Chapter 3

Literary Dependence: The Use of Matthew, Luke, John (and Acts) by the Author of Mark 16:9—20

In chapter 2 it was argued that the author of the Longer Ending intended for much of Mark 16:9—20 to resemble traditional materials, many of which resemble strikingly formulations preserved in the NT. Chapter 3 builds upon the previous chapter’s conclusion that the LE’s author wrote in conscious imitation of other valued traditions. In particular, this chapter will investigate what can be known about the materials this author incorporated into these twelve verses. In principle, the author of the LE could have consulted independent oral traditions, written traditions other than copies of the Gospels, oral traditions stemming from the reading of the Gospels in the Christian communities, MSS of the Gospels themselves, or all of these. It turns out that literary dependence upon actual copies of the four NT Gospels and probably of Acts best explains the numerous similarities between the LE and various parts of the NT.

A. Gospel Traditions in the Second Century

Recent scholarship has contributed much to understanding the significance of oral tradition to many second-century Christian writers. It has also shown the need for caution when considering the importance of written traditions like the NT Gospels for these same communities. Consequently, it would be imprudent to discuss Mark’s Longer Ending without considering certain aspects of this larger debate.

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1 Martin Hengel, *Die Evangelienüberschriften* (Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philo-

address the possibility that some writers cited these texts without referring to them by the name εὐαγγέλιον or, for that matter, by any other title. Albert correctly, the analyses of Koester and Gundry only point out that "gospel" was not a recognized name for such documents if they were used.6

The most straightforward presentation of Koester’s methodology for ascertaining literary dependence upon the NT in later Christian writings appears in his critical review of Edouard Massaux’s book, The Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew on Christian Literature before Saint Irenaeus.7 Koester recognizes that Massaux’s “approach and results stand in countercorrespond to” his own and observes two areas of fundamental difference: the roles of literature and oral tradition and the relevance of form and redaction criticism for identifying literary dependence.8

With regard to the first area, Koester offers that the earliest Christian communities found primary significance in the “narrative” of the Eucharist, valued oral sayings of Jesus, preferred the authority of living apostles and at times sometimes wrote down certain traditions to instruct converts before baptism.9 He infers that these communities consequently had “no need for the production of authoritative written documents” like the NT Gospels.10 Only at a later time, in the presence of an apostle like Paul, did the writing of epistles arise as the first alternative to the then customary preference for oral materials. Later still, and less frequently, were the “writings that were later called ‘gospels’” assembled.11

This line of argument supports two observations that are assumed in Koester’s analyses of possible literary dependence in extracanonical Christian writings. First, written gospels were not foundational to the earliest

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3 H. Koester, Ancient Christian Gospels, pp. 1–48. Koester explains that Marcion interpreted Paul’s “my Gospel” as referring to a written document, namely Luke (pp. 36–37). According to Koester, Marcion’s interpretation is described as a written document. Marcion was excommunicated in 144 CE, and his movement was established within a decade.


5 Note the similarity to the Second Gospel (e.g., Mark, 1:14–15), as well as H. Koester’s comment concerning Palyvog (Philippines), who knew the Gospels of Matthew and Luke... (p. 29).

6 As noted above, H. Koester argues that Polycarp (Philippines) cited the Gospels of Matthew and Luke without referring to such a writing by the name εὐαγγέλιον (Ancient Christian Gospels, pp. 19–20). As will be observed below, the author of the Longer Ending shows strong indicators of having used one or more copies of the NT Gospels but, as mentioned above, never refers to these texts with a name like εὐαγγέλιον.


congregations but arose at a later date and from only certain individuals within these communities. Second, the use of Gospel material in congregations was neither mandatory nor normative, but rather constituted only one of a number of ways to continue oral traditions from or about Jesus. As a result, one should not be surprised if Ignatius' letters, 1 Clement and Barnabas do not cite what the author of Matthew or any of the other NT evangelists happened to write. Koester is so confident about the early church's preference for oral tradition that he shifts the burden of proof to those who would argue to the contrary: "Unless it can be proved otherwise, it must be assumed that authors who referred to and quoted such materials were dependent on these life situations of the church and did not quote from written documents." In addition, form and redaction criticism in turn offer Koester the negative and positive criteria for ascertaining exceptional cases in which literary dependence has clearly occurred. On the other hand, form criticism aims to reconstruct the history of a piece of tradition before a writer incorporated it into a larger work. If, for example, someone like Ignatius of Antioch cites a saying of Jesus which reflects a Sitz im Leben that can be shown to be earlier than the "setting in life" reflected in Matthew, literary dependence cannot have occurred. On the other hand, redaction criticism, which studies how different individuals worked as editors of tradition, offers Koester the only positive means of identifying literary dependence: "Whenever one observes words or phrases that derive from the author or redactor of a gospel writing, the existence of a written source must be assumed." Consequently, similarities in wording are not by themselves a sufficient criterion for deciding if literary dependence has occurred. One must show that a citation of, for example, Mark or John reflects the editorial work of these evangelists and not just the traditions they incorporated in their writings. The noteworthy assumptions in his approach are that second-century authors who happened to possess texts of the Gospels not only had access to comparable, and possibly earlier and more highly-esteemd oral traditions, but also usually preferred to cite the latter rather than written documents.

Koester applies the above principles in his book, Ancient Christian Gospels. One problem with his discussions lies in the inferences he draws after concluding that there is insufficient evidence to argue for literary dependence. For Koester, the lack of evidence for dependence upon written traditions indicates that a writing like the Gospel of Thomas was independent of texts like the NT Gospels and written by someone who did not have any knowledge of them. Two observations indicate that Koester addresses only part of the problem. First, instead of offering "free advertising" to one's opponents, an author (ancient or modern) who was aware of a written source could ignore certain aspects of the other side's claims and purposely not cite the views of the opposition. The issue of theological and hortenmental diversity brings up a second point which has implications beyond the "original meaning" of a text: from, for example, any of the Synoptic Gospels. Equally important to the question whether a later writer would want to cite a certain writing are the possible effects of later, competing interpretations of that writing. For example, Ignatius could have interpreted the Gospel of Matthew to criticize an opponent who did not want to take part in the Eucharist. The latter may choose not to disclose his dependence on Matthew, not because of what the author Matthew wrote, but because of Ignatius' secondary and polemical interpretation of this writing. This illustration suggests that observing the lack of a high degree of verbal similarity does not by itself constitute a strong

12 Contrast E. Massaux, whom H. Koester criticizing for presupposing that the beginning of the tradition of sayings in written gospels, and especially the canonical Gospels ("Written Gospels or Oral Tradition," p. 297, emphasis added).
13 H. Koester writes, "Their usage was a matter of choice" ("Written Gospels or Oral Tradition," p. 295).
14 H. Koester, "Written Gospels or Oral Tradition," p. 297, emphases added. Koester describes these "materials" as traditions "born and about Jesus in ritual, instruction, and missionary activity."
15 H. Koester does not use this particular example, which is offered here to illustrate his method. Such a negative criterion thus hinges upon one's ability to demonstrate the history of the pre-Synoptic tradition. See the discussion below of the way in which in his book, Ancient Christian Gospels.
16 H. Koester, "Written Gospels or Oral Tradition," p. 297. Note the high degree of confidence Koester displays in his criteria. He does not explore how one should proceed if these two criteria (recognizing the Sitz im Leben or the redactor's hand) do not offer definite results.
17 Note that H. Koester's characterization of oral tradition within early Christianity does not necessarily apply to the LE or any other text. Koester acknowledges certain exceptions to a general preference for oral tradition, and there is no reason that the LE could not also be classified with writings like 2 Clement and Polycarp's letter to the Philippians. See Koester, Ancient Christian Gospels, pp. 17-18, 19-20.
18 H. Koester, Ancient Christian Gospels, pp. 75-128.
19 I am indebted to H. D. Betz's analysis of the apostle Paul's Galatian opponents for this idea (Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia [Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979] 5-9). By contrast, it can be advantageous to begin with one's own premise to build an alternative case. Politicians, theologians and even some historical critics do this all the time. There is no reason to conclude that the same would not have been possible for the author of an exorcistional Gospel. With certain texts, moreover, there may not be a lot of evidence for arguing the point either way. The main concern here is that H. Koester's conclusions stemming from a lack of explicit dependence can be misleading. It would thus be wise to proceed with more caution in this area. Although Koester's preliminary collections of data are certainly indispensable, it may be more promising for future investigations to look for broader theological issues of contention (not limited to the philological similarities on which Koester focuses) in the interplay between various Christian writers.
argument for the independence of Christian trajectories. Diverse Christian texts may indicate the presence of informed, heated debate among individuals (or groups) who to some extent understood and competed with one another.

An even more acute concern is how one can identify the use of oral tradition by an early Christian author. At a number of points Koester concludes that differences of wording between the text of a NT Gospel and the citation by a later author point to the use of oral tradition by the latter. The assumption seems to be that authors who consulted an extant text would copy their written source with a rather high degree of accuracy. Koester reflects such an assumption in his discussions of the "ur-Marcus" document that Matthew and Luke used and of the two forms of "Q" reflected in the citations of these two evangelists. The earlier form of Mark and two different versions of the "Q" source explain respectively the minor agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark and the differences between Matthew's and Luke's versions of "Q." Koester's analysis of the "minor agreements" between Matthew and Luke establishes the text of ur-Marcus equivocates between literary dependence and faithful reproduction. Although the latter is a likely indication of the former, the former does not necessitate the latter. That is to say, an author can both borrow extensively from another writing and change it for his own purposes. Below how Joseph Hug approaches the question of the LE's literary dependence with such a faulty preassumption will be discussed.

A more serious difficulty with Koester's approach is that no surviving writing exemplifies the criteria he posits for the ways in which written traditions are supposed to have been used by the early Christian authors. Among the Synoptic Gospels, where some dependence is almost undeniable, Koester, although he certainly is not the first, reconstructs ur-Marcus and two versions of "Q" in accordance with his criteria of extensive replication. In later sections of his Ancient Christian Gospels, Koester applies this criterion to extracanonical writings in which instances of verbal correspondence are typically less obvious. As a result, he often concludes that these authors rely on oral, not written, tradition. At a certain point the argument becomes circular: Koester's reconstructed Synoptic sources set the criteria for how authors of extracanonical writings should reflect knowledge of written Gospels.

Such methodological issues, of course, are part of a larger debate within Synoptic studies, which E. P. Sanders aptly addresses concerning how the Synoptic tradition developed in a number of later Christian writings. The goal of his study is to compare these tendencies with the assumptions behind the two-source hypothesis. Sanders does not question that there are certain tendencies in the Synoptic tradition but only denies that these are universally applicable to all early Christian writings. A methodological difficulty shared in common by both Sanders and Koester is that their analyses of extracanonical literature rest upon the assumption that these texts developed in a similar way as the Synoptic Gospels did at an earlier period. Sanders concludes that in numerous extracanonical writings the Synoptic tradition does not reflect a development similar to that postulated for the Synoptics on the basis of the two-source hypothesis. What this means for this chapter's inquiry into the LE's literary relationship with other texts is that no theory of the relationship of the Synoptic Gospels, including that posited by Koester, can necessarily predict how other later authors might be inclined to make use of written traditions, including the NT Gospels.

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20 It may, of course, in some cases be not possible to ascertain whether literary dependence has occurred. This position will be taken below concerning the LE's relationship to the NT book of Acts.
21 None of these observations is intended to oppose Koester's point that the historian must not anachronistically impose the standards of a later orthodoxy or understanding of the NT upon earlier periods of Christianity.
23 Such an approach can also be noted in Arthur Bellermine, who refers to the "laws of transmission," which he understands as "governing the transmission of the tradition of narrative material and the tradition of sayings material" (The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin Martyr [Leiden: Brill, 1967] 3–4).
B. Critique of Hug’s Argument concerning the Use of Written Sources in the LE

At present it remains to examine the findings of Joseph Hug, who seems to agree with Koester on some of the above methodological points and who applied them to the LE. This section is not intended as a positive argument for literary dependence, which will be discussed later in this chapter. As noted in chapter 1, Hug deserves recognition for having devoted primary attention in a major work to understanding the LE as a distinct text rather than in relation to the Gospel of Mark. In his discussion of the Longer Ending and its sources, Hug addresses the question of the LE’s possible literary relationship to Matthew, Luke, and John, but his analysis curiously does not include an analysis of how the LE’s author made use of Mark 1:1—16:8.31 He considers individually eight parts of the LE:

1. the appearance to Mary Magdalene; 2. the appearance to the two disciples on the road; 3. the appearance to the eleven; 4. the command to engage in mission (“L’ordre de mission”); 5. reception or rejection of the Gospel; 6. promise of assistance by the sigma; 7. the ascension and exaltation at the right hand; and 8. the departure on the mission.

Contrary to the position to be taken here, Hug argues that similarities between the LE and the NT Gospels point to the use of common written sources used by both the authors of Matthew, Luke and John and by the author of the LE, rather than to the latter author’s direct dependence upon copies of these Gospels.32

Hug is not alone in his assessment of the evidence and received praise from the majority as a reviewer for his argument. Kleemans Stock, even endorsed Hug’s analysis “als letztes Wort in diester Frage.”33 The LE’s independence of the NT Gospels was also foundational for Paul Mirecki, who proceeded from source to redaction criticism and treated the passage as a composition written in stages.34 If Hug is right, he is justified, as he does, in treating the LE as an original and independent piece of tradition and in comparing the passage’s historical value with similar texts in the NT Gospels.35

A discussion of two methodological issues will precede a more detailed critique of his findings. The first point concerns the unreasonable difficulty criterion Hug insists upon for being able to recognize any direct dependence of the LE on a NT Gospel. Although he does not argue for such a criterion in so many words, he presupposes that another author’s use of a NT text would involve extensive citation rather than selective borrowing and redactional adaptation. The analysis Hug offers is largely consistent with this implicit presupposition in that he draws distinctions between the LE and the other evangelists based on what in the LE is missing from similar accounts in the NT. A case in point is his discussion of Jesus’ ascension as depicted in Mark 16:19b and Acts 1:9, 11, 22. Hug reasons that, because too many of Luke’s details are absent in the LE, the likelihood of dependence must be discarded.36 His argument seems to presuppose the sort of native evo-

32 J. Hug’s argument for the use of written sources rather than oral tradition reflects a small, but important, difference from that of R. Koester. This alternate hypothesis does not, however, stem from an approach that is markedly different from Koester’s. In addition, Hug never offers any evidence for the continued existence and extended use of these Vorlagen in the mid-second century. He also does not discuss the importance of oral tradition and its productivity to change over time. As written Gospels gained authority, for example, they would change, and eventually overshadow, oral traditions.


34 P. Mirecki also regards the conclusion concerning independence of the LE as indicating that “the passage is free of any indications that it is a late composition” (“Mark 16:9—20: Composition, Tradition, and Redaction,” p. 14).


