of the other three Gospels, there are nine words in this section which can qualify. They are *proi* ("early," v. 9; also found 5 times elsewhere in Mark, 3 times in Matthew, and twice in John), *apistia* ("unbelief," v. 14; also found in Mark 6:6; 9:24 and in Matthew 13:58), *sklerokardia* ("hardness of heart," v. 14; also found in Mark 10:5 and in Matthew 19:8), *kerusso* ("preach," twice, vv. 15, 20; also found 12 times elsewhere in Mark, 9 times in Matthew, and 9 times in Luke), *euaggelion* ("gospel," v. 15; also found 7 times elsewhere in Mark, and 4 times in Matthew), *ktisis* ("creature, creation," v. 15; also found in Mark 10:6 and 13:19, but in none of the other Gospels), *arrostos* ("sick," v. 18; also found in Mark 6:5, 13 and in Matthew 14:14), *kalos* ("well, recover," v. 18; also found 5 times elsewhere in Mark, twice in Matthew, and 4 times in Luke), and *pantachou* ("everywhere," v. 20; also found in Mark 1:28 and Luke 9:6). The presence of these words lends credence to the idea that Mark wrote this section.

Objections Based on Phraseology

The phraseology of these last twelve verses is claimed to be non-Markan because: (1) eight phrases used in this section are not used elsewhere in Mark; (2) similar but different phrases are used elsewhere in Mark; and (3) the phrase *oi met' autou genomenoi* ("those having been with him") is used to designate the disciples only here.

The eight phrases which are used in this section but not elsewhere in Mark are *prote sabbatou* ("first [day] of the week," v. 9), *ekballo apo* or *ekballo para* ("cast out from," v. 9), *oi met' autou genomenoi* ("those having been with him," v. 10), *etheathe hup'* ("was seen by," v. 11), *meta tauta* ("after these things," v. 12), *pasa ktisis* ("all creation, every creature," v. 15), *kalos echein* ("to have well, to get well, to recover," v. 18), *men oun* ("on the one hand therefore," v. 19). Once again, it is not so much the presence of any particular phrase as it is the large number of phrases which is the stylistic feature in question. However, in the twelve verses of Mark 15:42-16:6 there are nine phrases used which are not found elsewhere in this Gospel. They are: *ede opsias genomenes* ("now evening having come," v. 42), *ginosko apo* ("know from," v. 45), *proskulio epi* ("roll on," v. 46), *he thura tou mnemeiou* ("the door of the tomb," twice, vv. 46, 3), *lian proi . . . erchomai* ("come very early," v. 2), *mia ton sabbaton* ("[day] one of the week," v. 2), *en tois dexiois* ("on the right," v. 5), *stolen leuken* ("white robe," v. 5), *me ekthambeisthe* ("Be not affrighted, Do not be amazed," v. 6). Thus Mark did know how to use a large number of new phrases in a particular section.

But a second objection regards the use of *prote sabbatou* ("first of the week") in verse 9 for Sunday. In verse 2 Mark used *mia ton sabbaton* ("one of the week") to designate the same day. Some have argued that *prote sabbatou* is not in Mark's style, but since *mia ton sabbaton* is only found once

itself in the Gospel of Mark, it can hardly be said to constitute Mark's style in this regard. A more serious question

102

is whether Mark would shift to a similar but different form to designate the same thing. Once again we can find this stylistic feature elsewhere in Mark. For example, in Mark 2:23, 24 the sabbath is referred to in the plural form in Greek (*ta sabbata*) while three verses later in verses 27-28 Mark switches to the singular form (*to sabbaton*). Both forms have a singular meaning. Again, in Mark 5:2 the word that Mark uses for "tomb" is *mnemeion* while in verses 3 and 5 he switches to the similar word *mnema*. The same variation is found in Mark 15:56-16:8.

It may also be noted that *prote sabbatou* would sound better to a Roman than *mia ton sabbaton* and that Mark is usually stated to be the Gospel for the Romans. The use of the cardinal (*mia*—"one") for the ordinal (*prote*—"first") is a known Aramaic characteristic that is used in the Talmud. On the other hand, Latin (like English) prefers the ordinal in such a phrase. In English, we prefer "first day of the week" to "day one of the week"; in the same way, a Latin speaker would prefer *prima sabbati* ("first of the week") to *una sabbati* ("one of the week"). This is shown by the Latin translation of Matthew 28:1 which literally would have been *unam sabbatorum* or *una sabbati*, but which in fact is the better sounding *prima sabbati*. Thus it is not surprising to find the corresponding Greek phrase *prote sabbatou* in the Gospel of Mark which is supposedly primarily for the Romans.

The third objection is that the phrase *oi met' autou genomenoi* ("those having been with him") is used nowhere but verse 10 to designate the disciples. A similar objection sometimes made is that *thanasimos* ("deadly," v. 18) is used only here to designate the disciples, but *thanasimos* is not referring to the disciples but to something that may be drunk. However, *oi met' autou genomenoi* is here referring to the disciples. But the past flavor given to the phrase by the use of the aorist participle *genomenoi* ("having been") would hardly have been appropriate previous to the crucifixion. Thus one would not expect to find this phrase referring to the disciples except in the last chapter. And the shorter expression *oi met' autou* ("those with him") is found three times elsewhere in Mark (1:36; 2:25; and 5:40).

In addition, there are at least four other phrases which are found in this section and also elsewhere in Mark. They are *eis agron* ("into the country," v. 12; also found in Mark 5:14; 6:36, 56; 13:16), *kerusso to euaggelion* ("preach the gospel," v. 15; also found in Mark 1:14; 13:10; 14:9), *en to onomati mou* ("in my name," v. 17; also found in Mark 9:38), and *epi . . . cheiras epitithemi* ("lay hands on," v. 18; also found in Mark 8:25). This is additional evidence that this last section is in Mark's style.

Miscellaneous Objections

Several miscellaneous objections have also been raised to Mark's authorship. (1) It is claimed that Mark's usual style is to expand the accounts of incidents in Christ's life as compared with the other Gospels while this section condenses the accounts. (2) It is noted that Mark has a fondness for the word *kai* ("and") which is lacking in this section. (3) It is claimed that *ekeinos* ("that one") and the contraction *akeinos* ("and that one") are used in a weakened sense of simply "he," "she," or "they" in this section as opposed to the rest of the Gospel. (4) It is noted that Jesus is referred to as "the Lord" or "the Lord Jesus" only in this section of Mark. (5) And it is noted that the only appearances recorded in this ending of Mark are also recorded in the other Gospels, implying that the writer relied on the other Gospels for his information.

Regarding the first objection, it is often true that Mark has more material on an incident in Christ's life than the other Gospels (compare Mark 5:21-43 with the parallel accounts in Matthew 9:18-26 and Luke 8:40-56). However, in this section we find only one verse describing Christ's appearance to two on the road, while Luke gives that incident twenty-three verses (Luke 24:13-35). But Mark also knows how to pass over quickly important events in Christ's life. Passing over Jesus' birth completely, Mark gives only seven verses to John the Baptist's preaching, three verses to Jesus' baptism, and two verses to His temptation! Thus condensation can also be a stylistic feature of Mark.

Probably the most serious objection against Mark's authorship of these verses relates to the strange distribution of conjunctions in this last section as compared with the rest of Mark. It is often stated

that Mark had a fondness for the conjunction *kai* ("and") which is not shown in these verses. Other conjunctions are used and verse 10 is even without a conjunction to begin it. While *kai* is used at least

103

once in every verse in some sections, here it is used only nine times, and only three of these are used to join clauses. There are also three contractions with *kai* in this section: once *kai* contracts with *an* ("if") to form *kan* and twice *kai* contracts with *ekeinos* ("that one") to form *akeinos*. These are all used to begin new clauses. But the scant usage of *kai* in this section is paralleled in the twelve verse sections of Mark 7:15-26 (only eight uses of *kai*, six joining clauses) and 13:26-37 (only nine uses of *kai*, four joining clauses). All of the other conjunctions in this section are used elsewhere in Mark. Regarding the lack of a conjunction to begin verse 10, it should be noted that the first four verses of the Gospel do not contain a single coordinating conjunction (there is one subordinating conjunction in verse 2). Thus Mark knew how to use the stylistic features of a few uses of *kai* and no beginning conjunction.

Still another objection is that *ekeinos* ("that one") and the contraction *akeinos* ("and that one") are used in a weakened sense of simply "he," "she," or "they" (this is called an "absolute" use of the pronoun). While it is true that *ekeinos* is not used elsewhere in Mark in the absolute sense, the contracted form *akeinos* is used absolutely in Mark 12:4, 5 (the only two other places in Mark where it is used).

A fourth objection is that Jesus is referred to as "the Lord" or "the Lord Jesus" only in this section of Mark. There is a textual question as to whether verse 19 should read "the Lord" or "the Lord Jesus." Both the Nestle and UBS Greek texts include "Jesus" in brackets in the text. The objection, however, is the same regardless of which reading is accepted. Both show a heightened respect for Christ after His resurrection. But the term "Lord" is also used in reference to Christ in Mark 1:3; 2:28; 7:28; 11:3; and 12:36-37. In some of these passages the term "Lord" does not have the full significance that it does here, but Luke, who uses the term "Lord" extensively to refer to Christ, also uses the heightened term "the Lord Jesus" only in Luke 24:3, after His resurrection.

The last objection to be discussed is that the only appearances recorded in the long ending of Mark are also recorded in the other Gospels, implying that the writer relied on the other Gospels for his information. While the observation is correct, the implication that is drawn from it is not. It only needs to be noted that this section contains new information about the appearances not revealed elsewhere. For example, this section alone tells us that the disciples were "mourning and weeping" (v. 10), that Christ appeared to the two on the road in a "different form" (v. 12), and that one of the signs to follow the disciples would be the drinking of deadly things without harmful results (v.18). Thus this objection is also invalid.

Cumulative Style and Peak

In conclusion, we see that all the objections to Mark's authorship of this section based on style fall into one of two classes: (1) either the stylistic feature in question is found elsewhere in Mark, or (2) there is a reasonable explanation for its presence. By far the largest number of objections fall in the first category. This indicates that it is not correct to state that this long ending is not in Mark's style.

It is possible that someone might object that it is not that these stylistic features are not found elsewhere in Mark, but that they are rare in Mark, being used infrequently by him. Thus it is the cumulative factor of using so many rare stylistic features in one place that makes this section non-Markan. This objection is well-taken and must be given consideration.

With the recent discovery of the concept of peak, however, this frequent use of rare features in an important part of the story is exactly what should be expected. Peak is a area of grammatical turbulence. Little used features become prominent in peak sections and often used features are abandoned. Background devices become foregrounded and vice versa. In languages around the world, peak has been shown to occur in sections of climax and denouement, and sometimes inciting incident, in narratives told by good storytellers. If the crucifixion is the climax, the resurrection is the denouement. One would expect this to be a peak area in which the use of expected stylistic features is abandoned in favor of less frequently used ones. This is exactly what is found in the increased use of words used only once in Mark in the last five chapters. Rather than revealing that Mark is not the author of these last twelve verses, this different cumulative style may show that he was a good storyteller.

Chapter 9: Is Mark 16:9-20 Non-Markan?

In addition to Dr. Terry's analysis, the following points about the internal evidence are offered.

(1) Mark is well-known for his fondness for presenting things in groups of three.¹ Mk. 16:9-20 exhibits this characteristic: the post-resurrection appearances are arranged in three scenes: the appearance to Mary Magdalene (vv. 9-11), to the two travelers (vv. 12-13), and to the eleven (vv. 14-18). The triple use of εφαναη/εφανερωθη ("appeared") is striking.

(2) It is sometimes objected that 16:9-20 does not mesh with Mk. 14:28 or 16:7 because there is no mention in 16:9-20 of a meeting in Galilee.² The weakness of this objection is exposed, however, when we observe that 16:8 says that the women never told the apostles about the angel's news that Jesus was raised or about His instructions to go to Galilee. Without that news and instructions, the apostles would be expected to remain, at least for a few days, where they had last been seen in the narrative: in Jerusalem, not Galilee. Only after reading the Gospel of Matthew, or some other source-material explicitly locating a post-resurrection appearance in Galilee, would an author feel pressured to mention that the appearance in Mk. 16:14ff. occurred in Galilee.

(3) It is sometimes claimed that 16:17-18 shows the author's familiarity with the book of Acts. Supporters of this claim typically consider the statement "They shall take up serpents" to allude to the events in Acts 28:3-6. However, the term used for "serpent" in Acts 28 is εχιδνα; in Mk. 16:18, it is οφεις. A much closer parallel to the verbiage of 16:8 exists in the Septuagint-text of Exodus 4, where Moses picks up a serpent (LXX: οφεις). Although the author of 16:9-20 may have been aware of many events which are related in the book of Acts, nothing in the text of 16:9-20 really indicates that he had read the book of Acts. In addition, the statement "they shall take up serpents" describes a volitional act, and that is not what Acts 28:3-6 describes.