36 J. Hug, La finale de l’évangile de Marc, p. 138. Hug admits that the intentional omission of details is possible but does not pursue the point. Contrast Gerhard Lohfink’s
lutionary approach to the development of religious texts — namely that the Synoptic tradition only "grows" over time and can never be summarized or "shrunk" — which E. P. Sanders rightly criticized. 37 Hug applies this criterion to the LE in that a later passage like Mark 16:19 must either reproduce most or all of an earlier writing (Acts 1) or be considered independent of the NT. 38

Second, Hug also does not recognize that dependence is not always identical to copying a single source. 39 It is widely accepted that authors like Matthew and Luke — not to mention Mark, John, and other early Christian authors — combined different written traditions into a single narrative. 40 If, in a similar manner employed by the NT evangelists, the LE's author assimilated numerous traditions into a brief epitome, Hug's observations concerning the elements "missing" from Luke and the other Gospels are not of primary relevance. In short, such a strict standard for dependence allows no room for the LE's author to adapt a variety of traditional materials for his own purposes. In what follows, examples will be offered of the ways in which Hug's rigid standards as applied to eight parts of the LE significantly undermine his argument for the independence of Mark 16:9—20.

When considering (1) the appearance to Mary Magdalene, Hug claims that the only similarities of Mark 16:9 to John 20:14—18 and Matt 28:9—10 are "the verbs προφῆτη and ἀναγγέλειν." This indicates to him that Mark 16:9 can be "an independent witness" to a post-resurrection appearance to this Mary. 41 Concerning similarities with Luke 8:26, Hug explains that the discussion of Mark 16:19 (Die Himmlische Seele, pp. 119—121). Lohfink regards the LE as a whole as "eine kämpfe Epoche" die Teflisch der mattheischen, lukanischen und johnischen "Aussagenentwicklung" (p. 119).

37 Such reasoning ignores a foundational principle of form criticism, namely that traditions were preserved because of their containing "usefulness" to later communities. See the comments above on E. P. Sanders' work in this area.

38 Hug concludes that the shorter and less detailed LE cannot be dependent upon the more descriptive account in Luke (La finale de l'évangile de Marc, p. 172). The contrast Hug draws is also misleading in his comparison of the LE with an extended narrative like the Emmaus legend (Luke 24:13—35), since such a longer passage, which is much longer than Mark 16:12—13, would most likely contain more details.

39 The limited usefulness of this result becomes apparent when one considers applying J. Hug's question to Matthew and Luke, where use of both Mark and the "Q" source is evident. In passages where Matthew or Luke combines elements of both sources (e.g., Matt 9:35—11:1), the lack of exact verbal similarities to either text would not necessarily contain a persuasive argument against the use of Mark or "Q."

40 Numerous examples of such eclectic combination were discussed in chapter 2, including Mark 16:19b, which seems to reflect influence of both Luke-Acts and other Christian traditions, including Mark.

41 J. Hug, La finale de l'évangile de Marc, pp. 163—164.

42 J. Hug, La finale de l'évangile de Marc, p. 164.


44 J. Hug, La finale de l'évangile de Marc, p. 165.

45 J. Hug, La finale de l'évangile de Marc, pp. 166—167.

46 J. Hug, La finale de l'évangile de Marc, p. 167.
which is in parallel position to, but does not match, κύριον in Luke 24:13.\(^{47}\) It would be difficult for any epitome to capture more of Luke’s story in so few words. Positioning a common source is thus not necessary, and the “missing” Lukans items lose significance in light of the purpose of the LE’s author, who alludes to this narrative without reproducing every detail.

Hug discounts similarities between (3) the appearance to the eleven (Mark 16:14—18) and the other Gospels as comprising common “motifs” that do not imply direct dependence. He again posits “une tradition commune sur une apparition de Jésus aux apôtres avec l’envoi en mission.”\(^{48}\) Hug’s own presentation of the evidence, however, suggests an alternate hypothesis. The columns in which he illustrates parallels between Mark 16:15—16, Matt 28:19 and Luke 24:44—47 suggest that the LE’s author has combined elements of both Matthew and Luke.\(^{49}\) Hug lists the four components of Mark 16:15—16 as καὶ ἔλεγες αὐτοῖς, ἀφεῖνες . . . κρυπτάτε . . . βαρτισθείς. These four parts of vv. 15—16 occur either in Matthew (parts two and four) or in Luke (parts one and three), and none of them is present in both Gospels. For Hug to support his thesis concerning the independent motifs, it would be necessary to substantiate the following progression in the history of these traditions:

1) a common tradition existed which contained all four parts; 2) Luke borrowed parts one and two while Matthew borrowed parts two and four; 3) finally, the LE’s author, writing later than Matthew and Luke, preserved the original common tradition without being influenced by the selective choices of either evangelist.

Such an explanation is speculative and unnecessarily complicated. Regardless of what traditions the authors of Matthew and Luke may have used, the most straightforward explanation is that the LE’s author has skillfully combined elements from both Gospels. Once again Hug’s argument for the independence of the LE fails to persuade.

In his treatment of (4) the command to engage in mission (L’ordre de mission), Hug discusses further the commissioning of Mark 16:15. In an earlier chapter Hug offers a comparison of the LE’s vocabulary with other first- and second-century Christian writings.\(^{50}\) Recalling that the LE’s author “uses missionary terminology that was current in the apostolic and post-apostolic age,” he concludes that, since there are also numerous second-century parallels to the missionary language of the Gospels, one cannot maintain that the LE’s author relied on the commissions of Matthew and Luke.\(^{51}\) Hug’s case is persuasive with regard to the words πάντα τῆς κρίσης. But it is problematic that he follows Ferdinand Hahn in maintaining the Markan phrase κρυπτάτε τοῦ ἐνεργείου must be “assez ancienne” because it resembles Mark.\(^{52}\) As is discussed above, the point is a non sequitur, since the use of Mark’s terms does not de facto indicate an early date of composition. It was suggested in chapter 2, moreover, that εἶς τὸν κόσμον εἰσέβαλε reflects a combination of Synoptic traditions.

The discussion of (5) the reception or rejection of the Gospel (Mark 16:16) is the second point at which Hug’s argument for independence of the LE has some merit. For example, he observes that baptism is part of the missionary command in Matt 28:19b but “une condition de salut” in the LE.\(^{53}\) Missing in his analysis, however, is an explanation for the similarities to structure and wording of John 3:16-18.\(^{54}\)

Concerning (6) the promise of Jesus’ assistance by the signs, Hug contrasts “la présence du Seigneur” in the LE with the ends of the other three NT Gospels.\(^{55}\) He highlights how the description in Mark 16:17—18, 20 of the continuing relationship of Jesus to the disciples through signs is a redactional element. His argument for the independence of the whole of 16:17—18, however, fails to persuade because he only treats the list of five signs briefly and as a group rather than individually.\(^{56}\)

In his discussion of (7) Jesus’ ascension (Mark 16:19b), Hug recognizes that the only possible NT source is Luke, who discusses the departure of Jesus (Luke 24:50—53; Acts 1:2, 1:11, 1:22). Hug views the verbal similarities of Mark 16:19b (διελθομένου εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν) as “very insignificant.”\(^{57}\) If, as mentioned above, the LE’s author was seeking to reproduce the larger narrative of Acts 1, Hug would be correct to state that the parallels are not striking. What Hug does not acknowledge is that these are the only four words that the author of the LE uses to describe the ascension. All four words in the LE correspond to the first four texts in Luke-Acts. The author of 16:19b has done a credible job if he wants to imitate Luke’s

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\(^{47}\) The occurrence of δύναμις in Mark 16:12 may reflect the fact that the LE’s author did not want to allocate space to summarize the journey recorded in Luke’s narrative.

\(^{48}\) J. Hug, La finale de l’évangile de Marc, pp. 166.

\(^{49}\) J. Hug, La finale de l’évangile de Marc, p. 168.

\(^{50}\) J. Hug, “Analyse de la Finale,” in Idem, La finale de l’évangile de Marc, pp. 39—162.

\(^{51}\) J. Hug, La finale de l’évangile de Marc, p. 169.

\(^{52}\) J. Hug, La finale de l’évangile de Marc, p. 170.

\(^{53}\) J. Hug, La finale de l’évangile de Marc, pp. 170—171. On this point see the discussion in chapter 4.

\(^{54}\) J. Hug, La finale de l’évangile de Marc, pp. 173—174. That is to say, Hug notes simply that there is no parallel to the entire list of signs in vv. 17b—18 (La finale de l’évangile de Marc, p. 171). Contrast the analysis of each individual sign offered above in chapter 2.

\(^{55}\) J. Hug, La finale de l’évangile de Marc, p. 172.
depiction of the ascension before mentioning another point, namely the session (16:19c), which Hug does not discuss. The last section Hug discusses is Mark 16:20, which concerns (3) the departure of the disciples on the mission. On the one hand, Hug rightly observes that the final verse of the LE has numerous redactional elements related to the assistance of Jesus through the granting of signs. On the other hand, his argument is problematic because a redactional element in part of a verse does not suggest the independence of the whole. Hug does not acknowledge, moreover, that ἐγέρθησαν ἐκ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν echoes Mark 6:12. Also not mentioned in his discussion are parallels to παντοτέο (Luke 9:6), τοῦ κυρίου (John 20, Luke 24:34) and analogous uses of ὁ λόγος in Mark (for example, Mark 2:2).

Hug concludes that the independence of the LE “supports the fact that the development of the tradition of the Easter appearances has not been only or principally a literary process” but reflects the oral tradition of the communities. This critique does not wish to discount Hug’s general point concerning the continued importance of oral traditions to later Christian congregations. With regard to the LE, however, Hug argues persuasively at only two points for the independence of Mark 16:9—20 relative to the NT Gospels: preaching πάση τῇ κινήσει (v. 15b) and the assistance of Jesus (v. 20b). These two parts of the LE hardly comprise a majority of the passage. Hug’s analysis thus does not discount the argument of chapter 2 that the LE’s author wrote in conscious and consistent imitation of traditional materials.

Nevertheless, as Hug argues, it stands to reason that the author of the LE has not copied verbatim at length from any one of the NT Gospels to the exclusion of the others. Nor was this author limited to incorporating materials from only the Synoptics, Acts and John. Such a result is clearly less than Hug intended, but, as discussed above, his tacit assumption of a single criterion to the exclusion of other possibilities led to numerous flawed results. Instead of concentrating on what the author of the LE omitted, the following discussion will focus primarily on what parts of the LE bear comparison to the four NT Gospels and Acts. Only an analysis of the wording in Mark 16:9—20, which is oftentimes more brief than parallel material in other NT texts, can prove or disprove the thesis of direct dependence via condensation of longer narratives.

C. The Use of the New Testament Gospels (and Acts) in the Longer Ending of Mark

In considering the question of literary dependence, it is important to note that LE needs to be treated differently from both the evangelists after Mark, on the one hand, and second-century “patristic” citations of the NT, on the other. With regard to the latter, the LE is not typical of “patristic” writings since its author did not pen a novel homily, apology or treatise but, as is argued in chapter 4, finished an older work, namely Mark, that was perceived as incomplete. In addition, the author of the LE did not make use of Mark, Matthew, Luke and John in the way that Matthew and Luke cited large portions of Mark and “Q.” This author simply did not require all, or even most, of the material contained in these writings. As a result, the lesser quantity of detailed citation in the LE does not discount the concerted effort of this author to make Mark 16:9—20 resemble other written traditions.

The following analysis will consider what indications there are that the LE was composed with knowledge of one or more copies of the NT Gospels and Acts. The method of investigation to be followed here is different from that of Joseph Hug, who proceeded in order through parts of the LE’s twelve verses and considered each case independently of the others in this passage. In drawing his conclusions, Hug ignores all other similarities in the Longer Ending to, for example, the ends of Matthew and John. Instead of considering each possible parallel without reference to the others, the examples will be organized by the Gospels they most closely resemble. It will be argued that, although a number of individual examples suggest that the imitation of oral or written tradition could be possible, the cumulative effect of so many allusions to the same passages makes dependence upon actual copies of the NT Gospels the most likely explanation.

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58 See the analysis of the session (καὶ ἐκλάθομεν ἐκ δεξίων τοῦ θεοῦ, Mark 16:19c) in chapter 2.
60 In separating his analysis of the parts of the LE from one another, J. Hug removes the possibility that numerous individual probable cases of literary dependence could have the cumulative effect of supporting the inference of a general, albeit not extensive, pattern of borrowing from a certain writing.
61 J. Hug, La fin de l’évangile de Marc, pp. 172—173.
62 It is for this reason that I mention the possibility, for example, that John 21 was the source for common phrases like μονον τῆν ὁμοιομονοιαν in Mark 16:19 if such borrowings correspond to what has been demonstrated with regard to this author’s other uses of certain writings.
63 J. Hug argued, e.g., that Mark 16:9 was “an independent witness” because, in his view, within this verse only the verbs παντοτέο: and διοργάνωσαν support some connection with Matthew 28 and John 20 (La fin de l’évangile de Marc, pp. 163—164; cf. the above discussion of this point). Accordingly, Hug does not consider whether Mark 16:9—20 as a whole may reveal a pattern of borrowing from one or more writings like Matthew and John.
Below the parallels between the LE and other NT texts, which were summarized at the end of chapter 2, are organized according to their canonical order. The only exception is that the possible allusions to Acts follow those listed for the Gospel of Luke. Parallels to the Gospel of Mark are also listed to underscore the observation that the LE's author had access to the text to which he appended this ending.