Furthermore, when Acts 28:5 says that Paul "suffered no harm," this is the phrase "επαθεν ουδεν κακον," which would offer itself to a mimic for implementation at the end of Mk. 16:18, but 16:18 expresses the idea of invulnerability in different terms: ". . . ου μη αυτους βλαψη." All of the terminology which has been alleged to show the author's awareness of Acts is instead evidence of his familiarity with the Septuagint and his knowledge of events in the church's formative years.

(4) Assessments of the significance of the internal evidence vary wildly from scholar to scholar. In 1881, Hort wrote, "Vocabulary and style of vv. 9-20 indecisive, but not favorable to genuineness."³ In 1896, Ezra Gould wrote, "The internal evidence for the omission is much stronger than the external, proving conclusively that these verses could not have been written by Mark."⁴ In 1971 Bruce Metzger wrote that 16:9-20 "must also be judged by internal evidence to be secondary."⁵ But in 1990, Harvard professor Helmut Koester stated that the vocabulary and style of Mark 16:9-20 is "fully compatible with the Gospel of Mark,"⁶ and in 2000 J.K. Elliott wrote, "In many ways the non-Markan character of Mark 1.1-3 is more pronounced than that of Mark 16.9-20."⁷

¹ ~ T.A. Burkill lists numerous examples of this tendency on pp. 256-258 of New Light on the Earliest Gospel, © 1972 Cornell University.

² ~ Michael Holmes raised such an objection in "To Be Continued . . .," p. 48, *Bible Review* August 2001.

³ ~ p. 29, Introduction, Notes.

⁴ ~ p. 302, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark, International Critical Commentary series, © 1896 Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

⁵ ~ p. 125, Textual Commentary.

⁶ ~ p. 295, Ancient Christian Gospels, © Helmut Koester 1990, SCM Press and Trinity Press International.

⁷ ~ p. 586, New Testament Studies, Vol. 46, pp. 584-588, © 2000 Cambridge University Press.

(5) The question, “Was Mark 16:9-20 written by Mark?” should be separated from the question of the passage’s presence in the Gospel of Mark. When 16:9-20 is treated as a short, separate composition, and the inquiry is refashioned so as to ask if the author of the Gospel of Mark could be the author of this composition, a substantial number of objections to Marcan authorship of 16:9-20 are immediately rendered irrelevant:

- The “awkward” juncture between 16:8 and 16:9 cannot be considered a point against Marcan authorship of 16:9-20 as a separate document.⁸
- The reintroduction of Mary Magdalene in v. 9 cannot be considered a point against Marcan authorship of 16:9-20 as a separate document.
- The “use of *αναστας δε* and the position of *πρωτον*”⁹ cannot be considered a point against Marcan authorship of 16:9-20 as a separate document.

The only remaining objection to Marcan authorship of 16:9-20 given by Metzger in his *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* is the “vocabulary and style” of the passage.¹⁰ The analysis provided by Dr. Terry has yielded a solid rebuttal to this claim as far as vocabulary is concerned, and the few tender reservations which remain – the most weighty of which is the absolute use of *εκεινη* (16:10), *κακεινοι* (16:11), *εκεινοις* (16:13), *εκεινοι* (16:20) – are swept away by the considerations that 16:9-20, as a much shorter text, should be expected to display a greater tendency toward brevity than Mk. 1:1-16:8, and that 16:9-20 was originally of a different genre – a catechetical or liturgical text – than 1:1-16:8.

(6) The objection that the author of Mk. 16:9-20 appears to have derived verbiage from Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts (a point emphasized by James Kelhoffer in his dissertation *Miracle and Mission*¹¹) fades away when the foundations of this claim are examined in detail. The claim that “all of the material in 16:9-20 appears to be garnered from accounts found in the other three Gospels”¹² may not only be deflected but reversed.

The statement in 16:10 that the disciples “mourned and wept” (*πενθουσι και κλαιουσιν*) has no parallel in the Gospels, except very remotely in Jn. 16:20 (*κλαυσετε και θρηνησετε*). The statement in 16:14 that Jesus rebuked the unbelief of the eleven apostles has no parallel. The statement in 16:16a, “He who believes and is baptized shall be saved,” stresses the importance of baptism more explicitly than any other statement in the Gospels. The statement in 16:17 that the believers will “speak in new tongues” has no parallel in the Gospels. And the statement in 16:18 that “if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them” has no parallel. These unique features in a 171-word passage demonstrate that the claim that all its contents are derived from the Gospels is false.

Kelhoffer’s theory that a mimic composed Mk. 16:9-20 by gathering verbiage from the Gospels and Acts is rendered absurdly complex when one considers the many ingredients which the theory requires: first, the mimic would need to possess copies of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts. Second, he would need to have gleaned 60 phrases from those sources – resorting to his sources one time for every three words he wrote.

8 ~ Cf. Metzger: statement that “The connection between ver. 8 and verses 9-20 is so awkward that it is difficult to believe that the evangelist intended the section to be a continuation of the Gospel,” p. 125, *Textual Commentary*.

9 ~ cf. p. 125, Bruce Metzger, *Textual Commentary*.

10 ~ p. 125, *Textual Commentary*.

11 ~ See James A. Kelhoffer’s *Miracle and Mission – The Authentication of Missionaries and Their Message in the Longer Ending of Mark*, © 2000 by J.C.B. Hohn (Paul Siebeck), P.O. Box 2040, D-72010 Tubingen, Germany.

12 ~ p. 616 (?), David E. Garland, *The NIV Application Commentary: Mark*, © 1996 by David E. Garland, Zondervan Publishing House, a division of HarperCollins.

Now we must ask some simple questions:

- (1) Since Mk. 15:40 and 16:1 refer to “Μαρια η Μαγδαληνη,” does the phrase “Μαρια τη Μαγδαληνη” in 16:9 suggest that it was derived from Jn. 20:11-18?
- (2) Since Mk. 5:14 uses *ανηγγειλαν*, Mk. 5:19 uses *απαγγειλον*, and 6:30 uses *απηγγειλαν*, does the use of *απηγγειλαν* in Mk. 16:10 suggest dependence upon Mt. 28:8-11, Lk. 24:9, and Jn. 20:18?
- (3) Since Mk. 6:6 uses *απιστουν*, Mk. 9:19 uses *απιστος*, and 9:24 uses *απιστια*, does the use of *ηπιστησαν* in Mk. 16:11 suggest dependence on Lk. 24:11?
- (4) Since Mk. 4:22 uses *φανερωθη*, does the use of *εφανερθωη* in Mk. 16:12 suggest dependence on Jn. 21:14?
- (5) Since 12-1=11, does the use of *τοις ενδεκα* in 16:14 suggest dependence on Mt. 28:16, Lk. 24:9, Acts 1:26, or Acts 2:15?
- (6) Since the phrase *και ειπεν αυτοις* is used six times in Mk. 1:1-16:8, does its occurrence in 16:15 suggest dependence on Lk. 24:46?
- (7) Since Mk. 8:11-12 uses *σημειον*, (referring to the request for “a sign from heaven”), does the use of *σημεια* in 16:17 suggest dependence on Jn. 20:30-31?
- (8) Since *ου μη* is used in Mk. 9:1, 9:41, 10:15, 13:2, 13:19, 13:30, 13:31, 14:25, and 14:31, does the use of *ου μη* in Mk. 16:18 suggest dependence on Lk. 10:19b?
- (9) Since *πανταχου* is used (in the Alexandrian Text) in Mk. 1:28, does the use of *πανταχου* in Mk. 16:20 suggest dependence on Lk. 9:6?
- (10) Since the phrase *ανελημφθη εις τον ουρανον* is in the Septuagint in II Kings 2:11, and since Luke 24:51 has *ανεφερετο*, not *ανελημφθη*, does the use of *ανελημφθη εις τον ουρανον* in Mk. 16:19 suggest dependence on Lk. 24:51 and Acts 1:9?
- (11) Since the Septuagint’s text of Psalm 110:1 includes the phrase *καθου εκ δεξιων μου*, and since Psalm 110:1 is quoted in Mk. 12:36, and since Mk. 14:62 includes the phrase *εκ δεξιων καθημενον της δυναμεως*, does the use of *εκαθισεν εκ δεξιων του θεου* in Mk. 16:19 suggest dependence on Acts 7:55-56?
- (12) Mk. 2:28 refers to Jesus as Lord (*κυριος*) of the sabbath, and He is referred to indirectly as ‘Ο *κυριος* in Mk. 11:13, where, although characters in the story may not grasp the full sense of the phrase, “The Lord has need of it,” the reader is meant to do so. And in Mk. 12:36, Psalm 110:1 is quoted, the Son of David is called Lord (*κυριω*). So does the use of *Κυριος* in Mk. 16:19 and 16:20 suggest dependence on Lk. 24:34 and Jn. 20:18?

In each of these dozen cases, dependence on non-Marcian canonical sources is not suggested by the evidence. Kelhoffer presented other evidence, *including eighteen examples proposed to show dependence on Mark 1:1-16:8*, in a case designed to show that Mk. 16:9-20 is not Marcian. Rather than refute the remainder of such evidence directly, we now turn to evidence that the author of Mk. 16:9-20 wrote without knowledge of the Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of Luke, and the Gospel of John.¹³

13 ~ For a point-by-point analysis of the style and vocabulary of Mk. 16:9-20, see William Farmer’s The Last Twelve Verses of Mark, © 1974 Cambridge Univ. Press.

The Author of 16:9-20 Had Not Read Matthew

Mk. 16:9-11 states that Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene and she reported this to the disciples, but they did not believe her. Matthew 28 gives no indication that the women's report about the appearance of Jesus was not believed by the disciples: in Mt. 28:11, the women continue on their way to the disciples, and in Mt. 28:16, the disciples have accordingly gathered in Galilee.

The Author of 16:9-20 Had Not Read Luke

In Luke 24:1-11 and Lk. 22-24, the women encounter angels, not Jesus. The author of Mk. 16:9-11, if he relied on the Gospel of Matthew, had no basis to write that the women's report had not been believed. Yet, if he had depended on the Gospel of Luke, he had no basis to report that Mary Magdalene had seen Jesus.

Also, Mk. 16:14 states that "Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table, and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen." There is no such rebuke in Matthew. In Luke, when Jesus appears to the eleven disciples, He gives no such rebuke. The mild questions in Lk. 38 focus on the disciples' hesitance to believe their eyes and ears, not their disbelief of the report of earlier eyewitnesses to His resurrection.

In addition, Luke 24:36 presents Jesus' appearance to the eleven right after the two Emmaus-road travelers arrive and tell about their experience; Luke does not say that the eleven disciples disbelieved their report and he does not even make it clear that the eleven disciples had time to do so before Jesus personally appeared to them. No writer would summarize Luke 24:33-43 as two events in which the disciples first rejected the report of the two travelers, and were later rebuked by Jesus for doing so.

Also, Luke locates Christ's ascension at the Mount of Olives (Lk. 24:51, Acts 1:9). The author of Mk. 16:9-20, if he had written in order to compose an ending for the Gospel of Mark, and if he had done so with the Gospels of Matthew and Luke on hand, would have possessed a very strong impetus to mention that the disciples traveled to Galilee and saw Jesus there, and then returned to Jerusalem where He ascended to heaven.

The Author of 16:9-20 Had Not Read John

Mk. 16:9-20 does not specifically mention Peter, even though Peter was singled out in 16:7. Nor does Mk. 16:9-20 mention a change of location from Jerusalem to Galilee (even though one could be inferred to have occurred).

John 21 records a post-resurrection appearance of Jesus in Galilee, and proceeds to describe Peter's restoration. He who denied Christ three times affirms his love for Christ three times, and is instructed three times to feed Christ's flock. Here, it would seem, is material which would contribute very handily to a conclusion of a narrative-thread which otherwise ends at Mk. 16:8. Yet we detect none of this in Mk. 16:9-20 – no fishing-trip, no catch of fishes, no conversation between Jesus and Peter.

Therefore we conclude that Mk. 16:9-20 contains no linguistic or stylistic features which preclude Marcan authorship. We also conclude that Mk. 16:9-20 contains several features which render the theory that it was composed by an author who was informed of the contents of the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John extremely implausible.

Chapter 10: Theories about How the Ending was Lost

At this point we may state a few important points: the external evidence shows that Mk. 16:9-20 was treated as part of the Gospel of Mark in the second century. This treatment dominates the transmission-stream at all times and in all places except in Egypt and in locales (Caesarea, Armenia) where an Egyptian or Egyptian-influenced text seems to have enjoyed high esteem. The internal evidence shows that Mk. 16:9-20 was probably composed as a freestanding summary of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances, and not as a conclusion to Mk. 1:1-16:8. The internal evidence also shows that the author wrote without knowledge of the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John, which indicates that the author either had some other source, or sources, of information about the events he summarized, or was himself a witness to the events he describes. Finally, the internal evidence does not show that Mark did not write 16:9-20.