Mark 1:1, 115, etc.
1:14, 14:28
2:13, 2:32, etc.
3:14
6:5, 6:13
Mark 1:16: tò eisagwghín
1:19: metà tò lapháa toú toú
1:20: tò lógo
toh
1:21: toû toû genwmôn
Mark 1:18: eis drôos tôn ejýchovn ejkthentos
1:22: ejkolouthés ejkthentos

The relevant terms in Mark 6:5 and 6:12–13, for example, do not occur in any of the other NT Gospels. Of the fourteen possible parallels to Mark 1:1–18, it has been argued that the intentional inclusion of Mark is most likely in eleven cases and plausible in the cases of Mark 9:1 (Mark 16:19: o oúmu), 14:17–18 (Mark 16:14: avtws évthwson) and 14:28 and 1:14 (Mark 16:14: metà tò lapháa toú). The influence of these fourteen passages from Mark on the LE may be highlighted with the following undeclined words:

14:9: avtws évthwson
16:13: avtws évthwson
16:14: avtws évthwson
16:24: avtws évthwson
16:25: avtws évthwson
16:26: avtws évthwson

The Use of the New Testament Gospels (and Acts) in the LE

Mark 16:13: ejkolouthés ejkthentos
16:14: avtws évthwson
16:18: ejkolouthés ejkthentos
16:20: ejkolouthés ejkthentos
16:21: ejkolouthés ejkthentos
16:22: ejkolouthés ejkthentos
16:23: ejkolouthés ejkthentos
16:26: ejkolouthés ejkthentos

The purpose of this analysis is to complement, without unnecessary repetition, the preliminary observations of chapter 2. Readers are referred to the discussions of the previous chapter, which are assumed in what follows.
1. Matthew

Parallels to three parts of Matthew 28 indicate that the LE’s author had access to a copy of this Gospel. The first of these concerns the response of the three women of Matt 28:8—10. The LE’s author did not have a choice with where he would begin his narrative. Mark 16:8 was by necessity the starting point, and arguably the reason, for appending this addition to the end of Mark. Unlike the fearful, silent women of Mark 16:8, the messengers in Matthew leave quickly to tell the disciples about the resurrection. The LE’s author, however, did not simply alter “Mark” in light of Matthew but wrote the first appearance (Mark 16:9—11) primarily in light of the example of Mary Magdalene in John 20. Especially since John 20 was the primary tradition utilized by the LE’s author, the absence of numerous details from Matthew 28 does not support the LE’s independence. The most likely explanation for this similarity between Mark 16:10 (πορευόμενοι) and Matt 28:7—8 (καὶ ἐκεῖ οὖν παρεξήγησαν αὐτῷ τον μαθητὴν αὐτοῦ) is that Matthew was found to contain a detail that complemented the account of John 20. Although the similarity of two words in Matthew 28 to Mark 16:10 does not by itself prove literary dependence, this observation does have merit in a larger, cumulative argument to this effect.

The discussion of τοῖς ἐνσέκα in chapter 2 noted that the usage in Mark 16:14 suggests a connection with Matt 28:16—17 as opposed to Lukan texts mentioning “the eleven.” Moreover, the context of Matt 28:16—20 parallels in the LE the sequence of Jesus’ appearance to the eleven followed by a commissioning.66

The most striking case for literary dependence arises from understanding how Mark 16:15—16 (πορευόμενοι εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἔπανα πνεύματος) revises Matt 28:19 in light of Luke 24:45—47. Instead of Matthew’s πορευόμενοι εἰς τὸν κόσμον, the command to “preach” (Mark 16:15) arises from Luke 24:47 (στρατηγοὺς... εἰς πάντα ἐκ τῆς θητείας). As noted earlier in this chapter, it is unnecessarily complicated, as Hug does,67 to posit a common tradition behind Matthew, Luke and the LE. It is also highly unlikely that an author only

65 Presupposed here is the argument offered below that the LE reflects literary dependence upon the Fourth Gospel.
66 See the critique of J. Hug (La finale de l’évangile de Marc, p. 168) above on this point.
67 With B. Helwege, who argues, “Die form des Missionsauftrages im Mk ist eine komplizierte und freie Wiedergabe von Mt 28, 19f, also wiederum ein Rammell, das . . . stellt die Abfolgung unter Zweifel” (“Der Schluß des Markusevangeliums [Mk 16, 9-20],” pp. 38, 39). See also the discussion of this point in chapter 2.
68 Again, J. Hug, La finale de l’évangile de Marc, p. 168.

fluenced by oral tradition would present such a fusion of details which Matthew and Luke do not share in common. Reliance upon the text of Matthew (and Luke) is the most adequate solution.

A final observation further supports the conclusion that the LE’s author borrowed from a copy of Matthew. All parallels to this Gospel are to material occurring after Mark 16:8, that is to Matt 28:8—20. The only part of Matt 28:8—20 not incorporated in some way into the LE is the plot to foil reports about the resurrection (Matt 28:11—15). This leaves Matt 28:8—10 and 16—20, which concern the obedience of the three women to relate the message of the resurrection, the appearance to the eleven and the great commission. No major part of these eight verses has been left out of the LE. Therefore, knowledge of a text of Matthew 28 influenced both word choices and the general structure of Mark 16:9—20. Although an oversimplification, a large part of the use of other Gospel texts by the LE’s author consists of (re-)inserting the element of disbelief into the LE’s Matthewic framework.69

2. Luke

With the exception of the LE’s parallels to Mark 1:1—16:8, the most compelling evidence for literary dependence is to be found with the Gospel of Luke. The reworking of passages in Luke before the post-resurrection narratives can be demonstrated in two cases and is plausible in another. First, the description of Mary Magdalene in Luke 8:2b is striking in comparison

69 On this point see the discussion of the LE’s macro-genre in chapter 4. The influence of Matthew on the LE may be summarized as follows:

(16:14) ἢ ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂ

(14:16) ἢ ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂ

(16:14) ἢ ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂ

(16:14) ἢ ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂν ἂ

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with that of Mark 16:9b, especially since these two passages are the only such description(s) of the exorcised Mary in early Christian literature:


The LE’s author is probably responsible for the only significant difference in wording: the change from ἔξελθεν to ἐκβῆλθεν reflects his desire to be consistent with the verb used also in Mark 16:17b (ἐν τῷ ἐναντίῳ τοῦ δασμοῦ ἁγγελικῆς). It is unnecessary to suggest the existence of a common written source behind these two verses, both because the existence of such a document is dubious and because other parallels in the LE to this Gospel point to the direct use of Luke.

As was observed in chapter 2, moreover, the narrative statement of the disciples’ mission in Mark 6:12—13 was influential in the portrayal of their activities in Mark 16:17—18 and 20. The use of Mark 6:12a explains the presence of ἔξελθεν in Mark 16:20a but cannot account for the adverb πανταχόσον, which occurs in Luke’s parallel account of the twelve disciples’ mission in (Luke 9:6). Such an interest in harmonizing details from parallel accounts points to an author who compared the presentation of Luke with that of Mark.

Another passage that might have influenced the LE is the ministry of the seventy disciples (Luke 10:1—24). When the seventy return to Jesus, they marvel that “even the demons submit to them in Jesus’ name” (Luke 10:17; cf. Mark 16:17b). Afterward Jesus replies:

ἐξέδωκαν τὸν Σατανᾶν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος ποιεῖν, ἵνα δοκήσῃ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκ τοῦ κρίνοντος τοὺς διδάσκαλους καὶ σπασίναι, καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν ἄνωνον τοῦ θύμου, καὶ σώζει τὸν τῶν θάνατον μέλει (Luke 10:18—19)

As is noted in chapter 2, the references to picking up snakes and drinking poison in Mark 16:18ab share numerous similarities with Luke 10:17—19. One difficulty with this comparison, however, is that there is no obvious reason why the LE’s author would have changed stoning on snakes (Luke 10:18) to picking them up (cf. John 3:14). This point will be discussed further in chapter 6.71

With regard to Luke’s post-resurrection narratives, Luke 24:9—12, like Matthew 28:8—10, offers an account of what happened to the women who visited Jesus’ tomb. Two details from the Lukean version suggest literary dependence, and a third is possible. The women returned from the tomb and ἀναστάτων τοῦ ἐντάχεια καὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς λοιποῖς (Luke 24:9). Luke states that the women reported to both the eleven disciples and “the rest” of the people. In the LE, however, the disciples and others who had been with Jesus (τοῖς μετ’ αὐτῶν γενομένοις πενθοῦσι καὶ κλαίοντες, Mark 16:10) first hear the report from Mary. Afterward, “the rest” (τοῖς μετ’ αὐτῶν γενομένοις μεταμετρότατοι, Mark 16:13) listen to the two people to whom Jesus appeared in 16:12. Unlike in Luke 24:9, the identity of “the rest” is not clear in Mark 16:13. Such a difference between Luke and the LE does not hurt the case for dependence and may, in fact, strengthen it. The LE’s author seems to have been aware of Luke’s construction (τοῖς ἐντάχεια καὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς λοιποῖς) and used the second part in Mark 16:13 without clarifying the identity of “the rest” relative to those mentioned in 16:10.72

Another indication that the LE’s author wrote in light of Luke 24:9—12 concerns the reaction of those who disbelieve the reports of the resurrection:

Luke 24:11: ἔθηκαν ἐπὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ τόλμησαν... καὶ τριβοῦσαν αὐτόν... Mark 16:11: ἐκείνων δακρυών τις ἔχει καὶ ἐδέχθη διά αὐτῆς πάθησιν... Mark 16:13b: ἀπέθανον ἐκτίσθησαν... Mark 16:14b: ἐκ τῶν ἐκτίσθησαν αὐτούν ἐκηρύσσουν ἔτσι κοίμησαν... The important difference between the LE and Luke is the use of the aorist tense rather than the imperfect. The imperfect tense in Luke seems intentional, indicating that in Luke 24:11 they “were not believing” at that time before Jesus’ appearance to them in 24:36. For his part, the author of the LE portrays a more definitive act of disbelief, which eventually earns Jesus’ rebuke in Mark 16:14. The difference in emphasis between the LE’s author and Luke does not detract from the observation that the disbelief of Mark 16:11 (cf. 16:13b, 14b) is likely to have been based upon Luke 24:9.73


71 An additional possible point of dependence on a part of Luke before the post-resurrection accounts occurs in Luke 6:25b. This woe (οἰκία, σπέρμα, λατρείαν) may have influenced the LE’s descriptions of the disciples who were to disbelieve Mary’s report as τοῖς μετ’ αὐτῶν γενομένοις πενθοῦσι καὶ...
In Luke the Emmaus narrative (24:13—35) follows directly on the heels of the reactions to the women’s report (Luke 24:9—12). It is probably no accident that certain elements of these Lukian narratives parallel the order of the LE’s first and second appearances. In chapter 2 it was argued that the LE’s author knew some form of Jesus’ appearance on the road to Emmaus. Key to this inference is the observation that alleged omissions by the LE’s author are less significant than the elements to which he does allude in the brief epistle of Mark 16:12 (μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα δύον αὐτῶν περιπατοῦν ἐν τῇ μορφῇ προσεμφάνεις τῷ αὐτῶν). The introductory transition (μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα) is redactional and probably reflects the arrangement of the LE’s author. Of the remaining eleven words in this verse, ten allude to the narrative of Luke 24:13—35. The first three of these words (δύον αὐτῶν) parallel the beginning of Luke’s account (καὶ ἀπὸ δύον αὐτῶν, Luke 24:13a).

Moreover, the two dative participles and adverbial prepositional phrase (περιπατοῦσιν . . . προσεμφάνεις τῷ αὐτῶν) parallel the detail that the men are on a journey (καὶ προσεμφάνεις εἰς τὴν κόμην . . . παραβρέσσων, Luke 24:13a, 28a). One could, however, argue that the change from κόμην to ἁμράν in the LE suggests the use of oral tradition or that this author paraphrases Luke’s text from memory. The difficulty with such an explanation is that it cannot account for the similarities to Luke 24:13 (δύον αὐτῶν ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ἁμράν ἔχουσα προσεμφάνεις εἰς τὴν κόμην). It is more probable that the change from journeying toward a certain “village” (Luke) to walking into the “country” (LE) reflects the editorial work of the LE’s author, who did not have space to relate the self-disclosure of Jesus that took place once the travelers had reached their destination in Luke 24:28—35. This author’s redactional activity also explains a final allusion to the Emmaus story. There was also not enough room in this brief epistle to capture Jesus’ initial secrecy and later self-disclosure in Luke 24:21. This is why the LE’s author alludes to the secrecy motif of this passage with ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ κόμῃ.

In addition, Luke’s description of the empty tomb may have also influenced another word choice in the LE. In Luke 24:23 they report that the women, who μὴ ἔχουσιν αὐτὸν καταφέρειν, ἰδοὺν ἔλεγον καὶ ὁμολαγοῦσιν κατὰ ἐκείνην ἀφάνειαν τῷ αὐτῶν τῶν φυλάκων. This description of Jesus as “living” appears also in Luke 24:5b and Acts 1:9, and may have influenced the formulation of Mark 16:11b: οὕτως οὗτος ἔδειξεν διὰ αὐτῆς τὴν ἀνακοίνωσιν.

Three other points of contact between Luke and the LE offer additional confirmation to the argument that the latter author knew and used a copy of the former’s work. These are referring to Jesus as ὁ κύριος, the introduction to Jesus’ final words in Luke, and the mention of preaching εἰς πάντα τῇ ἐθνί. First, in Luke 24:33—35 the two disciples, who had just realized that they had seen Jesus, return from the road to Emmaus to Jerusalem and report to the others. They refer to Jesus as ὁ κύριος (ὐμών ἔδειξεν ὁ κύριος, Luke 24:34), which is the same title used twice in Mark 16:19—20. As noted above, the use of ὁ κύριος is more prominent in the Fourth Gospel, especially John 20. Although the presence of ὁ κύριος in Luke 24:34 does not necessarily depend on Luke, it is plausible that the LE’s author was influenced by both writings. Second, as noted in chapter 2, both Mark 16:15 and Luke 24:46 happen to introduce Jesus’ final statement with ὁ κύριος ἐφή. As is also argued in chapter 2, Mark 16:15—16 (παραβρέσσως εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐξοντοῦσα κρυφόμενος) could reflect a revision of Matt 28:19 in light of Luke 24:44—45: κρυφόμενος . . . εἰς πάντα τῇ ἐθνί.

It is thus necessary to conclude that the LE’s author made use of a copy of Luke as he did with Matthew and Mark. Evaluating the LE on the basis of what gospel material its author included, rather than what he left out, constitutes an important difference between the analysis offered here and that of Joseph Hug. Before the passion narrative, the attention to detail in the descriptions of Mary Magdalene (Luke 2:2b) and the disciples preaching παντιστατόμος (Luke 9:6) is best explained in terms of an author who had access to a copy of Luke. In addition, the references to reporting τούτος λαοίς who disbelieved (φθειρόμενοι) stem from Luke 24:9—12. Furthermore, most every word of Mark 16:12 may be understood as either the redaction of the LE’s author or an epitome of the Emmaus story. Finally, the reference to Jesus as ὁ κύριος (Luke 24:34), identical introductions to Jesus’ final words (καὶ ἐφή εἰς πάντα τῇ ἐθνί, Luke 24:46) and mention of preaching εἰς πάντα τῇ ἐθνί suggest that the author of Mark’s Longer Ending stayed in close contact with Luke’s narrative until the very end. It now remains to consider whether this author had access to the continuation of Luke’s story in Acts.77

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74 Thus far every word of Mark 16:12, with the exception of the verb ἔδειξεν·, has been analyzed in terms of citations from and allusions to the Emmaus narratives and the redaction of the LE’s author. As noted above, it is possible that this word choice reflects the influence of John 21:14 (τότε ἦν ἐπὶ τὸν κομμικὸν ἑκατέρας τῶν κομμικῶν ἔχοντας ἔδειξεν·). The verb also parallels ἔδειξε in Mark 16:9, and thus probably reflects also the redactional arrangement of two parallel appearances (νν. 9—11, 12—13).

75 Luke 24:3b: τότε ἦν ἐπὶ τὸν κομμικὸν μετὰ τῶν κομμικῶν: Acts 1:3a: οἷς καὶ παραβρέσσων κατὰ τῶν κομμικῶν. This parallel will be discussed below in connection with Acts 1:2, 11 and 1:22.

77 The influence of the Gospel of Luke on the LE may be summarized as follows: (16:19) ἀνακοίνωσα δὲ τῷ κόσμῳ κατὰ πάντα τῷ κόσμῳ ἀνακοίνωσα διὰ τῆς ἡγεμονίας, καὶ ἐπὶ ἀνακοίνωσα κατὰ πάντα τῇ ἐθνί. (16:20) ἔκτην καὶ παραβρέσσων ἔδειξεν προφῆτα τοῖς πατέροις τοῖς πρόποις τῶν παιδίων τοῖς πατέροις.
3. Acts

The LE's portrayal of speaking in new languages and of Jesus' ascension and session suggests, but cannot prove, literary dependence on Acts. The discussion of the ascension in the LE in chapter 2 noted that Acts 1:2, 1:11 and 1:22 provide closer analogies to Mark 16:19b than other LXX or NT texts. Acts 1:11, like Luke 24:31, indicates that Jesus was taken up ely tais olypasi. Moreover, Acts 1:2 and 1:22 contain the asiri passive indicative form of diaphesmu, which also occurs in Mark 16:19b. Although the four words of Mark 16:19b (diaphesmu ely tais olypasi) do not occur together in Acts 1, the beginning of Luke's second volume is one of the most likely writing that the LE's author would have imitated.

As was also observed in chapter 2, speaking in "new" languages (glwstov xalaltrwstov kainov, Mark 16:17a) is a barax lexemenon in the NT. Two verses in Acts, however, parallel the use of an adjective modifying glwstov:

Acts 2:4: kai oun xalaltrwstov xalaltrwstov
Acts 2:11: xalaltrwstov xalaltrwstov xalaltrwstov

Knowledge of these constructions in Acts 2 would explain the jump from languages other than the speakers' mother tongue to the description of them as "new" languages in the LE.

Finally, chapter 2 concluded that Jesus' session in Mark 16:19c (kai ekathistov ev xalaltrwstov to 960) does not reflect imitation of any single NT passage. The LE's formulation is, nonetheless, understandable as a combination of Mark 14:62 and Acts 7:55—56. Only these two NT texts, like Mark 16:19c, agree with the LXX of Ps. 110:1 (109:1) in using the preposition ev (ex xalaltrwstov) as opposed to a locative dative (for example, in

4. John

Like what was observed in the cases of Matthew and Luke, the LE's literary dependence upon John is also readily discerned. If anything, the task with John is less complex because the material and emphases of the Fourth Gospel are naturally more distinctive and recognizable than those of the individual Synoptic evangelists. Ten parallels between John and the LE support the case for literary dependence.

78 There is no evidence to support a direct literary relationship between the LE's third sign of picking up snakes (Mark 16:18a) and the apostle Paul's viper bite (Acts 28:1—10). On this point see chapter 6.
Neither of these general similarities to the end of John necessarily demonstrates the use of any specific text or even literary dependence. They do, however, point to an author who was sufficiently acquainted with Johannean ideas to be able to reshape them for his own purposes.

A more sure sign of literary dependence exists in the parallels to Jesus’ appearance to Mary Magdalene. The Gospel of John differs from Matthew and Luke in that it reports an appearance to Mary alone (John 20:11—18; cf. John 20:1) instead of to Mary and two other women (Mark 16:1—8; Matt 28:1—8) or to “certain women” (Luke 23:50—24:8). The name Μαρίας η Μαργαρίτης could also come from Matthew and Luke but probably reflects an allusion to John 20:18. The LE’s author also seems to have modified the participle συγκατάθηκεν (John 20:18) to συγκατάθηκεν in Mark 16:10, perhaps in light of the indicative form (συγκατάθηκεν) in Matthew 28:8—11 and Luke 24:9. As observed in the statistical analysis of chapter 2, a particularly distinctive feature John and the LE share is how they use the pronoun ἐκείνη absolutely to denote “that woman.”

Such a use of ἐκείνη most probably stems from a deep familiarity with this Johannean passage.

The common occurrences of two transitions may suggest that the LE’s author sought to imitate even the most minute details of John’s narrative. The use μεν οὖν in the summary statement of John 20:30—31 and in the LE’s final sentence (Mark 16:19—20) could be intentional. In addition, although apparently a common construction at first glance, the transition between the first and second appearances in the LE (μεν οὖν οὕτως, Mark 16:12a) occurs elsewhere in the NT only in five other verses: Mark’s “Shorter Ending” (codex Bobiensis [W]), Luke 10:1, 184, John 19:38 and 21:1. In John 21:1, the function is identical to the LE, namely to provide a transition from one appearance to another.

There is an additional indication that the LE’s author knew an expanded edition of John which included John 21. The use of the verb φανερώω in connection with a post-resurrection appearance is extremely rare for any first- or second-century Christian author. Moreover, the aorist passive form (φανερῶθη) is identical in Mark 16:12, 16:14 and John 21:14. As is the case with the distinctive use of ἐκείνη, reliance on the text of John would explain the identical forms and uncommon use of this term. If, as seems
plausible, these allusions to John 21:1 and 21:14 are intentional, the LE’s author would then have written at a point after John 21 was added to John.

5. Conclusion with Regard to Literary Dependence

The numerous allusions to Matthew, Luke and John — especially to the ends of these writings — demonstrate that the author of the LE wrote with knowledge of copies of these writings. In the case of the NT book of Acts, literary dependence is probable but not certain because of the paucity of evidence. The fact that the author of Mark 16:9–20 wrote in conscious dependence on one or more MSS of the NT Gospels suggests a terminus post quem for the LE’s composition after these four Gospels had been collected and compared with one another, which probably would not have occurred earlier than 110–120 CE.

D. Mark’s Longer Ending as Forgery

Lest the explanations offered in this study for the compositional strategy employed by the LE’s author (chapter 2) and the literary dependence of the LE (chapter 3) be regarded as an isolated occurrence among Christian writings of the second and third centuries, this section seeks to discuss briefly certain writings that provide an analogy for what has been observed in the LE. Although both the genre and the problem perceived by the authors of the Epistle to the Colossians, 5 Ezra and certain other writings are different from those of the LE, the literary procedure is similar.

First, the Epistle to the Laodiceans provides an analogy to the LE in that both the occasion for writing and the method of composition parallel those which have been argued in the case of the LE. Whereas the LE’s author wrote Mark 16:9–20 after comparing the end of Mark (Mark 16:8) with the other NT Gospels, the author of the Epistle to the Laodiceans seems to have read the NT letter to the Colossians and noticed that “Paul’s” letter to the Laodiceans had not survived:

ἀποκορύφωσεν τοις ἐν Λαόδικῃς ἀδελφοῖς καὶ Νόμον καὶ τὴν καὶ ὀρθὸν ἀνθρώπου ἔκκλησιν καὶ Ἰσραήλ ἐπισκόπησεν τοὺς ἐν τῇ Λαόδικῃς ἐκκλησίας διάνοιας καὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν οὗτος ἔστη ἐν τῇ Λαόδικῃς ἐκκλησίας διάνοιας καὶ την ἐκκλησίαν ἔστη ἐν τῇ Λαόδικῃς ἐκκλησίας διάνοιας. (Col 4:15–16)

Seeking to eradicate this problem, this author composed a short letter from “Paul . . . to the brethren who are in Laodicea” (Ep. Laodiceans 1), which, in turn, is to be read among the Colossian congregation.

85 The term “forgery” denotes a particular method of composition, and is not intended to connote a value judgment concerning Mark 16:9–20 or other early Christian forgeries.

86 Accordingly, someone who esteemed at least some of Paul’s writings perceived a difficulty with not being able to account for a letter to the Laodiceans and, as a result, created another letter to take its place. In composing such a work, moreover, the author of the Epistle to the Laodiceans, like the author of the LE, did not begin de novo, but rather forged this letter using words and phrases from the NT Pauline corpus, primarily Philippians and Galatians. This forgery was so successful that it found its way into a number of NT MSS, thus indicating that it was, in fact, regarded by many as an authentic letter of the apostle Paul.

In light of the above considerations, W. Schneemelcher describes the Epistle to the Laodiceans as a “forgery.”87 This same designation aptly describes the LE, whose author used parts of the NT Gospels in forging an improved ending to the Second Gospel. Two differences between the LE and the Epistle to the Laodiceans should also be noted, however. The LE is an addition to an earlier work, namely Mark, but Laodiceans is a new composition. Moreover, whereas the latter author wrote with the intention of adding nothing of crucial significance to the picture of Pauline theology,88 the LE reflects the combination of both traditional motifs — for example, baptism as a requirement for salvation, ordinary believers as miracle-workers, picking up snakes and drinking a deadly substance. Such differences suggest that forgeries could serve a variety of purposes in early Christian writings.


88 On this point, see Paul A. Holloway, “The Apocryphal Epistle to the Laodiceans and the Partitioning of Philosophians,” NTS, 9 (1963) 321–325. W. Schneemelcher also notes that this author “seems to have gathered verses from Paul’s epistles, worded in general terms as possible, that with his patchwork he might close a gap in the Pauline corpus” (NTS, 2, 4; cf. pp. 45–46).

89 Note the discussion in chapter 4 of the early attestation to the LE by Justin Martyr, Tatian and Irenaeus. Moreover, it is likely that the Muratorian Canon refers to Epistle to the Laodiceans. If one accepts the earlier (i.e., late second-century) date for the Muratorian Canon, this would indicate a second-century date for the composition of Ep. Laodiceans. On these last two points, see W. Schneemelcher, NTS, 2, 442–45.

Schneemelcher writes of this letter, “It is a rather clumsy forgery, the purpose of which is to have in the Pauline corpus the Epistle of the Laodiceans mentioned in Col. 4:16” (NTS, 2, 44). In the case of Mark 16:9–20, the careful reworking of traditions by the LE’s author warrants characterizing the LE as a forgery, but not necessarily a clumsy one.

90 With Schneemelcher, NTS, 2, 244.
Second, the writing known as 5 Ezra may also be relevant to this discussion because its author forged a prophetic speech of Ezra by reworking passages from the LXX. The narrator in this writing identifies himself as Ezra, who "received the command of the Lord on the mountain Horeb that I should go to Israel" and states that, "when I came to them, they rejected me and received not the commandment of God." 99 Ezra's extended prophetic speech at the beginning of 5 Ezra is not a novel composition but consists of a reworking of OT passages, which this Christian author uses to criticize Jews of his own day. 100 Hugo Duensing and Aurelio de Santos Otero concur that the opening section of 1:4—2:9 is "nothing but a mosaic of innumerable OT passages." 101 Probable allusions to Luke 16:29, Rev 22:2 and Matt 7:7 indicate that this prophetic rebuke reenacts the Lord that has rejected Israel and given "the kingdom" to Jews and others who identify themselves as Christian. Graham Stanton rightly criticizes attempts to understand 5 Ezra as a writing that was originally composed by a Jew and later redacted by a Christian. 102 Accordingly, a Christian author, who esteemed and borrowed extensively from the LXX, wrote 5 Ezra.

It is uncertain, however, whether this writing was originally an independent composition or an addition to 4 Ezra. The latter option is perhaps more likely, since it is hard to imagine someone writing a document as short as 5 Ezra to be read by itself without reference to a narrative like that of 4 Ezra. With regard to the question of this writing's origin, then, 5 Ezra probably also merits comparison with the LXX in that it was composed by an author who wished to make an addition to 4 Ezra, in part through the reworking of OT passages. To summarize, it is probable that 5 Ezra was written as an addition to 4 Ezra. The Christian author of this writing composed Ezra's prophetic speech against Israel primarily out of passages from the Jewish scriptures. These similarities in a text that was probably not written later than the end of the second century 103 support the observation that this author's literary procedure should also be labeled as forgery.

Third, this discussion of forgery in early Christian literature should not overlook the fact that, already within the NT, the reuse of Pauline materials likely played a role in the composition of both 2 Thessalonians and Ephesians. 104 Fourth, the same method of composition may also apply to 3 Corinthians, another pseudonymous writing attributed to the apostle Paul. Parts of this second-century writing seem to reflect the author's intent to imitate material in other Pauline letters. 105 Fifth, two third-century Christian writings, The Martyrdom of Marian and James (especially 6–8) and The Martyrdom of Monnianus and Lucius (especially 1–11), reflect "the deliberate...

99 5 Ezra 2:33. ET: Hugo Duensing and Aurelio de Santos Otero, NTApe, 2.642—646.
100 G. Stanton wrote, "The replacement of Israel by the 'coming people' is the main theme of 5 Ezra." (5 Ezra," p. 70).
101 H. Duensing and A. de Santos Otero explain, "No Biblical citations and references are given for the following section (1:4—2:9), for the text is nothing but a mosaic of innumerable OT passages." Cf. G. Stanton, who notes that about "half" of 5 Ezra "is taken up with a mosaic of numerous Old Testament passages." (5 Ezra," p. 79). At the beginning of the passage which concerns this discussion (1:4—2:9), the prophet claims to relate "the word of God which came to Ezra, the son of Chidzai, in the days of Nebochadnezzar..." (1:4). The prophet is to make known to the "people their misdeeds" and that they have "forgotten" the Lord and "sacrificed to strange gods." (1:5—6). The people's stubbornness after the Exodus and the appropriation of the promised land are emphasized in 1:7—80. Afterward is mentioned the promise of judgment in that the Lord will give their "dwelling to a people which shall have no name" because the covenant people have "slain" the Lord's prophets (1:50) and burnt their bodies in pieces (1:52). There seems to be little hope when the prophet instructs the "wicked city" to remember what the Lord "has done to Sodom and Gomorrah" (2:8). The conclusion stemming from this message of references to the Jewish scriptures is that the Lord instructs Ezra to "tell my people that I will give them the kingdom of Jerusalem which I would have given to Israel." (2:10).
102 Stanton writes, "The 'Jewish' sections and the allegedly 'Christian' interpolations dovetail together so neatly that 5 Ezra has undoubtedly been written by a Christian who is deeply indebted to the Old Testament and to later apocalyptic themes." ("Ezra," p. 68). It would thus follow that the author of 5 Ezra is at the opposite end of the theological spectrum from Marcus."
intention . . . to emulate the qualities of the Passio Perpetuae et Felicitas,” specifically the visions recorded in Perpetua and Felicita. Of particular interest in these last examples is the application of traditional material to similar contexts: the heavenly revelations, which once encouraged the martyr Perpetua, subsequently came to be applied to depictions of the executions of other believers. Sixth, of related interest is the fact that an anonymous author composed an additional conclusion for The Martyrdom of Montanus and Lucius (12–23). Seventh, a secondary ending also survives for The Martyrdom of Saint Crispina and records the date (December 5) of Crispina’s martyrdom, a detail not present in the original account. It thus follows that the forgoing of writings out of esteemed texts was not an isolated occurrence in the early church but describes aptly the Epistle to the Laodiceans, 5 Ezra, Mark 16:9–20 and probably a number of other early Christian writings as well.