We may therefore discern that either Mk. 16:9-20 was originally part of the Gospel of Mark, attached to 1:1-16:8 while the Gospel of Mark was still in production, or that the Gospel of Mark was first published in a form which lacked 16:9-20, which was added very shortly thereafter. Before deciding between these two possibilities, we shall review two theories of earlier scholars who have proposed that Mk. 16:9-20 was an original part of the Gospel of Mark which was removed some time after the Gospel of Mark's initial dissemination.

Theory One: Excision by a Harmonist/Apologist. In chapter one we noticed a comment by Dionysius bar-Salibi stating, in a confused way, that Ammonius and Tatian each made a fourfold Harmony of the Gospels, and, "When they came to the narrative of the resurrection and saw that [the accounts] varied, they gave up their work."¹ The author of this note seems to have been misled by the identical name which Eusebius gave to Ammonius' Matthew-centered harmony, and which was also given to Tatian's harmony; he assumed, it seems, that they were the same thing. If we subtract this confusion from the note's meaning, it seems to say that Ammonius discontinued his Gospels-harmony at the beginning of the resurrection-accounts.

This could mean that in Ammonius' Harmony, when he reached the resurrection accounts, Ammonius simply placed all four texts side by side. It can also mean, though, that from the beginning of the resurrection-accounts onward, Ammonius wrote down only the text of Matthew with nothing in the adjoining columns.

If this was the case, then subsequently if the individual sections of Ammonius' Harmony were numbered, and the numbers were placed in the margins of a continuous-text manuscript of the four Gospels prefaced by a chart of the section-numbers, Mark 16:9-20 would have no section-number.

In and of itself, this would not elicit the removal of Mk. 16:9-20. However, a Christian apologist who devoted considerable effort to harmonize the Gospels, especially if he worked in a locale where Mark was little-used and was last in order, may have obelized the non-Matthean resurrection-accounts, appealing to Ammonius' Harmony as a precedent. Following this, a harmonist who independently reapproached the problem may have realized that a harmonization was more easily accomplished by the

¹ ~ p. 59-60, Tatian's Diatessaron, by William L. Petersen, © 1994 by E.J. Brill, The Netherlands. Eusebius' letter to Carpian is in the equation here; for an English translation of this letter, see p. 144, *The Epistle of Eusebius to Carpianus*, introduced and translated by Harold H. Oliver in pp. 138-145, Novum Testamentum, Vol. 3, #1-2, 1959, (c) E.J. Brill, the Netherlands.

simple step of excluding the Marcan account, which seemed not only difficult but redundant. The difficulties posed to a harmonist include:

- (1) Mk. 16:9, unpunctuated, gives the time of Jesus' rising as "early on the first day of the week," which seemed to some readers to disagree with Mt. 28:1.
- (2) Mk. 16:13 says that the disciples did not believe the report of Cleopas and his fellow-traveler, but Lk. 24:33-34 seems to present the disciples believing, already when they hear the report, that the Lord was risen.
- (3) Mk. 16:14 mentions an appearance to "the eleven" when they were sitting down at a table, but Jn. 20:19-24, while it describes an appearance to the disciples, says that Thomas was absent, lowering the count to ten.²
- (4) Mk. 16:14-20 seems to describe the statement of the Great Commission and the Ascension on the same occasion, whereas Matthew 28:16-20 locates the Great Commission in Galilee and Acts 1:6-12 locates the Ascension in Jerusalem, on the mount of Olives.

While all of these discrepancies are capable of resolution when one appreciates Mk. 16:9-20 as a condensation, a weary or frustrated apologist may have been tempted to slice the knot rather than untie it.

In addition, anti-Christian writers were capable of treating the signs described in Mk. 16:17-18 as if they were intended to be normative expectations and practices, and thus pose an apologetic difficulty. As we have seen, the anti-Christian writer to whom Macarius Magnes responded in *Apocriticus* (this writer is almost certainly Porphyry, who wrote c. 270, or Hierocles, Porphyry's assistant who made extensive use of Porphyry's writings) derisively challenged Christians to drink poison, citing Mk. 16:18. In reply, an apologist who felt that Mk. 16:9-20 was somewhat redundant, and who possessed a copy of the Gospels which had been supplemented with Ammonian section-numbers (in which Mk. 16:9-20 had no section-number), could convince himself that an easy answer to the challenge (and, as a bonus, resolutions of some harmonistic difficulties) presented itself if Ammonius' exclusion of Mk. 16:9-20 was the effect of the absence of 16:9-20 from Ammonius' copy of Mark.

In about 250, Origen wrote a reply (consisting of eight books) to the objections and jibes of another anti-Christian, Celsus, who had written in about 180.³ Later, sometime before 300, Eusebius of Caesarea wrote a response to the anti-Christian writer Porphyry – a response consisting of 25 books, none of which are extant.⁴

To these apologetically driven authors, a text with Mk. 16:9-20 almost certainly seemed more difficult than a text which contained it. And from their perspective, the loss of a problematic passage may have seemed a manageable price for the maintenance of their notion of the veracity of Scripture. To illustrate this point, we may consider what Jerome says about the way in which one of Porphyry's objections to the legitimacy of the book of Daniel was resolved:

² ~ As evidence that harmonists noticed this sort of minor detail, and were willing to alter the text to make a "correction," consider the MSS (including D*, G, the margin of the Harklean Syriac, and Old Latin witnesses) which, in I Cor. 15:5, read "eleven" instead of "twelve."

³ ~ Origen's *Against Celsus* can be read in eight parts online, beginning at www.gnosis.org/library/orig_cc1.htm.

⁴ ~ Jerome, near the beginning of the introduction to his *Commentary on Daniel*, mentions that Porphyry had target Daniel in his 12th book, and that Eusebius, in return, had targeted Porphyry's 12th book in Eusebius' 18th, 19th, and 20th book against Porphyry. See Jerome's introduction to his *Commentary on Daniel* at www.tertullian.org/fathers/jerome_daniel_02_text.htm. Eusebius also wrote *Against Hierocles*.

"Porphyry makes this objection to us concerning the Book of Daniel, that it is clearly a forgery not to be considered as belonging to the Hebrew Scriptures but an invention composed in Greek. This he deduces from the fact that in the story of Susanna, where Daniel is speaking to the elders, we find the

expressions, "To split from the mastic tree" (απο του σκηινου σκηισαι) and "to saw from the evergreen oak" (και απο του πρινου πρισαι), a wordplay appropriate to Greek rather than to Hebrew.

But both Eusebius and Apollinarius have answered him after the same tenor, that the stories of Susanna and of Bel and the Dragon are not contained in the Hebrew, but rather they constitute a part of the prophecy of Habakkuk . . . Origen, Eusebius and Apollinarius, and other outstanding churchmen and teachers of Greece acknowledge that, as I have said, these visions are not found amongst the Hebrews, and that therefore they are not obliged to answer to Porphyry for these portions which exhibit no authority as Holy Scripture."⁵

This shows that apologetically driven individuals such as Origen and Eusebius were willing to dispense with a passage – even an entire chapter of the Septuagint, in the case of the story of Susanna – in order to “dismiss a superfluous question” (as Eusebius wrote in *Ad Marinum*), when a textual basis could be found for doing so.

The essence of this theory was proposed by F.H.A. Scrivener: “In fact, after having been cited as genuine by the Fathers of the second and third centuries, from Irenaeus downwards, the difficulty of harmonizing their narrative with the other Gospels (a circumstance which ought to plead in their favour) brought suspicion upon these verses, and caused their omission in some copies seen by Eusebius (*Questiones ad Marinum*), whose influence over the Scripture codices of his age we have seen to be very considerable.”⁶

Such a ruthless act seems unlikely, however, unless an apologist possessed at least one copy of Mark which either concluded at 16:8, or else obelized 16:9-20, or else separated Mk. 16:9-20 from the main text. Besides the possibility of influence from Ammonius’ Harmony, it is also possible that if the autograph of the Gospel of Mark consisted of two pieces – a scroll from the hand of Mark (containing 1:1-16:8) and a separate page (containing the contents of 16:9-20) also from the hand of Mark – its copiers may have naturally inserted a blank space between 16:8 and 16:9.

Theory Two: Accidental Loss. Many copies of Mark are supplemented with markings which represent the beginnings and endings of passages which constitute segments of text assigned to be read on certain days of the church-calendar. If a very early copy of Mark contained these lection-marks (αρχη for “beginning” and τελος for “end”), and if, in this copy, a lection ended at the end of 16:8, and if, in this copy, 16:8 concluded at the end of a page, then when used as an exemplar it would present a copyist with a text which, after the end of 16:8, conveyed that the book ended there.

Of course the copyist would turn the page to seek the rest of the text. But if this copy had, by accident, lost its final page – as has happened to the text of Mark in several MSS, including 16, 1420, 2386, Gothic MS Codex Argenteus, and Beinicke MS 402⁷ – then the copyist’s only option, unless another copy of Mark was available, would be to interpret the τελος-mark as if it signified the end of the book.

⁵ ~ This rendering is based on the translation provided at www.tertullian.org/fathers/jerome_daniel_02_text.htm .

⁶ ~ p. xlv, F.H.A. Scrivener, *Introduction, A Full Collation of Codex Sinaiticus*, 1863.

⁷ ~ Beinicke MS 402 is a Vulgate MS from the 1000’s at Yale University. Its last page of Mark (containing the last part of 16:19 and 16:20) is a replacement-page from the 1100’s. (Thanks are extended to Robert Babcock, Curator of Early Books and Manuscripts at the Beinicke Library, for this information.) See webtext.library.yale.edu/beinflat/pre1600.MS402.htm for a description of this MS.

This theory was proposed by Burgon in 1871:

“Of course it will have sometimes happened that S. Mark xvi. 8 came to be written at the bottom of the left hand page of a MS. And we have but to suppose that in the case of one such Codex the next

leaf, which would have been the last, was missing, - (the very thing which has happened in respect of one of the Codices at Moscow) - and what else could result when a copyist reached the words,

ΕΦΟΒΟΥΝΤΟ ΓΑΡ ΤΟ ΤΕΛΟΣ

but the very phenomenon which has exercised critics so sorely The copyist will have brought S. Mark's Gospel to an end there, of course. What else could he possibly do?"⁸

Burgon's theory may be simplified and improved if we consider that if a copyist possessed only one copy of the Gospel of Mark, and it ended at the end of 16:8 at the bottom of a page as the result of the accidental loss of its final page (or as the result of damage to the final columns of a scroll), he would be compelled to conclude the text at that point, whether the exemplar contained any lectionary-related marks or not.

Hort considered the persuasiveness of this theory along the following lines:

"The last leaf of a MS of Cent. II might easily be filled with vv. 9-20, and might easily be lost; and thus the MS would naturally become the parent of transcripts having a mutilated text. It is not so easy to understand how a defect of this magnitude in so conspicuous a part of the Gospels could be widely propagated and adopted, notwithstanding the supposed existence of a fuller text in the copies current all around. Nevertheless the loss of a leaf in Cent. II does afford a tenable mode of explaining omission, and would deserve attention were the Documentary and the Intrinsic evidence ambiguous."⁹

Hort apparently felt that the internal evidence provided by \aleph , B, Codex Bobbiensis, the six Greek MSS containing the Double Ending, and the statements from Eusebius and Jerome (to which we may add the earliest Sahidic version and the Sinaitic Syriac) when combined with the internal evidence which shows that 16:9-20 was not written as a conclusion to the Gospel of Mark, sufficiently precluded this theory. However, if the "intrinsic evidence" is simply evidence that 16:9-20 was indeed attached to the main text, but that this attachment was accomplished while the Gospel of Mark was still in production, then the internal evidence becomes moot, and we must seek guidance from the external evidence.

However, we find no weighty external evidence, direct or indirect, for the abrupt ending which is definitely earlier than the early 200's. We also find that the third-century evidence for the abrupt ending, such as it is, is found in a narrow channel of transmission, in Egypt.

The theories proposed by Scrivener and Burgon to account for the loss of 16:9-20 are not entirely far-fetched. However, another theory deserves our attention, for it effectively unravels a major assumption that has been made in the case for the authenticity of the abrupt ending: the assumption that the Short Ending must have been preceded by the abrupt ending.

Theory Three: Replacement by the Short Ending. The narrative-break between 16:8 and 16:9 naturally induced a pericope-break when the contents of the Gospel of Mark were divided into lection-readings. It is even possible (though nothing hinges on the point) that Mk. 16:9-20 was used at Rome as a special lection-unit before it was incorporated into the text of the Gospel of Mark; if so, this would render its continued use in that capacity practically inevitable when the lectionary was later established in a more thorough form.

⁸ ~ p. 240, The Last Twelve Verses of Mark, © 1871 James Parker & Co.