E. The LE as a Witness to the NT Gospels in the Second Century

Certain implications of this chapter’s discussions of literary dependence and forgery become evident when one considers the LE relative to Helmut Koester’s characterization of “differences between a second-century user of a Gospel and a fourth- or fifth-century quotation in a Church Father.” At the outset of his essay, Koester lists three such distinctions:

1) Before 200 CE, the Gospels were usually transmitted separately and not “available as part of the four-Gospel canon.”
2) “In the later period, the Gospels were usually considered holy scripture; no such respect was accorded them in the earliest period.”
3) “Beginning only with the third century can we assign quotations to certain text types . . . .”

This chapter’s investigation of the LE’s dependence on the four NT Gospels calls for caution in light of the the first, comparison of the NT Gospels and the decision by the LE’s author that the end of Mark was deficient were only possible at a time when the four Gospels had been collected and compared with one another. The Longer Ending thus offers an exception to Koester’s first generalization that these four Gospels were usually transmitted separately in the second century.

As Paul Rohrbach argued on different grounds over a century ago, it also follows that the LE points to the existence of a four-Gospel canon. This conclusion stands in agreement with Martin Hengel’s assessment that the LE “and the Epistula Apostolorum . . . are thus probably the earliest Christian texts to presuppose all the Gospels and Acts.”

Furthermore, the fact that additions to Mark were made — that is, the LE and the Shorter Ending, not to mention the interpolation following Mark 16:14 preserved in Codex Pecianus (W, 032) — both supports and calls for a modification of Koester’s second point concerning the respect that was allegedly not accorded to the NT Gospels in the second century. On the one hand, Koester’s observation is valid in that the Gospel of Mark was not considered “holy scripture” in the sense that it could never be changed or augmented by someone like the author of the LE. On the other hand, the consistent effort of this author to imitate the NT Gospels bespeaks a high respect for these four writings. It also suggests that this author, like the author of Mark’s Shorter Ending, considered the Gospel of Mark valuable enough to be improved in order to meet the needs of his and future generations. As a result, it is inaccurate to generalize, as Koester does, that “no such respect was accorded” to the NT Gospels “in the earliest period” before 200 CE.
Finally, for all that has been learned in chapters 2 and 3 about the strategy with which the LE’s author wrote, there remains much to discover with regard to the distinctive elements of these twelve verses, which yield additional clues about the person who wrote this addition to Mark. Accordingly, the next four chapters will address specific elements of the LE within the context of Christianity in the mid-second century. The following chapter treats the questions of the LE’s date and origin and compares the parts and the whole of Mark 16:9—20 with analogous literary forms in both the NT and in other early Christian writings. Chapter 5 takes up the issue of miracles and mission in Christian writings of the first three centuries, and the final two chapters discuss the anomalous miracles involving picking up snakes (chapter 6) and drinking a deadly substance (chapter 7) in their history-of-religious contexts.

because no second-century Christian author reflects a view of scripture like those represented in later centuries, there thus must have been no such concept in the second century. It is correct to observe a difference but problematic to prejudge the views of any period (e.g., the second century) by the standards of a later situation (e.g., the fourth or the fifth century).

96 See the Epilogue for a discussion for what can (and cannot) be known about the author of the LE. How this author, separate from the Gospel of Mark, might have written his own presentation of the passion and post-resurrection appearances or of the Christian mission remains a somewhat open, and probably an unanswerable, question. The findings of chapters 2 and 3 provide only certain clues. The attempt to improve Mark, for example, indicates a high regard for this writing and an effort to preserve its influence. The fact that the author of the LE wrote Also in light of the other NT Gospels indicates a decided preference for these writings as opposed to others. Of course, accepting a text as authoritative neither implies a comprehensive understanding of it nor guarantees a commitment to adhere rigidly to the emphases of its contents.

Chapter 4

Questions of Origin and Genre:
Comparing the Parts and Whole of the Longer Ending
with Analogous Literary Forms

Because preceding research has so often been unnecessarily burdened by attempts to analyze the large amount of both internal and external evidences within the natural editorial confines of a single article or monograph, this study will restrict itself to a form- and redaction-critical analysis of the internal linguistic features of the text.1

A. Introduction

In the last chapter it was argued that numerous parts of Mark’s Longer Ending reflect not only knowledge, but also a conscious reworking, of various passages from each of the NT Gospels. As Fred Francis and Diosizio Miguez, among others, have observed, such a history-of-traditions analysis of any passage represents only an initial step in addressing its origin and distinct message.2 This chapter will discuss the date and origin of the LE, as well as the literary genre of the parts and the whole of the passage.

Concerning the first part of this inquiry, the fact that this passage was written after and in imitation of the NT Gospels leaves open a number of possibilities concerning its origins. For example, someone in the second century may have taken Mark 16:9—20 from another writing and appended it to the end of Mark. This explanation will be referred to here as the “fragment theory” because those who hold this position view the LE as a piece of another lost text that was secondarily appended to Mark. In 1986 Paul Mirecki offered a variation on this theory, arguing that Mark 16:9—20 reflects an earlier narrative taken over from a writing which a later author


significantly reworked and augmented.² But the contrary will be argued here, namely that the LE is a novel, unified composition written for the purpose of completing the narrative left off at Mark 16:8.

Having treated these points pertaining to the LE’s origin, the second main part of this chapter will both discuss the date of the LE and argue that Justin Martyr offers the earliest external attestation to this writing. The LE should thus be dated to ca. 120—150 CE, between the likely point at which the NT Gospels were collected³ and the time of Justin’s First Apology. In light of the possibility that Justin also knew the existence of the Acts of Pilate (a second-century writing that cites Mark 16:15—18), the LE’s terminus ante quem could be pushed back to ca. 140 CE. Aspects of literary genre will be discussed in the final sections of this chapter.

B. The Compositional Unity of Mark 16:9—20

1. The Fragment Theory and the Longer Ending

Henry Barclay Swete’s comments on the LE typify its characterization as a fragment taken from an earlier text and secondarily appended to the Gospel of Mark.⁴ Discussing the first appearance to Mary Magdalene in Mark 16:9, and also referring to the passage as a whole, Swete writes,

³ Paul Mirockí, “Mark 16:9-20: Composition, Tradition and Redaction,” esp. pp. 33—34. On his argument see chapter 1, as well as the discussion below in this chapter.

⁴ Most scholars date the Gospel of Mark to 69/70 CE and place Matthew within a generation of Mark around 85 CE. Due to the discovery of the John Rylands papyrus fragment (Pap. 50), most scholars date the Gospel of John to ca. 90—100. On this last point see Barnabas Lindars, Behind the Fourth Gospel (Studies in Creative Criticism 3; London: SPCK, 1971) 12. On the date of Mark, see Adela Yarbrough Collins, The Beginning of the Gospel: Prolegomena of Mark in Context (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 81—83. For the date of John, see Robert M. Gagné, The Formation of the New Testament (New York: Harper & Row, 1965) 98—99; F. Lamar Cribbs, “Reassessment of the Date of Origin and the Destinatarion of the Gospel of John,” JBL 89 (1970) 35—55; cf. George A. Young, “The Date and Purpose of the Gospel of John,” JETS 8 (1965) 82—83, esp. p. 83; Graham N. Stanton, “The Fourthfold Gospel,” NTS 43 (1997) 317—346. The most independent variable in this equation is Luke, which is not mentioned in the surviving fragments of Papyrus (e.g., Eusebius, Hist. eccl. 3.39.14—17) and could date anywhere from ca. 85—110 CE. It is not the purpose of this discussion to offer an argument concerning the date of Luke relative to the time of the LE’s composition. At present it can be noted that, regardless of Luke’s date of composition, there is no evidence that Luke and the other NT Gospels were collected and compared with one another before ca. 110—120. As noted in chapter 3, the Longer Ending is an early, not the earliest, witness to a collection of the four NT Gospels.

Ⅲ H. B. Swete, The Gospel According to St Mark, pp. 399—406. For others who maintain this position (e.g., H. Alford, B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort) see chapter 1.

The sequence (after Mark 16) is suddenly broken, and Mary Magdalene, who is one of the three women mentioned in Mark xvii. 4, becomes, as in John, the subject of a distinct narrative which in form at least is not consistent with the Markan tradition. She is introduced to the reader, as if she had not been named before (Mark Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁ Ναζαρηνός); alone of the three she sees the Lord, and announces the Resurrection to the Eleven; and an explanation is given of this unexpected turn in the events. Lastly, the paragraph has evidently been detached from some document in which the Lord has been the subject of the preceding sentence; in its present position both Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ is imperatively required...⁶

Swete neither discusses the nature of this unknown document nor argues for the probability of its existence. He does, however, offer two noteworthy arguments in support of the fragment theory: the author of a novel passage would not have reintroduced Mary Magdalene after Mark 16:8, and the beginning participle διανοοῦντας assumes an earlier statement, at present omitted from the fragment, in which the subject, Jesus, would have been explicitly named.⁷ Each of these arguments will be addressed in turn.⁸

First, the reintroduction of Mary Magdalene in Mark 16:9 does not support the fragment theory. One reads in the Gospel of Mark that “Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where the body was laid” (Mark 15:47) and that “Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome brought spices, so that they might go and anoint him” (Mark 16:1). Whatever its origin, the addition of Mark 16:9 yields a narrative in which this particular woman is mentioned for the third time in ten verses of “Mark” (Mark 15:47, 16:1 and 16:9). The argument that Mark 16:9 must therefore stem from another document does not necessarily follow because the LE’s first verse claims simply that Jesus first appeared only to this Mary and not to the other women mentioned earlier in Mark 15:47 and 16:1. As argued in chapter 3, Mark 16:9 is based upon other written sources (cf. John 20:11—18, Luke 8:2b), but this source-critical observation does not ipso facto demonstrate the validity of the fragment theory. As a result, the fragment theory is not necessary to explain either the additional mention of Mary Magdalene’s name or the description of her as one formerly possessed by demons in Mark 16:9.


⁷ Questionable in Swete’s argument is the assertion that the “form” of Mark 16:9—10 “is not consistent with the Markan tradition” (The Gospel According to St Mark, p. 399). Also dubious is his statement that this turn in the events is “unexpected” and receives “no explanation.” With regard to the latter, numerous aspects of Matthew 28, Luke 24 and John 20, passages whose authorship is not questioned, could also be regarded as equally surprising and unexplained.

⁸ The fragment theory also bears upon the question of the date of the LE. In the absence of an unambiguous citation of the LE as a part of Mark, Swete posits that authors like Justin Martyr “may have known the fragment in another connection” (The Gospel According to St Mark, p. 16).
Second, Swete claims that at the beginning of the LE "the sequence is suddenly broken" and that the name "ο Ἰησοῦς Κυρίου" is imperatively required. On the one hand, it corrects that the subject of the sentence does switch without warning from Mark 16:8 to 16:9. In Mark 16:8, of course, it is the women, first mentioned in Mark 16:1, who ουδεὶς οὐδὲν εἶπαν οὖν οὗτος γάρ. In Mark 16:9 δεῖ νῦν γάρ... αὐτός alerts the reader that Jesus is the subject of the sentence. Once again, however, it cannot be maintained that the unspecified subject of Mark 16:9 demonstrates the fragment theory. It would not be necessary for Mark or another writer to mention Jesus by name, since the announcement of the resurrection in Mark 16:6 leaves no doubt about who is risen. Mark 16:9 may be aptly described as an abrupt transition, but such an observation does not constitute an argument concerning the origin of this passage.

In addition, another of Swete’s remarks illustrates the difficulty of maintaining the fragment theory. Like many commentators, Swete observes that the narrative of Mark 16:14—18 shifts abruptly from Jesus’ rebuke of the disciples (16:14) to the commission to preach to all creation (16:15—18). He writes concerning the opening statement of verse 15,

The words are in strange contrast to the stern reproof of the previous verse; the extreme compression which the writer of the fragment practices has led him to connect two occasions which were separated by more than a week.

In both cases (Mark 16:8—9 and 16:14—15), however, the problem is the same: Mark 16:9—20 moves rapidly from one topic to another without the transitions one finds in many other Gospel narratives. In contrast with

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10 See the discussion of δεῖ νῦν γάρ... αὐτός in chapter 2. Swete’s observation does support this argument against the authenticity of the LE, namely that the author of the Second Gospel did not continue Mark 16:8 with Mark 16:9. See also the critique of Westcott and Hort on this point in chapter 1.
11 Contrast William Farmer, who, in defending the Markan character of the unexpressed subject, writes that “it is not unusual for Mark on occasion to use sparingly the name of Jesus and its equivalents” (*The Last Twelve Verses*, pp. 83—84). Although his point is probably defensible, the examples Farmer cites from Mark are questionable. He offers Mark 1:21, 1:29—2:4 and 3:8—5:20 to argue that Mark used unexpressed subjects. The first (1:21) is too short to be of use in comparing the unnamed Jesus of Mark 16:7—18. Mark 1:29—2:4 is not directly relevant because Jesus is part of the plural subject of ὁ θεός (1:29) and referred to (ὡς... λέγει) just before the participial ἐπηρεάσθη ἄνθρωπος in 1:31. The reader is never uncertain when Mark refers to Jesus without naming him in the remaining verses (1:22—2:4). The same is true for 3:5—5:20, where it is 3:7 that begins a new section and names Jesus. Compare also Farmer’s second example, which ends with 2:4 in the middle of a paragraph just before Jesus is named in 2:5.

Swete’s earlier discussion of this “fragment,” which does not follow smoothly after Mark 16:8, his comment on Mark 16:15 explains both difficulties in light of the compositional technique employed by the author of the passage. In the case of Mark 16:9, it is possible, but unnecessary, to call on the fragment theory to explain the shift in subject matter after Mark 16:8. When one observes the same difficulty in Mark 16:14—15, however, the argument for construing the LE as a unified fragment which originally belonged to another writing is weakened significantly. To be consistent, one should acknowledge the following two possibilities: either the LE reflects the combination of two (or more) fragments secondarily strung together to complete Mark’s Gospel, or the rapid changes in both Mark 16:9 and 16:15 stem from the work of a single author who deliberately wrote, to use Swete’s words, with “extreme compression.” As a result, Swete’s arguments do not support the fragment theory. Perhaps ironically, Swete maintained that the Shorter Ending, but not the Longer Ending, was written with the purpose of continuing the narrative of Mark 16:8:

As to the origin of this ending [i.e., the SE] there can be little doubt. It has been written by someone whose recension of the Gospel ended at ὁ θεός ἐπηρεάσθη ἄνθρωπος, and who desired to soften the harshness of so abrupt a conclusion, and at the same time to remove the impression which it leaves of a failure on the part of Mary of Magdala and her friends to deliver the message with which they had been charged.

According to Swete, then, only an individual like the author of the SE could have written such an addition to Mark. Because, in Swete’s view, Mark 16:9, which focuses only on Mary Magdalene, does not discuss the plight of all three women, the LE must have been lifted from another document and secondarily placed after Mark 16:8. Such reasoning, of course, is not compelling because of Swete’s *a priori* assumption that a secondary addition to Mark 16:8 would necessarily follow the same narrative left off by the evangelist himself.

A more satisfactory explanation for the sudden shift introduced by Mark 16:9 may be offered in light of the way in which the LE’s author made use of the NT Gospels. The first appearance (Mark 16:10) indicates that the

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15 H. B. Swete, *The Gospel According to St Mark*, p. 404. Swete continues the statement cited above as follows: “Terminated as they were, [the author of the SE] adds, they recovered themselves sufficiently to report to Peter the substance of the Angel’s words. After this the Lord Himself appeared to the Apostles and gave them their orders to carry the Gospel from East to West; and these orders, with His assistance, were loyally followed.”
women's reaction to the message of the οὖν τοῦ δικαιοσύνης of Mark 16:5—7 is not the end of the story for all three of these women. The person who added the LE does not relate what eventually became of Mary the mother of James or of Joanna (cf. Mark 16:11), but does report that at least Mary Magdalene followed through with the commission to “tell his disciples and Peter” about the resurrection (cf. Mark 16:7). Abandoning the line of thought expressed at the end of the Second Gospel, this author begins again with the message of the resurrection (δεύτερας . . . ἐν χωρίῳ) and relates in summary form the appearance of Jesus to Mary in John 20:11—18.

With more caution than Swete, Eugen Hezilo also defends the thesis that the LE, before it was added as an ending to Mark, “may have been a teaching tool (Lernaßck) for the baptized [people] of the missionary community.” 16 In support of this claim, Hezilo highlights the LE’s didactic function by comparing it to passages like 1 Cor 15:3—7, Phil 2:6—11 and Rom 10:17. The problem with this proposition about the LE’s origin is that it poses a false dichotomy between apologetic and missionary motives, on the one hand, and a perceived need to complete the end of Mark, on the other. Especially when it is granted that the NT evangelists themselves wrote at times with overt, apologetic purposes, Hezilo offers no reason to justify the conclusion that the author who wrote with such didactic and apologetic intentions and the person who later added a section of this otherwise unknown tractate to the Gospel of Mark must have been two distinct individuals.

More recently, Rudolf Pesch has offered a nuanced version of the fragment theory. 18 Although he recognizes the presence of Markan elements in the LE, Pesch argues that Mark 16:9—20 was not intended as a conclusion to Mark. 19 In addition to the reasons offered by H. B. Swete, Pesch offers another argument in support of this thesis. Like a number of NT scholars, Pesch is convinced that an earlier written tradition (Fürsage) underlies the end of Matthew. In the case of Luke 24 and Acts 1, his judgment is the same. Pesch also explains the origin of the LE in an analogous manner: the LE’s similarities to other Gospels may be explained by these authors’ use of common traditional material. 20 For example, he writes, “Mk 16, 14—20 wäre dann zumindest zum Teil gewissermaßen ein Excerpt dieser zusammenhängenden Tradition” that Luke used in Luke 24 and Acts 1. 21 To Pesch, the use of, for example, pre-Lukan tradition demonstrates that the LE is either an excerpt from a pre-existing Easter narrative or a compilation of various Easter traditions, which was secondarily attached to the end of Mark. 22 Pesch’s argument begins to fall apart when he maintains that, because the LE’s author made use of traditional material, he could not have originally intended for this material to appear at the end of Mark. This, of course, does not follow. In fact, Pesch seems to maintain that the very same means of composition followed by Matthew and Luke — incorporating traditional materials when writing an ending to a Gospel — could not also have been utilized by the author of the Longer Ending. At this point Pesch also encounters the same objections which have been offered above to the argument of H. B. Swete. Even if the LE’s author made use of the same traditional material as Matthew, Luke and other evangelists did, such an explanation clarifies neither why he wrote Mark 16:9—20 nor the type of writing which originally contained this passage before it was subsequently joined to the end of Mark.

In light of the above critique of Swete’s, Hezilo’s and Pesch’s arguments, it follows that the thesis that the LE reflects a single, continuous fragment lifted

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16 Hezilo writes, “... unser Text ursprünglich, bevor er dem Mk als Schluß beigefügt worden ist, den apologetischen und missionarischen Zweck der Gemeinde entsprechend ein Lehr- bzw. Lernaßck für die Täuflinge der Missionengemeinde gewesen sein mag” (“Der Schluß des Markusvangeliums [Mk 16, 9—20],” pp. 88—89).


19 R. Pesch, Das Markusvangelium, 2.544—548. Summarizing his argument that, since Mark 16:9—20 does not reflect the redactional features of Matthew, Luke and John (2.544—546), the LE’s author wrote independently of the NT Gospels, Pesch writes, “Der teilweise kompliatorische Text scheint von den kanonischen Evangelien literarisch unabkömmig zu sein, vermittelt aber dem Kern des in ihm tradierten bzw. verarbeiteten Übergangswesens” (2.544). The validity of such an objection to literary dependence was called into question in the previous chapter. Of primary concern here is the incoherence of Pesch’s thesis with regard to the origin of the LE. One the one hand, Pesch recognizes

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20 Pesch writes, “... daß der Text offensichtlich nicht erst als Abschluß des MkEv verfaßt ist, sondern (in vielerlei auch Teil anderer Gestalt) wohl schon zuvor als Kompliation oder Excerpt von Österländung zeugen” (Das Markusvangelium, 2.546, emphasis original; cf. 2.547).

21 Pesch writes, “... daß der Text offensichtlich nicht erst als Abschluß des MkEv verfaßt ist, sondern (in vielerlei auch Teil anderer Gestalt) wohl schon zuvor als Kompliation oder Excerpt von Österländung zeugen” (Das Markusvangelium, 2.546, emphasis original; cf. 2.547).
from another writing is unnecessary, inconsistent and unproved. Pesch’s thesis that the use of traditional sources by the LE’s author excludes the possibility that Mark 16:9–20 was written as a continuation of Mark 16:8 is also untenable. The following section turns to the question of the passage’s compositional unity.

2. Literary Argument for the Unity of Mark 16:9–20

Although there are many problems with Swete’s arguments for the fragmentary theory, he rightly describes the LE as “a carefully constructed passage,” whose transitions “mark the successive points of juncture.” It will be argued here that Mark’s Longer Ending shows numerous indications of a single author’s redactional organization. This assessment agrees with Gerhard Hartmann and Eugen Helze, whose arguments have been sharply criticized in recent decades. The most prominent signs that a single author wrote the LE occur in the three appearances of Jesus, but additional indications are also evident in the commissioning and in the reference to the ascension and departure.

One recent attempt at clarifying how the LE’s author organized this passage was offered by Joseph Hug, who finds in the LE four distinct sections, which he derives from the following temporal indicators:

v. 9, πρῶτον  v. 12a, μετά  v. 14a, δεύτερον  v. 19a, μετά

He thus divides the LE into the following sections: vv. 9—11, 12—13, 14—15 and 18–20. In partial agreement with Hug, I follow Eugen Helze in regarding the first three of these as indicators of the beginning of new sections. Hug’s designation of verses 14–18 as a single unit, however, is less helpful in that the connection of vv. 15–18 to v. 14 is somewhat superficial, and vv. 15–18 become curiously separate from vv. 19–20. Other reasons Hug offers in support of this fourfold division do not strengthen his argument and, on the contrary, uncover additional weaknesses in his explanation.

Nonetheless, Hug rightly recognizes that the LE’s author connected the three post-resurrection appearances with the following transitions: πρῶτον (v. 9), μετὰ δὲ ταύτα (v. 12a) and δεύτερον (v. 14a). In addition, Paul Mirecki notes that the message of the resurrection is proclaimed on three different occasions: Ἰησοῦς οὖν προεύρεται τοῖς ἀποκριθέντες (v. 10a), ἔκεισθι δὲ ὁ σταυρὸς τοῦ φυλακής (v. 13a) and ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἐξελθὸν εἰς τὴν ἀνάστασιν (v. 20a). The threefold occurrence of τοὺς ἀποκριθέντας in each of the appearances may also constitute a redactional characteristic of this author:

Mary reports τοὺς μετὰ τοῦτον γενομένου θαύματος καὶ καθαρίσεως (v. 10);
Jesus appears δὲ ὁ σταυρὸς τοῦ φυλακής... τοῖς ἀποκριθέντας (v. 12);
and also manifests himself ἐκείνος ὁ σταυρὸς τοῦ φυλακής (v. 14).

At the very least, these observations suggest that there are grounds for regarding verses 9–14 as a single compositional unit.

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27 Hug does not mention that the words from verses 9 and 19, which appear in seventh and sixth position respectively, do not, in fact, introduce these verses. The first three divisions are useful for vv. 9–14, but his fourfold division is less helpful.

28 In support of this fourfold division, J. Hug identifies three additional characteristics, which, he claims, are present in each section: the initiative of Jesus; the response of the messengers to Jesus; and the reaction of those who hear the message (La finale de l’évangile de Marc, pp. 35–36). On the contrary, each of these three indications points to a trinitary arrangement. For example, the three appearances of Jesus (vv. 9, 12 and 14) stand together but are not parallel to the ascension and session (v. 19). Second, the departure of the messengers (vv. 11, 13, 20) belong together but not with the command to preach (v. 15). Finally, in the LE there are only two (not three or four) explicit reactions to the message, namely the two cases of diakolon (v. 11, 13); mention of diakolon (v. 14) and the dualistic alternative of vv. 16 do not fall into the same category. Part of the rhetorical effect of the LE is that it does not specify the third response to the messengers of v. 20. Thus, according to all four of Hug’s criteria, the proposition for a fourfold division of the LE is not compelling.


30 P. Mirecki calls attention to “the triple presence of the introductory ἐκκλήσεως, the verb of movement... and the verb of announcing...” (“Mark 16:9–20: Composition, Tradition and Redaction,” p. 28–29).

31 The parenthesis is admittedly not as striking here. In the first appearance those who hear the message of the resurrection from Mary are not described (v. 10). In the second and third appearances, however, those to whom Jesus appears do receive such a description (vv. 12, 14). The distinctiveness of the first appearance may be explained in light of the fact that Mary has already been described as παρεῳκότως ταύτα (v. 9); thus, the participants in v. 10 modify those to whom the appearance was related rather than Mary, to whom Jesus appeared.
Second, another reconstruction of the LE’s textual history was offered by Paul Mirecki. Mirecki argues that the underlying “core” of Mark 16:9–20 consists of a document which originally comprised the threefold appearance sequence followed by a brief commissioning and the departure on a mission (that is, Mark 16:9a, 10–15, 20a). Verses 9b, 16–19 and 20b were added at a later point and distorted the structure of the original “tripartite” post-resurrection appearance scenes. Mirecki divides the final, expanded form of LE into the following eight subsections: vv. 9–11, 12–13, 14–15, 16, 17–18, 19, 20a and 20bc.

The tension one might perceive between Mark 16:14 and 16:15 does not factor into Mirecki’s history-of-traditions reconstruction. According to him, with the exception of Mark 16:9b, the points at which the LE’s parallel core narrative was redacted and, as a result, distorted follow after Mark 16:15. These are: the alternative (v. 16), the list of signs (vv. 17–18), the ascension and session (v. 19) and the portrayal of the risen Jesus as the one who grants these signs (v. 20b). This chapter’s analysis agrees with Mirecki both that Mark 16:9–14 reflects a compositional unity, and that the departure on the mission (v. 20a) assumes the commissioning of verse 15. To his credit, Mirecki is consistent in that he excludes the two references to miraculous signs in vv. 17–18 and in 20b from what he considers to be the earliest recoverable form of the LE.

Nonetheless, there are numerous problems with Mirecki’s divisions of the passage as well as his history-of-traditions analysis of the passage as a whole. For example, it is far from certain that the beginning of Jesus’ commissioning (v. 15) must be connected to the rebuke of v. 14 and divorced from the continuation of the statement in vv. 16–18. In addition, it is also questionable that v. 20a must originally have been joined directly to an earlier form of v. 15 rather than to vv. 16–19. Furthermore, Mirecki does not offer a persuasive argument that v. 20b is a later addition to 20a. After rightly commenting on the threefold appearances (vv. 9, 12, 14) and the threefold reporting of the resurrection (vv. 10, 13, 20), he too quickly infers

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32 Mark 16:19–20: ἰδαν αὐτῶν τὸν θάνατον μετὰ τοῦ λαλῆσθαι αὐτῷ ἐνεκύρος ἐπὶ τοὺς σκότους καὶ ἐκβάλειν ἐκ τῶν σκοτεινῶν τοῦ θανότος. 20 Καὶ εἴδον τὰς ἀγαθὰς ἡμῶν παρὰ τόν θάνατον ἐν τῇ φωσιν καὶ τὴν ἀνάµικρουσιν ἐκ τῶν σκοτεινῶν τοῦ θανότον.

33 Note also that one early Christian writer noticed this sudden shift after Mark 16:14 and made an addition to the LE in order to smooth over this transition. This occurred at or before the time of Jerome (contra Pelagianos 2.15), who cited from what is now referred to as the Free-Legion of Codex Freerianus (W, 855). This editor places into the mouth of the disciples an excuse to the effect that “This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan, who by means of evil spirits does not permit the true power of God to be apprehended; therefore reveal your righteousness now” (227: Vincent Taylor, The Gospel According to St. Mark, pp. 614–615). Jesus then offers an extended explanation before continuing with the commissioning of Mark 16:15–18.


35 As noted in chapter 1, Linnemann’s argument drew a swift refutation from Kurt Alan and does not require further discussion here (K. Alan, “Die wiederzugefundene Matthauschluss? Eine methodologische Bemerkung zur textkritischen Arbeit.” ZTK 67 [1970] 5–13; cf. the proposals by Walter Balzmann, “Der Matthauschluss, die Verkündigungsgeschichte und die
that the LE’s original narrative would have only contained material which fits neatly into this tripartite organization. Furthermore, and like proponents of the fragment theory, Mirocki also bears the burden of describing the origin and nature of the document which originally contained Mark 16:9a, 10—15, 20a, as well as of defending the likelihood of this core narrative’s survival until the point at which it was redacted and expanded. Mirocki does not address any of these points. 40 In the final analysis, then, Mirocki’s discussion of the LE’s parallel structure supports the unity of Mark 16:9—20 as a whole and not merely the more concise and parallel core narrative he seeks to reconstruct.