⁹ ~ pp. 49-50, Introduction, Notes.

This, however, required the preceding passage to end on a downbeat note: the women, mute with fear, flee from the tomb. This preceding section, as it deals with events on Easter-day, would be likely to be assigned to Eastertide, but the downbeat ending may have seemed disturbing. To remedy this, a lector inserted a short summary of 16:9-20 to include at the end of the reading of the section which would otherwise end at the end of 16:8. That short summary, initially placed in the margin alongside 16:8 to be

used as a liturgical flourish, gradually became accepted as part of the text in Egypt, as the Bohairic and Ethiopic versions show.

In Egypt, a copyist who was unfamiliar with the Gospel of Mark – a novice Christian scribe, or an experienced non-Christian professional – was given a lector’s copy of Mark to use as an exemplar. This exemplar included instructions to the lector to read (as the end of a lection which would otherwise end with 16:8) the material in the margin, rather than to proceed to read 16:9-20. The copyist proceeded to misunderstand these instructions, interpreting them to mean that the material in the margin, and not the material which followed, should be copied. As a result, the copyist mechanically produced a copy, or copies, of the Gospel of Mark in which the Short Ending immediately followed 16:8, and in which 16:9-20 did not appear.

Were Alexandrian copyists capable of this kind of error? A variant in the Alexandrian text of Matthew 27:49 says, “*Yes.*” At Matthew 27:49, the Alexandrian text has the phrase, “*ἄλλος δε λαβων λογχην ενυξεν αυτου την πλευραν, και εξηλθεν υδωρ και αιμα*” (“And another took a spear and pierced his side, and out came water and blood”). This feature is explained as being originally the contents of a note in the margin (drawn from Jn. 19:33-34) which was inserted into the text. According to Robert Waltz, this reading is supported by “*Σ B C L U Γ 1010 1293 dubl ept^{margin} kenan lich mac-regol mull mae slav*” but “is omitted by all other texts, including A D E F G H K M S W Δ Θ Σ Byz it *am cav ful hub tol cur pesh hark sa bo arm geo.*”¹⁰ We emphasize that this list includes Σ, B, L, and 1010.

(The recently-published Coptic MS “Mae 2” displays “*and the name of the servant was Malchus*” at Mt. 26:51; the phrase was borrowed from Jn. 18:10. In the same MS at Mt. 27:49, the phrase from John 19:33-34 appears, with “*blood*” and “*water*” in the same order in which they appear in John.¹¹)

Inasmuch as the resultant text of Mt. 27:49 creates a collision with the chronology of events in John (where the body of Christ is speared after His death), we may deduce that the copyist who initiated this Alexandrian reading was not very familiar with the text of the Gospels. And from this we deduce that Egyptian copyists were capable of badly misinterpreting marginalia such as one might find in an exemplar that had been a lector’s copy.

This consideration may undermine the claim of Hort that “The documentary evidence for the Shorter Conclusion resolves itself into additional evidence (indirect, it is true, in form, but specially certified by the nature of the indirectness) for the omission of vv. 9-20,”¹² and the very similar claim by Metzger that “The external evidence for the shorter ending (2) resolves itself into additional testimony supporting the omission of verses 9-20.”¹³

10 ~ See Robert Waltz’s discussion at www.skypoint.com/~waltzmn/WestNonInterp.html#MajorInterp .)

11 ~ My thanks to Wieland Willker for pointing out variants in Mae 2.

12 ~ p. 44, [Introduction](#), *Notes*.

13 ~ p. 126, [Textual Commentary](#). The similarity between these two statements is not coincidental; Metzger was relying heavily on Hort’s comments. In the same paragraph of [Textual Commentary](#), Metzger wrote, “No one who had available as the conclusion of the Second Gospel the **twelve verses** 9-20, so **rich in interesting material**, would have deliberately replaced them with **four lines** of a **colorless** and generalized summary.” Compare Hort’s statement: “The petty historical difficulty mentioned by Marinus as to the first line of v. 9 could never have suggested the substitution of **4 colourless lines** for **12 verses rich in interesting matter**” (p. 44, [Introduction](#), *Notes*) Emphasis added to stress parallels.

If the Short Ending suddenly replaced 16:9-20 via a scribal accident, the abrupt ending is explained as the reaction of a copyist whose sole exemplar displayed the Short Ending in the text after 16:8. This copyist realized that his sole exemplar contained an error, but he was at a loss to repair the text. The best he could do was to copy the text down to the end of 16:8 and leave space for the missing text, with the hope that a better exemplar would become available.

And here we have an explanation for the abrupt ending: a copyist who rejected the Short Ending created copies of Mark in which the text ended at the end of 16:8, followed by a blank space. In some of these copies, however, the intended completion was never accomplished, due to disruption caused by persecution or by the death or departure of their copyists. In the next generation of copyists the truncated text was faithfully transmitted (although the significance of the blank space was not perceived) and it was well-received in Caesarea where it made the tasks of harmonization and apologetics easier.

Such a theory fits the external evidence better than one might expect. We have explained that the form of the text in Codex Bobbiensis may be posited in the mid-200's, and that the form of the Short Ending in Codex L, lacking an explicit reference to the appearance of Jesus, seems earlier than the form of the Short Ending in it^k. The form of the Short Ending in Codex L may thus be traced to some point before the mid-200's, possibly to the mid-100's. This would provide ample time for the Short Ending to be composed as a liturgical flourish, and for a copyist unfamiliar with the Gospel of Mark to accidentally replace 16:9-20 with the Short Ending, and for another copyist to reject the Short Ending and produce unfinished copies of Mark, all before 230.

This would explain why, c. 325, Eusebius was unaware of copies of Mark with the Short Ending: none of the MSS at Caesarea contained the Short Ending because it had been rejected by copyist who preferred to perpetuate an unfinished text rather than an adulterated one.

This would also explain the treatments of the text in L, Ψ, 099, and 083, especially 099: their copyists had inherited copies of Mark from different local transmission-lines. In one transmission-line, the Short Ending had never been written, and as a result, 16:9-20 followed 16:8. In another transmission-line, the Short Ending had replaced 16:9-20. And in another transmission-line (known to the copyist of 099 and probably the copyist of L, but not known to the copyists of Ψ and 083), copyists had rejected the Short Ending but had not added 16:9-20, thus creating the abrupt ending. The absence of *καιναις* in 16:17 and the presence of *και εν ταις χειρσιν* in 16:18 shows that the ancestors of L, Ψ, 099, and 083 containing 16:9-20 were local copies, not copies imported from Byzantine or "Western" text-streams.

This would imply that the earliest Sahidic version of Mark was based on a copy from which the Short Ending had been excised, and that in the Bohairic and Ethiopic versions, the margin-note which had elsewhere become the Short Ending was correctly understood as a liturgical supplement, which gradually intruded into the text between 16:8 and 16:9.

Even if this theory is not adopted to resolve the entire problem, a form of this solution may still explain one important piece of evidence. We have mentioned some indications that the copyist of it^k was only semi-literate and that he was not acquainted with the contents of the Gospel of Mark. We have also mentioned that it^k has the reading *adparuit* (i.e., *apparuit*), which appears in the Latin form of 16:9 and 16:14 (as do *εφανη* and *εφανερωθη* in the Greek text). If we accept the idea that this *adparuit* in it^k's text of the Short Ending echoes a gloss in an earlier Greek copy – a gloss based on 16:9 or 16:14 – then we may conclude that it^k's exemplar probably displayed either the Double Ending, or else displayed the Short Ending in the margin and 16:9-20 in the text, and displayed a lector's note to continue after v. 8 with the Short Ending and stop before the beginning of v. 9. The copyist of it^k, having already inserted the interpolation based on *Gospel of Peter* between 16:3 and 16:4 (in which Jesus seems to ascend to heaven at the same time as His resurrection), in one of many confused moments, decided to perpetuate the Short Ending and not 16:9-20, partly because he misunderstood the lector's note, and partly because the Short Ending interlocked better with the interpolated narrative.

Theory Four: Excision by an Early Editor. If 16:9-20 was attached to 1:1-16:8 during the production of the Gospel of Mark in Rome, then it qualifies as part of the original text of the book, even though it was not included by Mark himself as the conclusion of the book. However a copyist in the early 100's who had encountered, either in literary form or in a church-service, the contents of 16:9-20, before he encountered the Gospel of Mark, may not have seen it that way. Unaware of the precise origins of 16:9-20, but certain that it was a freestanding composition he had encountered before, he may have assumed

that the creator of his exemplar had somehow combined two compositions which ought to be separated. So he separated them, creating a text of Mark which ended at 16:8. This text circulated in Egypt and was soon supplemented; in some cases by the restoration of 16:9-20 but in another case by the creation of the Short Ending.

The idea that 16:9-20 was originally composed as a separate catechetical work is supported by a theory offered by B.H. Streeter:

“The hypothesis that Mk. xvi. 9-20 was originally a separate document has the additional advantage of making it somewhat easier to account for the supplement in the text of W (cf. p. 337 f.) known as the “Freer logion.” A catechetical summary is a document which lends itself to expansion; the fact that a copy of it had been added to Mark would not at once put out of existence all other copies or prevent them suffering expansion. No doubt as soon as the addition became thoroughly established in the Roman text of Mark, it would cease to be copied as a separate document. But supposing that a hundred years later an old copy of it in the expanded version turned up. It would then be mistaken for a fragment of a very ancient MS. of Mark, and the fortunate discoverer would hasten to add to his copy of Mark – which, of course, he would suppose to be defective – the addition preserved in this ancient witness.”¹⁴

We are convinced that none of the above theories offers the most elegant explanation of all the evidence; nevertheless they are worth considering, for a case for the originality of the abrupt ending must surmount each of these theories if it is to be considered persuasive.

14 ~ p. 351, B.H. Streeter, The Four Gospels, 10th impression © 1961 Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London.

Chapter 11: The Unlikelihood of the Late Addition of 16:9-20

It goes without saying that if the Gospel of Mark was originally disseminated without 16:9-20, then 16:9-20 must have been added at some later date, after which it invaded and dominated almost all transmission-lines by the end of the fourth century. An addition which found its way into the texts used by Justin, Tatian, the author of *Epistula Apostolorum*, Irenaeus, the author of *Acts of John*, Hippolytus, the author of *Doctrine of Addai*, Vincentius of Thibaris, and the author of *De Rebaptismate* would have to have been made and embraced at an extremely early date.

If the Gospel of Mark was used by Matthew and by Luke as the framework for their Gospel-accounts (as many researchers of the Synoptic Problem think), and since Papias reported about its Petrine background, we may conclude that the Gospel of Mark enjoyed a wide circulation in the church in late first and early second centuries. As B.H. Streeter has observed, “A world-wide circulation of Mark in the first century is implied by the use made of it by the authors of Matthew, Luke, and John, who must have written in Churches at a wide remove from one another in theological outlook, and probably also in geographical situation.”¹

As Streeter explained in pp. 338-344 of The Four Gospels, this consideration renders any theory involving a deliberate suppression of some non-extant ending of Mark highly unlikely. The widespread use of Mark in the late first and early second centuries, and its entrenchment in the four-Gospel canon (attested explicitly by Irenaeus in Lyons in 184, and implicitly by Tatian in Syria a decade earlier), militates against drastic and obvious textual alteration for the same reason: like raindrops on the surface of a lake, the many perpetuations of the unaltered text would counteract and contain the impact of the anomalous alteration.

Only two mechanisms would invalidate that model: the promotion of an altered text by an authority acknowledged in all locales, or the widespread independent adoption of an anomalous text due to its inherent appeal. We may almost instantly reject the first mechanism, since nothing of the kind appears to have existed in the first, second, and third centuries; we see instead the development of local texts with local authority. This leaves the theory that after the Gospel of Mark had been disseminated to many locales (which must have happened before the end of the first century), 16:9-20 was added to the text of Mark, and although the shorter text had been known and used, the interpolation was accepted in many locales due to its inherent appeal.

The vigilance of second-century Christians against textual tampering is not easy to gauge.² Harmonizations were very common, as were alterations intended to clarify the meaning of rare or ambiguous words, as the “Western” and “Caesarean” witnesses show. Many fresh and unprovenanced compositions were rejected, but others, when their orthodox origins seemed clear, were well-received.

A 171-word interpolation at the end of a Gospel would be difficult to smuggle into the text without controversy. However, no controversy about these verses is mentioned by any patristic writer until the fourth century; nor does any patristic writer mention the existence of copies of Mark which end abruptly, until that time. In the second, third, and fourth centuries, we observe patristic writers (but not Eusebius) treating Mk. 16:9-20 like any other canonical text in Rome and Syria and Antioch and Asia Minor and Africa and even in Egypt. This is accounted for much more simply by the inclusion of 16:9-20 in the Gospel of Mark from the beginning of the Gospel of Mark’s dissemination than it is by a theory that 16:9-20 gradually invaded the local texts.