There are thus clear indications of the unity of Mark 16:9—14 and 16:15—20. 41 An explanation for the sudden shift in the middle of Mark 16:9—20 may be found in the rapid progression of the LE’s narrative. The fact that Mark 16:9 (ἀνεοριστὶ δὲ πρῶτον σεβάστοις ἐφάνετο κτλ.) departs suddenly from the narrative of Mark 16:8 has been discussed above. Chapters 2 and 3 noted that the description of Jesus’ second appearance ἐν τῷ ἐξήκοντα μορφῇ (Mark 16:12) epitomizes the Emmaus story of Luke 24:13—35 but also introduces confusion when one compares the nature of these first two appearances (Mark 16:9—11 and 16:12—13). 42 Likewise, after the commissioning of 16:15—18, the LE’s narrative does not pause for a moment before relating in rapid-fire succession the ascension, session and departure on a mission (16:19—20).

Such a swift development may be contrasted, for example, with the end of Luke and the opening chapters of Acts, where the events are said to take place over a number of weeks. By way of analogy, if the evangelist Luke is jogging at a comfortable marathon pace, the LE is sprinting a 100-meter dash from the silent women of Mark 16:8 to the successful, world-wide mission anticipated in Mark 16:20. It is therefore reasonable to infer that the sudden shift in tone and subject matter between Mark 16:14 and 16:15 is not uncharacteristic of the LE as a whole and, moreover, does not constitute grounds for denying the unity of this passage. 43 The LE should thus be regarded as a single compositional unit which includes appearances (16:9—14) and a commissioning of the disciples before their departure (16:15—20).

C. The Date of the LE

In light of the argument offered above for the LE’s unity, the following section on the date of the LE will interpret citations of any substantial part of the LE in later Christian writings as evidence for the existence of the whole passage at a given point in time. The primary witnesses for the existence of the LE in the second century are Justin Martyr, Tatian and Irenaeus. The analysis will touch briefly upon the witnesses of Irenaeus and Tatian before arguing that a number of passages in Justin — especially one description of the apostles’ ministry after the resurrection — point to a date for the LE before the middle of the second century.

1. Irenaeus

Writing in approximately 180 CE, Irenaeus argues in Adv. Haer. iii.9—12 for the unity of God as portrayed throughout the Bible. He discusses aspects of the fulfillment of the OT in Matthew (iii.9), Luke (iii.10.1—4), Mark (iii.10.5), 44 John (iii.11) and Acts (iii.12). In iii.10.5 Irenaeus discusses only two passages from the Second Gospel, Mark 1:1—3 and 16:19. He argues that the latter points to the fulfillment of Psalm 110:1:

40 Instead, as noted in chapter 1, in an appendix he reveals that his reconstruction of the LE’s core narrative would serve as the presupposition for another argument concerning the original ending of the Gospel of Mark (P. Mirocki, “Appendix Two: Discussed Above.” Chapters 2 and 3 noted that the description of Jesus’ second appearance ἐν τῷ ἐξήκοντα μορφῇ (Mark 16:12) epitomizes the Emmaus story of Luke 24:13—35 but also introduces confusion when one compares the nature of these first two appearances (Mark 16:9—11 and 16:12—13). Likewise, after the commissioning of 16:15—18, the LE’s narrative does not pause for a moment before relating in rapid-fire succession the ascension, session and departure on a mission (16:19—20).

41 As outlined in chapters 2 and 3, an additional argument for the unity of the LE stems from the consistent use of the NT Gospels throughout most of the passage.

42 The statement that Jesus appeared “in another form” (Mark 16:12) suggests a different type of appearance than the one reported in Mark 16:9—10. The epiphanies of the Greek narrative thus create tension within the LE.
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 sat on the right hand of God; confirming what had been spoken by the prophet: 'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit on my right hand, until I make your foes your footstool.'"

The text of Irenaeus' citation of Mark 16:19 is as follows:

_in fine autem Evangelii ait Marcus: Et subiit Dominus Iesu, posteaque locum est, roseum est in caelis et sedit ad dextram Dei._

Theodoret of Cyrus (ca. 393-ca. 466 CE) citation of Irenaeus' statement notes the following Greek text:

ἐν τῇ τελείᾳ τοῦ εὐαγγέλιου ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ μάρτυρος, ὅ μὴν συν ἔκρυψαν τοῦ κρέατος μετὰ τοῦ λαλήθη σαρκὸς ἐνελθείς ἐις τὸν σάρκαν καὶ ἔδειξέν τιν εἰς ἐκείνου τοῦ θεοῦ.

Such an unambiguous citation of Mark 16:19 as a part of the end of Mark's Gospel demonstrates that the Longer Ending — referred to by Irenaeus as occurring "fine... Evangelii" 'spoken' by Mark — had been attached to the end of this Gospel before Irenaeus wrote his treatise against heresies around 180 CE.

2. Tattian and Justin Martyr

Probably somewhat earlier than Irenaeus, the LE as a whole is also presupposed in Tattian's DialègMen (ca. 172 CE). In what follows an argument will be given that Tattian's teacher, Justin Martyr, also knew and made use of the LE a decade or two before Tattian did. There is not sufficient evidence, however, to demonstrate that Celsus48 wrote with knowledge of Mark 16:9-20. Moreover, in the case of the Epistula Apostolorum, as with the NT book of Acts, the parallels to the LE are insufficient to demonstrate a literary connection between the LE and the Epistula Apostolorum.49

Those familiar with Arthur Bellizzi's important study of Justin's citations of gospel material are aware that ascertaining the nature of Justin's sources is a complex matter. A careful examination of Justin's writings must be undertaken in order to assess the evidence for this apologist's knowledge of the LE. Understandably, Bellizzi himself never discusses the LE since his work focuses on the sayings of Jesus.50

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48 It is sometimes supposed that Celsus (ca. 170 CE) reflects knowledge of the LE because he characterizes Mary Magdalene as "a mysterious woman" (γυναῖκα μυστική, De fide, Contra Celsum 2.55 and 2.59) after having read the remarks about her past demon possession in Mark 16:9 (G. Hartmann, Der Aufbau des Markusevangeliums, pp. 242-243; E. Heidel, "Der Schluß des Markusevangeliums [Mk 16, 9-20]," pp. 3 n. 2, 23-24; W. Farmer, The Last Twelve Verses, p. 51; but note the caution of M. L. Lagrange (Évangile selon Saint Marc, p. 632; cf. p. 631) on this point). This argument is not sound for two reasons. First, the author of LE makes no mention of Mary's emotions in vv. 9-11. Thus the connection between Mary's emotional state and the exorcisms that had been performed on her is tenuous at best. Second, it is much more likely that Celsus ridicules John 20:11-15, which repeatedly mentions her weeping (e.g., Map 92 εὐφράξεται... Χαλκοῦν, ἐπερεικοῦσα τοῖς μαθηταῖς, 20:11; cf. 20:13, 15). Celsus' statements in Contra Celsum 2.55 and 2.59 thus do not offer secure grounds for dating the LE.

49 References in the Epistula Apostolorum to the women who visited Jesus' tomb as "weeping" (Epistulae a. 10, also "weeping and mourning," a. 9) of the depiction of those to whom Mary Magdalene reports Jesus' appearance as ἡ Μαρία ἡ μακαρισμένη, Mark 16:10) and to Jesus' missionary command to "go and preach to the twelve tribes of Israel" (Epistulae a. 30, cf. ταυταί, ἐκ τῶν νόμων διαστολή, Mark 16:15) cannot establish a literary relationship between the LE and the Epistula Apostolorum. Moreover, although Jesus' command that only one of the three women tell the resurrection (Epistulae a. 10) could be an expansion Mark 16:9-11, this passage in the Epistula Apostolorum could just as easily represent a combination of Matthew 28 and Luke 24, on the one hand, and John 20, on the other. See further below in the discussion of the reactions of disbelief in Mark 16:18-19 and the commissioning saying in Mark 16:15. As a result, the date of the Epistula Apostolorum does not offer a reliable guide for the date of the LE (or vice versa). Contrast the discussion of Charles B. Hiebert, "The Epistula Apostolorum: An Asian Text from the Time of Polycarp," JEC 79 (1999) 1-35, esp. pp. 9-10, 14, 21-22 and C. Detweiler, "Miller's 'Teacher's command line' ("[The Gospel of Mark, of which our text knows only the spurious ending, was] in that case an imitation of the "fire and brimstone" passage in Mark 16:16). The Epistula Apostolorum makes all the more use of the Gospel of John and its Logos Christology (Valkema, p. 1251).

50 Arthur J. Bellizzi, The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin Martyr (Leiden: Brill, 1967). Note, however, the words attributed to Jesus in Mark 16:15-18 and see the discussion of exorcism in Justin, Dial. 76 below. One reason for the focus of Bellizzi's dissertation was that his advisor's Habilitationsschrift had already studied the narrative passages in Justin's writings: Hermann Koester (Habilitationsschrift, Heidelberg, 1956). As the title indicates, the second half of Koester's work (pp. 51-97) addresses
For over a century certain scholars have maintained that Justin does reflect knowledge of Mark 16:9—20.\(^\text{51}\) One such study was offered by Charles Taylor, who focuses on the distinctive vocabulary which the LE and Justin share in common and argues that Justin’s writings point clearly to his knowledge of Mark 16:9, 17 and 20.\(^\text{52}\) Although Taylor overstates the evidence at certain points, a persuasive argument for Justin’s knowledge can nonetheless be made.

By far the most striking passage pointing to Justin’s knowledge of Mark 16:9—20 concerns the LE’s final verse. In Apol. I.45.5 Justin argues that the apostles’ deeds after the ascension (cf. Mark 16:19b) are signified in Psalm 110:2a, and mentions “the powerful word (τοῦ λόγου) of the apostles, [who,] going out from Jerusalem, preached everywhere (ἐξελθόντες πανταχυόν ἐπηρεάζαν)” (Apol. I.45.5).\(^\text{53}\) The final three words of Justin’s statement parallel exactly the form of three words in Mark 16:20a (ἐκκείνου δὲ ἐξελθόντες ἐπηρεάζαν πανταχύ), but appear in a different order. Although it is not a distinctive formulation, Justin’s reference to “the word (τοῦ λόγου)” of these apostles could also reflect an embellishment of Mark 16:20bc (τοῦ κυρίου συνεργοῦντος καὶ τῶν λόγων ἑπιδεικνύοντος διὰ τῶν ἐκκαθολοθυύντων σημείων).

In chapter 3 it was argued that the author of the LE borrowed ἐξελθόντες ἐπηρεάζαν from Mark 6:12a. From Luke 9:1—6, which parallels Mark 6:6b—13, the LE’s author gleaned the adverb πανταχυόν (Luke 9:6). Although possible, it is rather unlikely that Justin and the LE’s author have independently combined these aspects of the mission of the twelve as related in Mark 6:12 and Luke 9:6, and subsequently attributed similar activities to the apostles after the ascension. Since Justin both assumes the post-ascension setting of mission as depicted in Mark 16:19—20 and adds an interpretation of Psalm 110:2a, it is most likely that knowledge of the LE’s final sentence informed the apologist’s presentation of the apostles’ activities.

Justin’s citations of narrative material in Matthew, Mark and Luke. Like A. Bellinzone, Koosler does not discuss the LE.

\(^{51}\) See Charles Taylor, “Some Early Evidence for the Twelve Verses St. Mark 16, 9—20,” The Episcopalian Fourth Series 8 (1883) 71—80 and the studies he cites on p. 76.

\(^{52}\) C. Taylor, “Some Early Evidence,” pp. 72—76. Cf. Taylor’s unpersuasive argument that the Shepherd of Hermas (e.g., V. 3.1.2, Sim. 2.1, 9.17.7—2 and 9.25.1—2) also reflects knowledge of the LE (C. Taylor, The Witness of Hermas to the Four Gospels [London: C. J. Clay and Sons, 1892] 52—54, 57—60).

\(^{53}\) In this passage Justin first cites Ps 110:1—3 and then claims that v. 3a signifies “the powerful word of the apostles [who,] going out from Jerusalem, preached everywhere.” The Greek text cited for the First and Second Apologies was edited by Miroslav Marcovich, Justin Martyr: Apologiae pro Christianis (Bibliotheca Teutica et Studii 38; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994).

\(^{54}\) Co also C. Taylor, “Some Early Evidence,” pp. 73—76. Cf. Bernd Kollmann, Jesus und die Christian als Wundernder: Studien zu Magie, Medizin und Schamanismus in Antike und Christentum (FRLANT 170; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999) 337. For they continued, the day before Saturday, and on the day after Saturday, which is Sunday, he appeared (σημείον) to his apostles and disciples, and taught them the things which we have passed on to you also for consideration. (Apol. I.57.3)

\(^{55}\) The difference in word order between Justin (ἐξελθόντες πανταχυόν ἐπηρεάζαν) and Mark 16:20a (ἐκκείνου δὲ ἐξελθόντες πανταχυόν) may be explained by Justin’s wish to place the main verb (ἐπηρεάζαν) at the end of a phrase.

Additional similarities in wording between Justin’s writings and Mark 16:9—20 support, but do not independently confirm, the above observation concerning this apologist’s knowledge of the LE. For example, Charles Taylor identifies three distinctive words in Mark 16:9 (διάνοια ἐκ τοῦ πρῶτου σαββάτου διάνοια πρῶτον Μαρία τῇ Μαγδαληνῇ, παρ’ ἐκείνης ἐκβαλείτη ἑπτά δακτύλια) and argues that Justin’s use of all three of these words in two different passages points to knowledge of the LE.\(^\text{55}\) The first passage appears in Justin’s Dialogue with Trypho:

At the time of the flood, the just Noah, with his wife and three sons and their wives, making eight persons in all,\(^\text{56}\) were five (τέσσαροι) of that eighth day on which our Lord appeared; having risen from the dead which he is always with respect to power (δυνάμει) of the dead and of the living,\(^\text{57}\) (Dia. 138.1)

With respect to the words διανοια and διανοιας, Taylor makes a plausible observation.\(^\text{57}\) It is problematic, however, that his own citation of Dia. 138.1 ends suddenly with the word “first” (σημείον) and fails to reflect the fact that the genitive absolute πρώτης ὑπάρχεισθαι, unlike Mark 16:9, does not designate the first day of the week. The other passage Taylor cites occurs toward the end of Justin’s First Apology. Justin explains that Christians gather together on Sunday because it is the first day (στὸν πρῶτον ημέραν) on which God, transforming the darkness and matter, made the world; and our Savior Jesus Christ arose from the dead on the same day (στὸν πρῶτον ημέραν) from the dead (στὸν πρῶτον ημέραν). For they continued, the day before Saturday, and on the day after Saturday, which is Sunday, he appeared (σημείον) to his apostles and disciples, and taught them the things which we have passed on to you also for consideration. (Apol. I.57.3)
However interesting it may be that Justin calls attention to the day of the resurrection as πρωτη... ἡμέρα, neither of the other two words (δύστιμος and πάνεις) matches exactly the forms of Mark 16:9, and thus does not necessarily indicate that Justin is intentionally bowing down to the LE at this point.  