¹ ~ p. 339, B.H. Streeter, The Four Gospels, 10th impression © 1961 Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London.

² ~ The Muratorian Canon illustrates one second-century writer’s guarded reception toward new and edifying texts, and his rejection of texts considered heretical. It may be read on pp. 144-147 of A New Eusebius, ed. By J. Stevenson, © 1960 SPCK, where Souter’s translation is presented.

The theory that 16:9-20 invaded local texts may be tested by a comparison of its forms among the various text-types. To illustrate this test: when, in what appears to be an Old Latin witness, a section of text appears which agrees very closely with the Vulgate, we may deduce that the section which agrees with the Vulgate originates from some source other than the non-Vulgate portion. If we find in each text-type variants that are unique to each text-type, then it will be clear that those variants – and the text in which they are embedded – were not acquired by invasion, but are indigenous readings.

We first list five readings which are in “Caesarean” witnesses but tend to be absent in the definitive Byzantine, Western, and Alexandrian witnesses.

- (1) *f*¹³ omits δε and inserts ο ἰς after αναστας in 16:9. In MS 274, the lector is instructed to read the text in this way; a symbol in the text refers to ο ἰς in the margin.
- (2) Codex Θ has μαθηταις in 16:10 instead of μετ’.
- (3) Codex Θ has εφανε instead of εφανερωθη in 16:12.
- (4) Codex Θ has πορευθεντες instead of απελθοντες in 16:13.
- (5) *f*¹, *f*¹³, 28, and 565 (and A, C, Δ) add εκ νεκρων after εγγεμενον in 16:14.

Next, we list four non-Byzantine, non-Alexandrian readings of Mk. 16:9-15 in Codex D, representing the “Western” text-type.

- (1) Codex D has εφανερωσεν πρωτοις instead of εφανε πρωτον in 16:9.
- (2) Codex D adds αυτοις before τοις μετ αυτου in 16:10.
- (3) Codex D reads και ουκ επιστευσαν αυτη instead of ηπιστησαν at the end of 16:11.
- (4) Codex D adds και at the beginning of 16:12.

Next, we list three readings, the second and third of which are particularly distinctive, which occur exclusively or almost exclusively in representatives of the Alexandrian Text.

- (1) C*, L, 33, 579, and 892 (and D and W) have αφ instead of παρ’ after Μαρια τη Μαγδαληνη in 16:9.
- (2) C*, L, Δ, and Ψ omit καιναις at the end of 16:17. 099 also omits γλωσσαις λαλησουσιν, which is probably the result of accidental line-skipping. This implies that 099’s exemplar read:

δαιμονια εκβαλουσιν
γλωσσαις λαλησουσιν
και εν ταις χερσιν etc.

- (3) C, L, Δ, Ψ, 099, 579, and 892 have και εν ταις χερσιν at the beginning of 16:18.

This evidence shows that a unique form of 16:9-20 emerged in each of the locales where the Byzantine Text, the “Caesarean” Text, the “Western” Text, and the Alexandrian Text emerged. Certainly the non-Byzantine features in the Caesarean, Western, and Alexandrian copies cannot reasonably be claimed to have been derived from an invading Byzantine Text. We conclude that the evidence does not show that Mk. 16:9-20 came to dominate the various text-types as a result of mixture.

As additional evidence that the widespread acceptance of a suddenly appearing 171-word interpolation at the end of the Gospel of Mark in the second and third centuries is unlikely, we may attempt to see 16:9-20 as Christians at that time might see it if it came to them as a previously unseen interpolation. We observe first that at any time after the 100’s, an addition to the Gospel of Mark would

be, in effect, an addition to the four-Gospel collection in which the Gospel of Mark itself was included. The contents of Matthew, Luke, and John would answer whatever questions were raised by an abruptly-ending Gospel of Mark, so although the abrupt stoppage of the text of Mark would be noteworthy, there would be no dire need to create a fresh interpolation to add to the end of the book by which to alleviate whatever suspense the abrupt ending would have created.

A 171-word interpolation which was supposed to complete Mark’s account would face comparison with the parts of Matthew, Luke, and John which covered the same ground in the gospel-story. A comparison of any depth would find fault with the new text: besides the four harmonistic

problems already mentioned, the new text mentioned that Jesus “appeared in another form” to the two travelers, and that believers would handle serpents – which is not the same imagery used in Lk. 10:19, though the words in 16:18 are similarly figurative – and that believers would be able to drink poison without harm.

Christians with a keen interest in the harmonization of the Gospels would tend to conclude that the new text caused problems as big as the one it solved. Christians on guard against docetism would regard 16:12 with suspicion. And while some traditions circulated about individual disciples surviving poison-drinking or serpent-handling (such as the legend about John preserved in *Acts of John*), the text’s apparent allowance of the idea that these actions were to be claimed by all believers would stir caution in the minds of many readers.

The only mechanism that explains the widespread acceptance of Mk. 16:9-20 in the second and third centuries is *authoritative dissemination*, and the only point in time at which it could have been authoritatively disseminated is in the first century.

Chapter 12: The Best Solution

Before presenting the best solution to the question of the origin of Mk. 16:9-20, it will be helpful to relate some traditions about Mark.

In *Ecclesiastical History* II:24, Eusebius wrote, “*When Nero was in the eighth year of his reign, Annianus succeeded Mark the evangelist in the administration of the parish of Alexandria.*”¹

Eusebius also preserved Papias’ statement that Mark wrote as an “*interpreter of Peter.*” According to Eusebius, Papias had reported that Mark “*wrote down accurately, though not in order, whatsoever he remembered of the things said or done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor*

*followed him, but afterward, as I said, he followed Peter, who adapted his teaching to the needs of his hearers, but with no intention of giving a connected account of the Lord's discourses, so that Mark committed no error while he thus wrote some things as he remembered them. For he was careful of one thing, not to omit any of the things which he had heard, and not to state any of them falsely."*²

Jerome seems to have thought that Eusebius' statement about the succession of Annianus meant that Mark died at that time, in the eighth year of the reign of Nero (A.D. 62). In the eighth chapter of *De Viris Illustribus*, Jerome wrote,

"Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, wrote a short gospel at the request of the brethren at Rome, embodying what he had heard Peter tell. When Peter heard this, he approved it and published it to the churches to be read by his authority, as Clement in Book 6 of his Hypotyposes, and Papias bishop of Hierapolis, record. Peter also mentions this Mark in his first epistle, figuratively indicating Rome under the name of Babylon: "She who is in Babylon elect together with you salutes you, and so does Mark my son."

*"So, taking the gospel which he himself composed, he [Mark] went to Egypt and first preaching Christ at Alexandria he formed a church so admirable in doctrine and continence of living that he constrained all followers of Christ to his example. Philo ~ most learned of the Jews ~ seeing the first church at Alexandria still Jewish in a degree, wrote a book on their manner of life as something creditable to his nation, telling how, as Luke says, the believers had all things in common at Jerusalem, so he recorded what he saw was done at Alexandria under the learned Mark. He died in the eighth year of Nero and was buried at Alexandria, Annianus succeeding him."*³

Clearly Jerome thought that the Gospel of Mark had been written sometime before Mark's death, and he thought that Mark had died in A.D. 62.

Those statements should be compared to what is found in *Eccl. Hist.* V:8:1-3, where Eusebius quotes from the beginning of the third book of Irenaeus' *Against Heresies* (where Irenaeus seems to rely on Papias' writings):

*"Matthew published his Gospel among the Hebrews in their own language, while Peter and Paul were preaching and founding the church in Rome. After their departure Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, also transmitted to us in writing those things which Peter had preached."*⁴

1 ~ In *Ecclesiastical History* Book II, ch. 24.

2 ~ From *Eccl. Hist.* III:39:15. See www.ccel.org/fathers2/NPNF2-01/Npnf2-01-08.htm#TopOfPage.

3 ~ See ch. 8 at www.newadvent.org/fathers/2708.htm.

4 ~ See the text at www.ccel.org/fathers2/NPNF2-01/Npnf2-01-10.htm#P2978_1390975. John Chrysostom either did not know about this tradition, or consciously rejected it, or momentarily forgot about it, for he stated instead in his *First Homily on Matthew* that the Gospel of Mark was written in Egypt (see www.newadvent.org/cathen/09674b.htm).

Eusebius also preserves (in *Eccl. Hist.* VI:14:5-7) a statement made by Clement of Alexandria:

*"Clement gives the tradition of the earliest presbyters, as to the order of the Gospels, in the following manner: the Gospels containing the genealogies, he says, were written first. The Gospel according to Mark had this occasion: as Peter had preached the Word publicly at Rome, and declared the gospel by the Spirit, many who were present requested that Mark, who had followed him for a long time and remembered his sayings, should write them out. And having composed the Gospel he gave it to those who had requested it. When Peter learned of this, he neither directly forbade nor encouraged it. But, last of all, John, perceiving that the external facts had been made plain in the Gospel, being urged by his friends, and inspired by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel." This is the account of Clement."*⁵

Eusebius wrote, in Book II, ch. 16 of *Eccl. Hist.*,

“And they say that this Mark was the first that was sent to Egypt, and that he proclaimed the Gospel which he had written, and first established churches in Alexandria.”⁶

The accounts conflict. Clement states that Mark was distributing the Gospel of Mark while Peter was alive, but Irenaeus states that Mark distributed the Gospel of Mark “after their departure,” which almost certainly alludes to the martyrdoms of Paul and Peter. A beginning of clarification may take place if we discern that Jerome misunderstood a reference to the departure of Mark – a departure from Alexandria to Rome – as if it referred to Mark’s departure from earth itself, i.e., his death. This implies that Mark preached in Alexandria in the period right before the eighth year of Nero’s reign.

We should also consider the very persistent tradition that not only did Mark minister in Alexandria, but that he was martyred there.⁷ If these traditions are cautiously received, events in the final years of Mark’s life may be summed up in the following way:

After serving with Barnabas in Cyprus (as Acts 15:39 says), and later with Paul (as Philemon v. 24 says), Mark went to Alexandria and established a church there. After many conversions, Mark consecrated Ananias the cobbler (also called Annianus) and others to watch over the flock. In the eighth year of Nero’s reign (62) he departed Alexandria and went to Rome (possibly at the urging of Timothy; cf. II Tim. 4:11).

By the time Peter wrote First Peter, Mark was with him in Rome, as First Peter 5:13 attests (if we understand “Babylon” as a veiled reference to the city of Rome, an understanding which compares very well with the imagery in Rev. 17:3-9). In the mid-60’s, the Neronian persecution arose and both Paul and Peter were martyred. Mark, perhaps aware of the saying, “When they persecute you in this city, flee to another,” (Mt. 10:23) hastily departed Rome and went to Alexandria. Shortly after his arrival there, however, he was seized by pagans on Easter – which, in that year (68) was also the day of the festival of Serapis. The pagans martyred him by having him dragged by a rope through the city streets until he was dead.

5 ~ from *Eccl. Hist.* VI:14:5-7, see the text at www.ccel.org/fathers2/NPNF2-01/Npnf2-01-11.htm#P3700_1728536. See also Stephen Carlson’s article in which he proposes that Clement was describing the point at which Matthew and Luke were officially published, rather than the points at which they were composed, in *New Testament Studies*, Vol. 47, pp. 118-125. © 2001 Cambridge University Press.

6 ~ The text of *Eccl. Hist.* is available online at CCEL and at www.newadvent.org/fathers/250106.htm, © 2007 Kevin Knight.

7 ~ A biography of Mark based on traditions about him is at www.resourcescentreonline.co.uk/ST%20MARK%20THE%20APOSTLE.pdf. The tradition about Mark’s martyrdom in Alexandria eventually found a place, in an embellished form, in the medieval “Golden Legend.”

120

Patristic statements about the names of the early bishops of Rome augment the credibility of the tradition that Mark was martyred in Alexandria. Had Mark remained in Rome after the death of Peter, it would be almost inevitable that he would succeed Peter as bishop. Yet Linus, not Mark, is described in *Ecclesiastical History* III:3:2 as the first bishop of Rome after the martyrdoms of Paul and Peter:⁸ Augustine echoes this statement in his 53rd epistle. And in the list of early bishops in *Apostolic Constitutions*, Book VII (c. 380, but based on earlier works), the chief bishops of Rome after Peter are listed as Linus, and then Clement. In the same paragraph, Annianus (= Ananias the cobbler) is listed as the first bishop of Alexandria, “ordained by Mark the evangelist.”⁹

From all this it seems clear that Eusebius' statement that "When Nero was in the eighth year of his reign, Annianus succeeded Mark the Evangelist in the administration of the parish of Alexandria," the occasion of Mark's departure was not his death, but his move to Rome.

This is also indicated by *Ecclesiastical History*, III:14, where Eusebius wrote,

*"In the fourth year of Domitian, Annianus, the first bishop of the parish of Alexandria, died after holding office twenty-two years, and was succeeded by Abilius, the second bishop."*¹⁰

Domitian began to rule in September of 81. If we add to this four years, we come to 85, and if we subtract 22 years, we arrive at 63, or, if we figure that the reference to 22 years is a close estimate, we arrive in the year 62. (Nero began to reign on October 13 of the year 54, and Domitian began to reign in September of the year 81. If Annianus served as a bishop for a bit more than 22 years, but less than 23 years, the accounts square up without difficulty.)

All this provides the background for a hypothesis in which, in the year 67, following the martyrdoms of Peter and Paul, Mark was induced by the dangerous crisis in Rome to suddenly stop writing his nearly-complete text, and to leave it, along with whatever else he may have written, in the hands of his colleagues. Thus a plausible historical mechanism is established for the abrupt ending. However, if Mark did not remain in Rome to finish his account, he did not remain in Rome to publish it either. Therefore this only supports the existence of the abrupt ending at a stage prior to the initial dissemination of the Gospel of Mark.

The attachment of 16:9-20 is at this point accounted for: Mark's Roman colleagues had heard the preaching of Peter, and while they had no desire to insert material of their own design into Mark's text, they also had no desire to publish a composition which they all knew was not only unfinished, but which they believed would be recognized as unfinished by Christians everywhere.

Therefore rather than publish the Gospel of Mark with the abrupt ending, they supplemented the Gospel-text with a short text which Mark had composed – a text about Jesus' post-resurrection appearances which Mark had written at Rome as an Eastertide reading, or for catechetical purposes. Only after this supplement was added did the Roman church begin to publish the Gospel of Mark. This hypothesis explains the internal evidence, such as the awkward transition between 16:8 and 16:9.

If we agree with the traditions that Mark preached in Alexandria until he went to Rome in the year 62, then we may also grant the likelihood that some individuals in the church at Alexandria in the closing decades of the first century had known Mark. The church at Alexandria may have also included Christians who had fled Rome during the chaos of the 60's; some of these may even have accompanied Mark himself from Rome, in which case they would know the circumstances which had induced Mark to

12-8 ~ See Book III of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* at CCEL or at www.newadvent.org/fathers/250103.htm (© 2007 Kevin Knight).

12-9 ~ See Book VII of Apostolic Constitutions, Section 4, at www.piney.com/DocAposConstitu2.html.

12-10 ~ See Book III of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* at CCEL or at www.newadvent.org/fathers/250103.htm (© 2007 Kevin Knight).

121

stop writing, and – when copies of the Gospel of Mark reached Alexandria from Rome – which had also induced Mark's associates to append the final section of the text.

Some Alexandrians, or former members of the church at Rome who had traveled to Alexandria, like Mark, to escape persecution, would probably either have been aware that 16:9-20 had not been intended by Mark to be the conclusion of his Gospel, or would be capable of perceiving that to be the case, perhaps from previously encountering the Marcan resurrection-summary text during Mark's earlier stay in Alexandria. If we deduce that an extremely early Alexandrian copyist's realization that 16:9-20 had not been intended by Mark to be part of his Gospel-account, and that this on this basis the copyist

excised the passage – valuing it highly, but as a freestanding text, not as the end of Mark’s Gospel – then we have essentially completed the explanation of both the internal and the external evidence.

The transmission-history implied by this hypothesis fits the external evidence: as the Gospel of Mark with 16:9-20 was circulated from Rome, and it was disseminated in this form in all the locales which received it directly from Rome. Alexandria was the exception. There, the Gospel of Mark was circulated without 16:9-20 and the contents of 16:9-20 were preserved as a freestanding text, although copies of Mark continued to radiate from Rome and some of them went to Alexandria. In the late second century, a copyist in Egypt created the Short Ending. In the early third century, copies of Mark (or Gospels-collections which included Mark) with the abrupt ending were taken to Caesarea. Shortly after this, copyists combined the two endings, placing the Short Ending first so that it could serve to round off the end of a lection or pericope.

All the evidence is thus accounted for.

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Or so it would seem. The available evidence includes not only what we have reviewed so far, but also the other canonical Gospels. In these three books, if the majority of researchers into the Synoptic Problem are correct, we find very early utilization of the Gospel of Mark. An investigation into the origin of Mk. 16:9-20 cannot be complete until the contents of Matthew, Luke, and John are considered.

Chapter 13: Matthew, Luke, and John

When the scope of the external evidence from the second and third centuries is appreciated, and the diversity of the witnesses in favor of the inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20 (geographical diversity, text-type diversity, and the diversity of its users’ theological views), the evidence for inclusion seems more than capable of outweighing the opposing evidence. However, if we were to find three witnesses from the first century which clearly attested to the abrupt ending of Mark, the equation would be dramatically changed. Those witnesses, rather than \aleph and B, would become the main support for the abrupt ending.

Are the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John such witnesses? Answers to this question, especially where Matthew and Luke are concerned, will depend to a great extent upon one's solution to the Synoptic Problem. Advocates of the Griesbach-Owen Hypothesis – in which Mark is said to have condensed the Gospels of Matthew and Luke – will find nothing persuasive in the idea that Matthew and Luke did not know Mk. 16:9-20, since they believe that Matthew and Luke did not know the Gospel of Mark. Similarly, those who believe that each Synoptic author independently based his writings on apostolic traditions will find it barely interesting that the closing chapters of the Synoptics seem to have been produced as independently as the rest.

Advocates of Marcan Priority, however, may initially assume that because Matthew and Luke do not supply clear signs of awareness of the existence of Mk. 16:9-20, neither Matthew nor Luke possessed a copy of Mark in which 16:9-20 was present. We shall now explore the question of whether or not such an assumption is justified.

Matthew's Post-resurrection Narrative

Mt. 27:55-61 closely agrees with Mk. 15:40-47, though the Matthean text is shorter. In Mt. 28:1 and Mk. 16:1-2, Matthew and Mark describe the same event (the beginning of the women's visit to the tomb); again the Matthean text is shorter. In Matthew, this is followed by Mt. 28:2-4, which has no parallel in Mark; meanwhile in Mark, 16:2 is followed by 16:2-5, which has no parallel in Matthew.

Their substantial agreement returns in Mt. 28:5-7 and Mk. 16:6-7, where the angel speaks to the women. The first part of Mk. 16:8 is matched, approximately, by Mt. 28:8a. However, instead of a sentence that approximates Mark's statement that the women said nothing to anyone, Matthew reports that the women "ran to tell his disciples."

In Mt. 28:9-10, Matthew records that Jesus met the women en route to the disciples: "*And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Hail!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."*" Matthew 28:9-10, if placed after Mk. 16:8, would be a fitting continuation of the Marcan narrative. Though at first the women said nothing to anyone because they were afraid, this appearance by Jesus would supply them with courage to deliver the message.

Matthew does not provide any evidence that he is aware of Mk. 16:9-14, or Mk. 16:16-20. The parallels are slight and can be explained by dependence upon a shared tradition. Matthew 28:18-20 and Mark 16:15-16 both describe the commissioning of the disciples by Christ, and in both He mentions baptism, but there the resemblances cease. This should be compared to the otherwise close adoption of Mark which is made by Matthew in the rest of his Gospel-account.

However, Matthew may have chosen to follow another source -- the same source from which the contents of Mt. 28:2-4 were derived -- which did not put the disciples in the unfavorable light which we see in Mark 16:11-14. Also, Matthew's failure to mention the incidents in which the reader would otherwise witness the silence-inducing fear of the women, and the unbelief of the disciples, may be due to Matthew's charity rather than his ignorance. Elsewhere in Matthew, where in the parallel-passage in Mark sheds light upon the fear, unbelief, or hardness of heart of Jesus' disciples and other characters, Matthew occasionally shines a lesser light or charitably moves the narrative camera away:

123

Mk. 4:40 - "no faith" --	Mt. 8:26 - "little faith"
Mk. 5:15 - "and they became frightened"	Mt.: silence.
Mk. 5:33 - "the woman, fearing and trembling"	Mt: silence.
Mk. 5:36 - "Do not be afraid, only believe."	Mt.: silence.
Mk. 6:52 - "they were completely astounded" (εκστασει)	Mt.: silence.
Mk. 8:17 - "Is your heart still hardened?"	Mt. 8:21: "Do you not yet understand?"
Mk. 9:20-24 - the episode of the unbelief of the father of a possessed son.	Mt.: silence.
Mk. 9:32 - "they were afraid to ask Him."	Mt. 17:23: "they were deeply grieved."

Mk. 10:32 - “and those who followed were fearful” (εφοβουντο)Mt. 20:17: silence.

Mk. 11:18 - “for they were afraid of Him” (εφοβουντο) Mt. 21:13: silence.

This tendency alone does not fully explain Matthew’s non-use of Mark 16:9-20, but it does go a long way toward explaining his non-use of Mark 16:9-14, in which the unbelief and hardness of heart of the apostles are in the spotlight. Other motivations, about which we can only speculate, may have led Matthew to close his account with his own record of the Great Commission rather than rely on Mark. One such motivation may have been an awareness - either communicated to Matthew by a contact who was familiar with the circumstances in which the Gospel of Mark had been initially published, or intuitively discerned by Matthew - that Mk. 16:9-20 had not been attached to 16:8 by Mark.

We conclude that it is possible that Matthew knew of the existence of Mk. 16:9-20, but chose not to closely follow it in his own account, because of a desire to charitably paint the apostles in a more favorable light than what is shone upon them in 16:9-14, and out of a desire to include Matthew’s own recollection of the Great Commission. Because we cannot discern that Matthew’s non-use of Mk. 16:9-20 must be due to its absence in his source-materials, rather than because of an editorial decision by Matthew, Matthew is a silent witness.

Luke’s Post-resurrection Narrative

Luke 24 covers much of the same ground as Mark 16, but with significant differences. Luke diverges from Mark and Matthew by mentioning two angels within the tomb, rather than one angel or “a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe” (as in Mk. 16:5). Luke diverges again by presenting a different angelic statement: the angels in his account do not say, “Do not be afraid.” Instead the angels in Lk. 24:5 ask, “Why do you seek the living among the dead?”. The end of the angels’ instructions is also distinct: instead of reporting that the angels told the women to tell the disciples that Jesus is going before them to Galilee, where they will see Him, Luke 24:6 says that the angels told the women to remember what Jesus had said to them “while he was still in Galilee.” Luke thus ensures that his readers have no reason to expect that Jesus will meet with the disciples in Galilee. Luke keeps the focus on Jerusalem.

Luke proceeds to tell his readers that the women – including Mary Magdalene – “told all this to the eleven and to all the rest.” Luke also records the apostles’ reaction: “their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.” This roughly corresponds to Mark 16:9-11, with the important difference that Mark conveys that Mary Magdalene claimed that she had seen Jesus, while Luke conveys (in 24:23-24) that the women only claimed to have seen “a vision of angels.”

Following this, Lk. 24:13-53 consists of the account of the two travelers on the road to Emmaus. Again, this roughly corresponds to Mark 16:12. Mark 16:13 states that the two travelers were not believed when they told the others about their encounter. Luke is somewhat ambiguous about this: in 24:34, the disciples respond to the two travellers’ report by saying, “*The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon,*” but the narrative flows so quickly into the next appearance of Jesus that Luke does not allow his readers to easily discern whether this means that the disciples’ response meant, “You are

124

telling the truth; the Lord appeared to Simon as well as to you,” or, “We agree, indeed, that the Lord is risen, but he appeared to Simon, here in Jerusalem, not miles away.”

Luke proceeds, in 24:36-53, to remain focused on events in Jerusalem. Again, this roughly corresponds to Mark 16:14-20. The reference in Mk. 16:14 to the disciples “sitting at table” fits the scene in Luke 24:42, where the disciples have handy a piece of broiled fish. And the commissioning of the disciples in Mk. 16:15-18 fits the scene in Lk. 24:44-49. In both passages, the disciples are told to preach to all nations. Finally, the ascension-scene in Mk. 16:19-20 roughly corresponds to Lk. 24:50-53.

In each anecdote, Luke has preferred to follow a source other than Mk. 16:9-20 regarding various details. Yet Luke has retained the same incidents, in the same order, that occur in Mk. 16:9-20.

So, while readers may wonder why Luke, if he had known Mk. 16:9-20, would describe the women's report as merely a report about a vision of angels, readers may also wonder why Luke, if he had known Mk. 15:32b, would include the anecdote about the penitent thief. Clearly Luke had at least one source which he preferred at times over his Marcan material. If we accept that Luke occasionally (and especially in chapters 22-24) relied on this other source for details, while utilizing Mark to establish the framework of his account, then nothing stands in the way of concluding that Luke conformed the basic shape of Luke 24:9-53 to the shape of Mark 16:9-20.

B. H. Streeter stated, "In his account of the Last Supper and Passion, Luke appears to be "conflating" – to use the convenient technical term for the mixing of two sources – the Marcan story with a parallel version derived from another source Indeed there are only some 24 verses (cf. p. 216 f.) in this part of Luke's Gospel which can be identified with practical certainty as derived from Mark, though it would be hazardous to limit Luke's debt to Mark to these 24."¹ He continues: "While Matthew omits less than 10% of the subject matter of Mark, Luke omits more than 45%, but for much of this he substitutes similar matter from another source."¹

If Luke's non-incorporation of a passage in Mark was to be interpreted as evidence that Luke was unaware of its existence, then the conclusion awaits that not only Mark 16:9-20, but also Mk. 14:27-28 (where Jesus mentions that He will go before the disciples into Galilee) was missing in Luke's copy of Mark – and also absent were many other passages. The absent passages are so numerous, and in many cases so substantial (one 75-verse section, Mk. 6:45-8:26, appears to have been completely unknown to, or unused by, Luke), that such an approach could lead only to the conclusion that Luke did not use the Gospel of Mark but, instead, a shorter Proto-Mark, in which case Luke can tell us about Proto-Mark but not about the Gospel of Mark.

When we consider that (a) Luke failed to utilize other sections of Mark, including the 75-verse section from Mk. 6:45 to 8:26, and (b) Luke occasionally preferred to follow his Passion-Narrative Source, and (c) the framework of the post-resurrection appearances in Luke 24 matches the framework of the post-resurrection appearances in Mk. 16:9-20, it becomes clear that Luke's failure to clearly utilize Mk. 16:9-20 cannot be considered a demonstration or even a strong indication that he was unaware of its existence.

Finally, we suggest that if Luke had possessed the Gospel of Mark itself, in a form known to have been closely based on the remembrances of Peter, he would have followed it much more closely than he does. His failure to do so implies that wherever the Gospel of Luke agrees with the Gospel of Mark, this is an effect of both texts' agreement with a Proto-Markan text. We conclude that Luke's failure to use Mk. 16:9-20, like his failure to use Mk. 1:5-6, 1:16-20, 6:45-8:26, 9:15, 9:21-24, 9:28-29, 9:36, 10:1-12, 10:35-40, 12:32-34, 13:27, 14:27-28, 14:39-42, 14:50-52, 15:16-20, and 15:44-45, cannot validly be used to evaluate the presence or absence of the passage in the Gospel of Mark which was disseminated from Rome.

1 (twice) ~ See p. 159-160, B.H. Streeter, The Four Gospels - A Study of Origins, 10th impression © 1961 Macmillan and Co., Ltd.

The Johannine Ending

If Matthew and Luke cannot tell us about the contents of the end of Mark in the form in which it was initially disseminated, what hope is there that the Gospel of John could do so? The answer may be surprising. We shall begin our discussion of the Gospel of John by presenting five strands of evidence, to be combined into one strong cord that will uphold the theory that the author or co-author of the Gospel of John was aware of the existence of Mk. 16:9-20 as part of the Gospel of Mark.

First: The end of the Gospel of John poses a famous problem: the Gospel is brought to a satisfying conclusion at the end of ch. 20, but it proceeds to continue with chapter 21, which provides an account of an appearance by Jesus to a group of disciples, including Peter, in Galilee. If the end of Mk.

16:8 were to be attached to the beginning of Jn. 21, the result would be one smooth-flowing narrative. Here in Jn. 21 is the appearance in Galilee which readers of Mk. 14:28 and 16:7 were led to expect. Here, also, a thread left dangling in Mark 1:1-16:8 is wrapped up, as the disciples, especially Peter, are restored to their ministry.

Second: The Gospel of John was written with an awareness of the contents of the Gospel of Mark. B.H. Streeter provides strong arguments for this in the opening pages of ch. 14 of The Four Gospels.²

Third: Statements by Tertullian and Origen indicate that in the first half of the 200's, the ending of John 20 was regarded in some sense as the end of the Gospel of John, even though both writers were aware of the contents of John 21.

Tertullian, referring to the Gospel of John, wrote in the 25th chapter of Against Praxeas, "*Wherefore also does this Gospel, at its very termination, intimate that these things were ever written, if it be not, to use its own words, "that ye might believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?"*"³ Although Tertullian is quoting from John 20:31, he calls it the "very termination" of the Gospel of John. That demands some explanation, since John 21 follows with another 25 verses.

Adding to the puzzle, Tertullian plainly refers to the contents of John 21:23 in the 50th chapter of A Treatise on the Soul, (*De Anima*): "*Even John underwent death, although concerning him there had prevailed an ungrounded expectation that he would remain alive until the coming of the Lord.*"⁴

The evidence from Origen is also interesting. In Commentary on the Gospel of John, Origen writes, "*They say, 'Those are more blessed who have not seen and yet believe, than those who have seen and believed,' and for this they quote the saying to Thomas at the end of the Gospel of John, 'Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.'*"⁵ This might indicate that Origen regarded John 20:31 as the end of John's Gospel-account. On the other hand, he could have merely been making a very vague approximation.

In Book XIV of his Commentary on Matthew, Origen displays his familiarity with John 21, as he describes the impossibility of expounding the full meaning of Jesus' parables: "*Every solution and exposition of such parables was of such a kind that not even the whole world itself could contain the books that should be written.*"⁶

² ~ See Streeter's evidence on pp. 395-401 of The Four Gospels, 10th impression © 1961 Macmillan and Co., Ltd.

³ ~ See Canon Ernest Evans' translation of *Adversus Praxean* at www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/anf03-43.htm#P10374_2906966, published by SPCK in 1948 and transcribed by Rober Pearse in 2000.

⁴ ~ See Treatise on the Soul, translated by Peter Holmes, at www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/anf03-22.htm#P2560_840932.

⁵ ~ An English translation of Book 10 is at www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/origen-john10.html.

⁶ ~ See Book XIV of Origen's *Commentary on Matthew* at www.newadvent.org/fathers/101614.htm, © 2007 Kevin Knight.

126

And in De Principiis, Book II, ch. 6, Origen wrote, "*It is written, that "I do not think that the world itself could contain the books which might be written," regarding, viz., the glory and majesty of the Son of God. For it is impossible to commit to writing (all) those particulars which belong to the glory of the Saviour.*"⁷

Also, in Against Celsus, Book II, ch. 45, Origen referred to Jesus' prediction that when Peter was old, he would stretch out his hands: Origen states that Celsus has ignored "*the words of Jesus, when He predicted to Peter, "When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands," etc., to which the Scripture adds, "This spake He, signifying by what death he should glorify God."*"⁸

While it is impossible to prove that Origen was not making a very vague approximation in Commentary on John, ch. 10, Origen's statement there, combined with Tertullian's statement in Against Praxeas 25, suggest that in North Africa and Egypt in the second and early third centuries, an

interpretation of John 21 persisted in which that chapter was regarded as an attachment or an extraneous epilogue, rather than as a final chapter of the Gospel of John itself.

Fourth: near the end of the pseudepigraphical *Gospel of Peter*, the narrative flows smoothly from the events related in Mk. 16:8 to events related in Jn. 21:1. An excerpt from *Gospel of Peter* ch. 13-15 demonstrates this:

“And they went and found the sepulchre open : and they drew near and looked in there, and saw there a young man sitting in the midst of the sepulchre, of a fair countenance and clad in very bright raiment, which said unto them, “Wherefore are ye come? Whom seek ye? Not him that was crucified? He is risen and is departed; but if ye believe it not, look in and see the place where he lay, that he is not here: for he is risen and is departed thither whence he was sent.” Then the women were affrighted and fled.

“Now it was the last day of unleavened bread, and many were coming forth of the city and returning unto their own homes because the feast was at an end. But we, the twelve disciples of the Lord, were weeping and were in sorrow, and each one being grieved for that which had befallen departed unto his own house. But I, Simon Peter, and Andrew my brother, took our nets and went unto the sea: and there was with us Levi the son of Alphaeus, whom the Lord –”⁹ (here the MS stops, due to damage).

The author of *Gospel of Peter* seems to have written with a knowledge of some of the contents of the Gospel of Mark, and a knowledge of the contents of John 21. His reference to “Levi the son of Alphaeus” seems derived from Mk. 2:14. His statement that the women fled the tomb in fear seems based on Mk. 16:8. The next scene does not involve an appearance to the disciples in Jerusalem, where Luke and John locate the first post-resurrection appearance to the disciples. Instead, *Gospel of Peter* moves from the scene at the end of Mk. 16:8 immediately to the scene at the start of John 21.

It is unlikely that an author with knowledge of Jn. 20:1-31 would do that, regardless of whether he was orthodox or docetic. The contents of John 20:1-31 are simply too rich to ignore. Yet that is exactly what the author of *Gospel of Peter* has done. This implies that the author of *Gospel of Peter* knew the contents of John 21 (or at least the first part of John 21) without knowing the contents of John 20.

Fifth: in Codex Vaticanus, a “slanting T” *telos*-mark (which typically appears at the end of books, and at the end of Psalms, in Codex B) appears in the margin next to Jn. 20:30 and Jn. 21:1.

7 ~ See www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/origen123.html for an English translation of *De Principiis*.

8 ~ See the translation of *Against Celsus*, Book II, at www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/origen162.html.

9 ~ This excerpt is based on M.R. James’ translation at www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/gospelpeter-mrjames.html. The Greek text of *Gospel of Peter* is at www.earlychristianwritings.com/peter-greek.html.

The five pieces of evidence just described suggest the following hypothesis: the Gospel of Mark began to be disseminated from Rome in A.D. 68, complete with 16:9-20 which had been attached by Mark’s colleagues after Mark himself had suddenly left Rome and had gone to Alexandria. A very early copy was taken to Ephesus by a courier who knew that 16:9-20 had been attached by Mark’s survivors. The courier, seeing the opportunity to obtain a more appropriate ending of Mark’s narrative, asked John to write an account of what happened in Galilee after the women fled from Jesus’ empty tomb.

John responded to this request by composing what we shall call the *Johannine Ending* – a text resembling Jn. 21:1-19 – in which the Galilean reunion occurs, and in which Peter is restored, and in which Peter’s recent martyrdom is shown to have been predicted by Jesus. The Johannine Ending probably closed with Jesus telling Peter, “Follow Me,” the same invitation with which Peter’s interaction with Jesus had begun in Mk. 1:17. As an ending which interlocked well with Mark 16:1-16:8, and which had apostolic authority, the Johannine Ending was well-equipped to be accepted as the proper end of the story told by Mark.

The same five pieces of evidence could also be interpreted to suggest that John wrote the Johannine Ending after receiving a copy of Mark which ended at 16:8. However, if the Christians at Rome had disseminated copies of Mark which ended at 16:8, it is difficult to explain why the Johannine Ending ended up attached to John 21:31 instead of to Mk. 16:8. Communications between Rome and Ephesus would have worked in both directions, and the arrival of the Johannine Ending at Rome would have conveniently filled the need for an authoritative ending of Mark's account, if that need had not already been met.

Not only did the Roman community fail to attach the Johannine Ending to the Gospel of Mark, but the Ephesian community apparently acquiesced to the Romans' use of Mark 16:9-20. When the Gospel of John was written, the Johannine Ending was regarded as a freestanding text, rather than as something attached to the Gospel of Mark, and it was recast as part of the final chapter of John.

To sum up: the testimony given by Matthew and Luke does not prove that Mark 16:9-20 was absent from the Gospel of Mark as originally disseminated. This is partly because a simple Two-Source Theory does not adequately solve the Synoptic Problem, and partly because of the difficulty involved in discerning an author's reasons for using or not using a particular passage in a source.

When we turn to the Gospel of John, we find evidence that a Johannine Ending was composed to supplement the abrupt ending of Mark, and that *before the completion of the Gospel of John*, the Johannine Ending was not allowed to continue to function as such a supplement, but was redirected into the text of the Gospel of John so as to form most of chapter 21. This is reasonably explained as the effect of acquiescence to the presence of 16:9-20 in copies of Mark which were being produced in Rome.

The Alexandrian Text of Mark

For a brief time – perhaps between 70 and 75 – the Johannine Ending was treated at Ephesus as what it had been written to be: an apostolic, authoritative conclusion to Mark's unfinished Gospel-account. Although this situation did not continue in Ephesus, it may have been passed along to North Africa, where it may have continued to exist in the minds of second-century copyists in Egypt.

A trace of this tradition is indicated in the structure of the *Gospel of Peter*, of which at least one copy from the second or third century appears to have been found among the Oxyrhynchus Papyri.¹⁰ The author of the *Gospel of Peter* did not use the Gospel of John as a source; instead his sources for the last part of his composition were the Gospel of Mark, up to 16:8, and the Johannine Ending.

¹⁰ ~ See pp. 15-16, Eldon Jay Epp, "The Oxyrhynchus New Testament Papyri: "Not Without Honor Except in Their Hometown?", *Journal of Biblical Literature* Vol. 123, No. 1, Spring 2004, © Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta.

In the second and early third century, the understanding that John 20:31 was in some sense the end of John's Gospel-account continued to echo in Egypt and North Africa, even though at a much earlier date the Johannine Ending had been reworked and incorporated into the Gospel of John as the major part of chapter 21. Along with this understanding, a tradition about the circumstances in which (most of) John 21 had been composed – before the Gospel of John itself had been written – and about the purpose of the book – to conclude the Gospel of Mark by replacing Mk. 16:9-20 – survived.

The survival of such a tradition among copyists in Egypt provides an impetus for the removal of Mark 16:9-20: the excisor regarded Mark 16:9-20 as an unauthorized addition, and regarded John 21 as a better, apostolically authorized ending of Mark's account. The retaining of this tradition would not provoke copyists to excise 16:9-20 from codices in which the Gospel of Mark was the only text. But when four-Gospel codices began to be produced in the second century, copyists in Alexandria who appreciated this tradition about John 21 decided not to perpetuate Mark 16:9-20, and they passed along an oral tradition that John 21 should be regarded as the proper conclusion of Mark's narrative.

Unfortunately, the severe persecution at Alexandria in 202 caused the deaths of so many Christian copyists that this oral tradition was exterminated, and no one handed down, in explicit terms, the interpretation of John 21 as a Johannine continuation of Mark's otherwise abruptly-ending narrative. Without this understanding, the inadequacy of the abrupt stoppage of the Gospel of Mark was felt more acutely than before. Egyptian copyists reacted in two ways to the feeling that the abrupt ending of the Marcan text was inadequate.

Some copyists found 16:9-20 in other copies of Mark, and accepted the passage. The variants in 16:17-18, already reviewed, show that these copies were Egyptian; they were not gathered from some other locale. Possibly the circulation of Irenaeus' *Against Heresies*, with its explicit citation of Mk. 16:19, in Egypt in the 200's facilitated the reception of the passage.¹¹

Another copyist in Egypt inherited a copy of Mark 1:1-16:8 and, unable to tolerate the abrupt stoppage of the Marcan text, he either composed the Short Ending, or adopted it from some earlier source (regarding which, see Appendix B), intending to thus wrap up the text. Copies descended from this copyist's creation were circulated in Egypt and spread to North Africa.

Eventually copies with the Short Ending crossed paths with copies which contained Mk. 16:9-20. This resulted in the treatment seen in L, Ψ, 083, 099, 274, 579, and in the Coptic versions which display the Double Ending. That this phenomenon was mainly confined to Egypt is shown by Eusebius' lack of awareness of any copies of Mark with the Short Ending.

The "slanting T" *telos*-marks (which typically appear at the end of books, and at the end of Psalms, in Codex B) which appear in Codex B in the margin next to John 20:30 and 21:1 are vestiges of the understanding of John 21 as the proper end of the Gospel of John, which suggests the simultaneous understanding of John 21 as the Johannine ending of the Gospel of Mark. This is further evidence that the text of Mark in Codices S^{supp} and B were descended from an Egyptian copy of the four Gospels made in Egypt in the second century. This does not preclude the possibility that B's copyist was aware of, and had access to, copies other than his exemplar which contained the Short Ending, and other copies which contained 16:9-20, and was unsure how best to proceed.

¹¹ ~ Irenaeus' *Against Heresies* was known in Egypt almost as soon as it was written. Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 405, assigned a second-third century date, contains *Against Heresies* Book III, 9:2-3. See the *Conspectus of Papyri from the Rise of Christianity in Egypt* at www.anchist.mq.edu.au/doccentre/Conspectus.pdf (formatted as an Adobe Acrobat file).

CHAPTER 14: Closing Remarks

Before stating the conclusions based on the external and internal evidence which has been presented in this book, we wish to again state our sense of disappointment regarding inaccuracy and misreporting that has been encountered in commentaries, Bible footnotes, New Testament Introductions, and various articles about the end of Mark. Exaggerations, vagueness, and patently incorrect statements about the evidence pertaining to this text are so numerous that a consensus based on such statements, or on research capable of producing such statements, must be drawn into question.

Having freshly re-examined the issue, and having taken into account the major pieces of external evidence examined in Part One, and the internal evidence examined in Part Two, we derive the following findings:

- We have reasonably secure evidence that Mk. 16:9-20 was accepted as part of the Gospel of Mark in the early church in Rome, Asia, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, Constantinople, North Africa, and Gaul.

The only locales that attest to the non-inclusion of Mk. 16:9-20 in the early church, up to about 400, are Egypt and Caesarea (where MSS from Egypt were in the library).¹

- We have reasonably secure evidence that Mk. 16:9-20 was not written to conclude the Gospel of Mark.

- We have good reasons to believe that Mark did not intend to publish his account in a form which stopped at the end of 16:8.

- Early traditions about Mark's work in Rome during the Neronian persecution, and his martyrdom in Alexandria, provide a backdrop of events which account for the interruption of the production of the Gospel of Mark.

- We do not have proof that 16:9-20 was absent from the Gospel of Mark when the Gospel of Mark was initially disseminated for church-use.

- We do not have empirical proof that 16:9-20 was not written by Mark.

- We have identified evidence of a scribal tradition which would induce the excision of Mark 16:9-20 from four-Gospel codices in Egypt in the second century.

We conclude that Mark 16:9-20 was attached to the rest of the Gospel of Mark before the Gospel of Mark was initially disseminated for church-use. Therefore Mark 16:9-20 ought to be retained in the canonical text of the Gospel of Mark.

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¹ ~ That Alexandrian MSS of New Testament books were used at Caesarea is illustrated by a statement by Vaganay and Amphoux, as they describe Codex Coislinianus ("H," a MS of portions of the Pauline epistles): "According to a note in the manuscript [which appears after the book of Titus], the text was collated at Caesarea with a copy written by Pamphilus although it appears to have an Alexandrian text-type." - p. 20, An Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism, © 1991 Cambridge University Press.

Appendix A: Excerpts from the Diatessaron

From Section 54 (using Jn. 21:12, Mk. 16:12, and Jn. 21:13)

36 Jesus said unto them, "Come and sit down." And no one of the disciples dared to ask who he was, knowing that it was our Lord. Yet he did not appear unto them in his own form.

37 And Jesus came and took the bread and the fish, and gave unto them.

Section 55 (using Mt. 28:16-17, Mk. 16:14, Mt. 28:18, Jn. 20:21, Mk. 16:15, Mt. 28:19-20, Mk. 16:16-18, Lk. 24:49, Mk. 16:19, Lk. 24:50-51, Mk. 16:19, Lk. 24:52, Mk. 16:20, and Jn. 21:25)

1 But the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

2 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some of them doubted.

3 And as they sat there, he appeared again unto them, and upbraided them with their lack of faith and the hardness of their hearts, because they believed not those that had seen him when he was risen again.
4 Then said Jesus unto them, "I have been given all authority in heaven and earth; even as my Father sent me, so I also send you.
5 Go now into all the world, and preach my gospel in all the creation;
6 and teach all the peoples, and baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; and teach them to keep all whatsoever I commanded you.
7 And lo, I am with you all the days unto the end of the world.
8 For whosoever believes and is baptized shall be saved; but whosoever believes not shall be rejected.
9 And the signs which shall attend those that believe in me are these: in my name they shall cast out devils; and they shall speak with new tongues;
10 and they shall take up serpents, and if they drink a deadly poison, it shall not injure them; and they shall lay their hands on the diseased, and they shall be healed.
11 But ye, abide in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."
12 And our Lord Jesus, after speaking to them, took them out to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.
13 And while he blessed them, he was separated from them, and ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.
14 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,
15 and at all times they were in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.
16 And from thence they went forth, and preached everywhere; our Lord helping them, and confirming their sayings with the signs which they did.
17 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, not even the world, according to my opinion, would contain the books which should be written.¹

¹ ~ These excerpts are based on the translations by J. Hamlyn Hill on pp. 221-223 of The Earliest Life of Christ Ever Compiled from the Four Gospels, being the Diatessaron of Tatian Literally Translated from the Arabic Version, © 1910 T & T Clark, Edinburgh, and the translation at CCEL at www.ccel.org/fathers2/ANF-10/anf10-07.htm#TopOfPage.

Appendix B: The Short Ending

The Short Ending has been printed along with Mk. 16:9-20 in several Bible versions, even though it has sparse Greek attestation (6 MSS), is absent from the best witnesses of all text-types, and has received no support from textual critics.² Where, why, and how did the Short Ending originate? The first two parts of the question do not seem difficult: the Short Ending was first placed in copies of Mark in Egypt, where it was attached to 16:8 in order to make the ending less abrupt. The question of *how* the Short Ending was composed is not so easy; in fact it is difficult. It is often assumed that the Short Ending was written spontaneously. However, while that is certainly possible, it is not inevitably the case; its author may have based the Short Ending on previously existing material.

If one were to use the same method of source-detection which has been employed by some researchers who declare Mk. 16:9-20 a pastiche from Matthew, Luke, and John, a case could be made that some features in the Short Ending were derived from 16:9-20:

The Short Ending states that the women reported to Peter and the others, even though Mk. 16:8

says that the women did not tell anything to anybody. Mk. 16:10 similarly says that one of the women on the scene in 16:8 told the disciples about Jesus' appearance to her.

The Short Ending uses the phrase “μετα δε ταυτα.” Mk. 16:12 begins with the same three words.

The Short Ending, in the form supported by it^k and Ψ, uses the word εφαναη. Mk. 16:9 uses exactly the same word.

The Short Ending says that Jesus sent out the gospel (κηρυγμα) of eternal salvation (σωτηριας) through the apostles. Mk. 16:15-20 describes Jesus sending the apostles to preach (κηρυξατε), with instruction on how individuals are to be saved (σωθησεται).

The Short Ending refers to the spread of the gospel as a past event. So does Mk. 16:20.

These shared features may be fortuitous. On the other hand, they could be the result of a scenario in which the Short Ending, before becoming a supplement to Mk. 16:8, was a summary of the contents of 16:9-20. That could explain why the Short Ending is so short, and why its author appears to have made no use of the post-resurrection-accounts in Matthew, Luke, John, and Acts.

In *Ecclesiastical History* VI:14, Eusebius stated that Clement of Alexandria, in his *Hypotyposes*, “has made abbreviated narratives of the whole testamentary Scripture.”³ Could the Short Ending have been based on an extract of that work? A passage elsewhere in *Ecclesiastical History* may support that idea. In *Ecclesiastical History* II:15, Eusebius related a tradition handed down by Clement regarding the circumstances in which Mark began to write the Gospel of Mark: Christians at Rome were

*“not satisfied with the once hearing or with the unwritten teaching of the divine proclamation. With all manner of entreaties they importuned Mark – to whom the Gospel is ascribed, he being the companion of Peter – that he would leave in writing a record of the teaching which had been delivered to them verbally. They did not leave the man alone till they prevailed upon him; and so to them we owe the Scripture called the ‘Gospel by Mark.’ On learning what had been done, through the revelation of the Spirit, it is said that the apostle was delighted with the enthusiasm of the men, and sanctioned the composition for reading in the Churches. Clemens [Clement of Alexandria] gives the narrative in the sixth book of the Hypotyposes.”*³

2 ~ Bible versions which present the Short Ending in one way or another include *the New American Standard Bible, Updated Edition* (after 16:20, within italics and bracketed), the *English Standard Version* (in a vague and erroneous footnote attached to a heading that precedes 16:9), the *New Revised Standard Version* (within double-brackets between 16:8 and 16:9), and the *New Living Translation* (between 16:9 and 16:9, with a misleading footnote).

3 (twice) ~ See the extracts from *Eccl. Hist.* at www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/clement-fragments.html.

132

Now we ask, where in *Ecclesiastical History*, Book II, does Eusebius begin to present material from Clement of Alexandria's *Hypotyposes*? At the outset of Book II, Eusebius wrote, “*In the present book let us examine the events which took place after his ascension, confirming some of them from the divine Scriptures, and others from such writings as we shall refer to from time to time.*”⁴

In ch. 14 of Book II, (immediately before the part which Eusebius closes by saying that it is based on material in Clement of Alexandria's *Hypotyposes*) Eusebius writes:

*“He [Peter] like a noble commander of God, clad in divine armor, carried the costly merchandise of the light of the understanding from the East to those who dwelt in the West, proclaiming the light itself, and the word which brings salvation to souls, and preaching the kingdom of heaven.”*⁴

The parallels between Eusebius' sentence and the Short Ending are strong enough to merit further investigation. We tentatively suggest that a few sentences very similar to the Short Ending were contained in Clement of Alexandria's summaries of the books of the Bible, and that these sentences were recollected by the author of the Short Ending, who proceeded to write the Short Ending based upon them, in the early 200's.

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4 (twice) ~ See Book II of *Eccl. Hist.* at <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/250102.htm> , © 2007 Kevin Knight.