One other passage in Justin's Dialogue, where Justin describes the work of exorcists in his own day with language like that of Mark 16:17, adds some weight to the argument that this apologist knew the LE. In Dial. 76 Justin points to exorcisms by contemporary believers to provide a modern analogy for Luke 10:19, according to which Jesus gave authority to the seventy disciples to trample on serpents and scorpions. Having cited the Lukan verse, he explains:

And now we who believe (καὶ νῦν ἡμεῖς ὁ πάνεις) in Jesus our Lord, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, cast out all devils and other evil spirits and have them submitting to us (καὶ διάμαχον χάνονται καὶ παράγονται πνευματικά ἡκατοντάκατα τῶν ἡμῶν). (Dial. 76.66)

The comprehensive reference to "we who believe (ἡμεῖς ὁ πάνεις)" is strikingly similar to Mark 16:17a which claims, στήμετρα ὡς πάνεις, ἔτι τίς παρακαλομενοῖς. Exorcism is the first of the five signs in Mark 16:17b—18: ἔν τις ὄνοματι μοῦ διαμαχόμενος ἄγεσθαι. Although Justin and the LE's author use different terms for casting out demons, Justin's knowledge of the LE would explain his choice of words to designate believers in general as exorcists.

To summarize, the argument for Justin's knowledge of the LE hinges on the analysis of Apol. L45, which points to the apologist's use of Mark 16:20. Similarities to other parts of the LE in the writings of Justin can be understood in this light. In his own study of Justin's references to gospel narrative materials, Helmut Koester concluded that Justin's writings do not reflect a systematic use of the Synoptic Gospels except when the apologist is interpreting the Old Testament. Justin only "quoted exactly" from the Gospels when the evangelists themselves were citing the OT. The analysis

58 C. Taylor's overstated conclusion at this point is an unfortunate example of an approach that Helmut Koester has rightly criticized in his review article, "Written Gospels or Oral Tradition?" JBL 113 (1994) esp. p. 267.
59 Luke 10:19 in Justin, Dial. 76.66a δίδων τινι ἐξώοντα καταπαντει ἐπάνω Σωφρόνω καὶ σκοτίς καὶ καιλοποιείναι, καὶ ἐπάνω πάντες δούλος τοῦ ἐξώοντων. This section of Justin's Dialogue offers a significant parallel to Mark 16:17—18 that will be taken up in greater detail in chapter 7.
60 These parallels to various parts of the LE in the earliest witnesses to Mark 16:20 also support the argument offered above for the unity of this passage.
62 The difference, of course, is that Justin did not cite Ps 110:2a from one of the NT Gospels.
63 See A. Belliniomi, Sayings of Jesus, e.g., p. 139.
64 A. Belliniomi argues that Justin made use of a variety of written sources, including gospel harmonies, none of which was earlier than the Synoptic Gospels (Sayings of Jesus, e.g., pp. 140—141).
65 This question would merit exploration in another study.
66 See the note toward the beginning of this chapter concerning the point at which the NT Gospels were collected.
67 In chapter 3 ("Excerpts") certain similarities of the LE to the Gospel of Peter are discussed. Because it is highly unlikely that this writing is much earlier than 150 CE, I have chosen not to address in detail the complex question of the LE's possible relationship to this work. If the Gospel of Peter could be shown to reflect knowledge of the LE and to date earlier than the time of Justin Martyr, the probable termis ante quem for the composition of Mark 16:20 could conceivably be pushed back further than Justin's citation of the LE in the First Apology.

offered here of the LE would tend to support Koester's generalization, for the only passage in Justin's writings that appears to cite the LE rather closely is Apol. L45.5, which claims the fulfillment of Psalm 110:2a.  

In his own study of Justin and Gospel citations, Arthur Belliniomi argues persuasively that many of the apologist's so-called "deviations from the canonical gospels" point to the fact that the apologist usually quoted from "written sources," which were later than and derived from copies of the NT Gospels. This inquiry concerning Justin's knowledge of the LE has not explored the nature of Justin's written sources. It seems equally possible that Justin knew the Longer Ending as a part of Mark's Gospel or that he cited the LE from one or more other writings whose author(s) had copied and, perhaps in the process, adapted Mark 16:9—20. In either case, Justin points to the existence of the LE at the time he wrote the First Apology (ca. 155—161 CE).

This finding indicates that the time of the LE's composition may be fixed within a range of a few decades in the first half of the second century. The author of the LE wrote after the NT Gospels were collected—probably not before 110—120— but before Justin's First Apology. With confidence one may thus date the LE to ca. 120—150 CE.
3. The Acts of Pilate and Christ’s Descent into Hell


Now Philipo a priest and Ada a teacher and Angasus a Levite came from Galilee to Jerusalem, and told the rulers of the synagogue and the priests and the Levites: “We saw Jesus and his disciples sitting upon the mountain which is called Mamillich. And he said to his disciples: Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover. And while Jesus was still speaking to his disciples, we saw him taken up into heaven.”

Although the author does not indicate that he is citing the LE, it stands to reason that he regarded Mark 16:15—19 as a more appealing continuation of Matt 28:12—14 than Matt 28:16—20.

Because the date of the Acts of Pilate is difficult to ascertain, this citation of Mark 16:15—18 offers only a possibility for dating the LE. Justin Martyr, who offers the earliest witness to the LE, twice refers to a writing by this name:

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69 Acts of Pilate 14.1. This passage is one of the most extensive citations of the LE in early Christian literature (cf. NT/Text. 1.515). Placed in italics are words that correspond exactly to the Greek of Mark 16:15—19. Instead of οὐχί (v. 15a) the author wrote “this disciple.” Moreover, the listing of the citation as “Mt. 16:16-18” in NT/Text. 1.515 is only partially correct, for the citation begins with Mark 16:15. Moreover, the mention of the ascension (“we saw him taken up into heaven”) at the end of Acts of Pilate 14.1 continues to follow the LE and betrays knowledge of Mark 16:19 (οὐχὶ γὰρ κύριος θανείς μετά τὸ λαβθέντος αὐτοῦ ἑξήλθεν ἐγώ ἐν ἀνάρτωσιν καὶ κηθυσίαν ἐν δεσμών τοῦ θεοῦ). Since this writing does not follow the NT Book of Acts, which reports that Jesus spent 40 days on earth before the ascension (cf. Acts 1:3), it is usually thought to be of an early date, unless it is Ebionite in origin. On this point see F. Schneidewin in NT/Text. 1.503, and note the reference to only “four days” in Acts of Pilate 15.2. Moreover, the fact that the citation of Mark 16:18 in Acts of Pilate 14.1 reflects the shorter reading (“they will pick up serpents”) and does not include the later expansion (καὶ ἐν κατα Γαρσένι) would also support the argument that the Acts of Pilate belongs to an earlier rather than a later period.

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70 Justin writes specifically about Jesus’ healings and risings of the dead, which were performed in fulfillment of biblical prophecies. The only possible exception is the reference to the disciples’ miracles in Acts of Pilate 14.1, where the LE is cited. On this point F. Schneidewin writes, “Justin however also addsuce these Acts to assert the miracles of Jesus, and so the question arises whether he could have assumed of purely fictitious documents that in them mention was made of miracles” (NT/Text. 1.501, emphasis added). Moreover, the Acts of Pilate could not have been Justin’s only source for the existence of the LE. As discussed above, Justin (Apol. I.45.5) — but not the author of the Acts of Pilate — cites Mark 16:20a.

71 If Justin had referred to the Acts of Pilate only in Apol. I.35.9 and not also in Apol. I.48.2, the argument that Justin knew this writing would be stronger.
departure sequence (vv. 19–20). As mentioned above, each of the LE’s main subsections is intrinsically related to the material which follows and precedes in the passage. For example, the initial appearances to Mary Magdalene (vv. 9–10) and the two disciples (v. 12) anticipate the third appearance to the eleven (v. 14a). Furthermore, the rebuke Jesus offers his followers in v. 14b comes in response to their earlier disbelief (vv. 11 and 13). In addition, Jesus’ final appearance — presumably, to those who finally believe that he had risen — is the necessary presupposition for the missionary instructions (vv. 15–18) that follow. The commissioned disciples would most probably not begin to preach while Jesus was still with them, so the brief mention of the ascension and session (v. 19) precedes their departure on the mission (v. 20a). The final genitive absolute (v. 20b) ties together the promise of signs (vv. 17–18) and the continued work of the ascended Jesus (v. 19), who assists those who preach the word (v. 20a).

Having thus emphasized the unity of the LE’s narrative, the discussion to follow will explore this passage’s diverse literary forms. Although the work of a single author, Mark 16:9–20 reflects a plethora of micro-genres which merit comparison with analogous literary forms of the first, second and later centuries. This comparative analysis will highlight the points at which the LE’s author conformed to standard literary practices, as well as the times when he allowed his own particular emphases shine forth in the midst of this forgery. This chapter’s final section will consider the structure and genre of the LE as a whole.

1. The Appearances of Jesus (Mark 16:9–14)

The LE’s first main section (vv. 9–14) records three post-resurrection appearances of Jesus. Because the three accounts of Jesus’ appearances share many formal features in common, the literary features of Mark 16:9–14 will at times be discussed sequentially — that is, proceeding straight through the text, verse by verse — and at other points thematically, considering together the descriptions of the appearances and reactions of disbelief. This results in the following organization:

1) mention of the resurrection and chronological indicator (v. 9a); 2) mention of two appearances (vv. 9b, 12); 3) description of Mary Magdalene (v. 9c); 4) reporting the resurrection and the reaction of disbelief (vv. 10–11, 13); 5) the reassurance of those who had been “with” Jesus (v. 10b); 6) Jesus’ final appearance and the rebuke of the eleven (v. 14).

a) Mention of the Resurrection and Chronological Indicator (v. 9a)

As noted in chapters 2 and 3, the language of the LE’s opening words stems largely from Mark’s description of the women’s approach to the tomb:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Appearance</th>
<th>Second Appearance</th>
<th>Final Appearance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) mention of appearance</td>
<td>2) chronological indicator</td>
<td>1) mention of appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) chronological indicator</td>
<td>3) indication of the persons to whom Jesus appeared</td>
<td>2) chronological indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) indication of the persons to whom Jesus appeared</td>
<td>4) additional description of Mary</td>
<td>3) indication of those to whom Jesus appeared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) circumstantial description</td>
<td>6) self-manifestation “in another form.”</td>
<td>4) circumstantial description continued</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

74 As argued earlier in this chapter, the author of the LE composed Mark 16:9–20 with the intention of completing Mark’s Gospel and was thus inclined to begin with the chronology established by the author of the Second Gospel.

While the first account offers more information about Mary (παρ’ ἡς ἠκέβηλε κεκάμωνα), the latter two describe the circumstances under which these appearances took place (respectively, πενείκαφον ... παρασυνότων εἰς ἄνεμον καὶ διακαθεμένων αὐτούς). Only the second appearance describes the particular way in which Jesus was revealed (ἐν ἐκείνοις μορφής).

Although the NT Gospels contain a number of appearance narratives, it would not be accurate to characterize all of the LE’s appearance accounts as narratives. What sets the third appearance apart from the first two is that, whereas vv. 9b and 12 move quickly to the reporting of the appearance and reaction of disbelief (vv. 10—11, 13), only vv. 14b—18 includes a narrative description of what took place at the time of the appearance. It is for this reason that a distinction is to be made between the “mention” or “report of an appearance,” and an “appearance narrative.” Only the third appearance (Mark 16:14) can be characterized as a narrative, albeit a brief one. Strictly speaking, in the first two appearances there is no narrative but rather a statement that an appearance took place.

The closest analogy to a passage mentioning that appearances occurred without entering into a narrative description of them occurs toward the beginning of Paul’s argument concerning the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15. After mentioning Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection (1 Cor 15:3—4), Paul recounts in rapid succession four different appearances of the risen Jesus:

καὶ ὅτι Ἰησοῦς Κυρίου ἐστιν τῶν δώδεκαν
ἐπεί εὗρον ἑπάνω πενείκαφον δελφῶν ἐφόντας...
ἐστιν τῶν ἀποστόλων πᾶσιν
ἐκεῖνον ἐν πάντιν ἐναρκτῇ ἡ ἐκκλησία τῆς ἐκκλησίας καθὼς.

As discussed in chapter 2, there is no evidence to indicate (or exclude the possibility) that the author of the LE knew one or more Paul’s writings. Nonetheless, the brief mention of Jesus’ appearances before moving on to other points is similar in 1 Corinthians 15 and the LE.

c) The Description of Mary Magdalene (v. 9c)

The author of the LE identifies the Mary of the first appearance report as Μαρία τῇ Μαγδαληνᾷ, παρ’ ἡς ἠκέβηλε κεκάμωνα. The reason for including this biographical description may be deduced in comparison with the way in which Mark depicts those who visited the tomb.

and with the lack of a description of Mary in the appearance to her in John 20:11—18. The author of the Second Gospel identifies the woman of 16:1 as Μαρία τῇ Μαγδαληνῇ καὶ Μαρία τῇ Ἰακώβου καὶ Σαλώμη. In John 20:11 the lone woman is initially identified simply as Μαρία (cf. Μαρίαν, 20:16), and only at the end of the narrative is she called Μαρία τῇ Μαγδαληνῇ (John 10:18).

Although the LE’s author could have referred to this woman solely by her name, the description of Luke 8:2b (Μαρία ἡ κολοσσεύμη Μαγδαληνή) ἀπὸ τῆς δαιμόνια ἐπὶ ἑξαλείψεις was perhaps too interesting to pass up. The Lukean passage mentions “certain women, who had been healed from evil spirits and diseases . . . [and] who used to provide for” Jesus and for the twelve “out of their resources” (Luke 8:1). Of the “many” women to whom Luke refers, he mentions by name only Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Susanna and offers a description of Mary and Joanna. Concerning the latter he writes that she was “the wife of Herod’s steward Chuza (Ἰωάννα γυνή Χοζᾶ ἐπιτρόπου Ἡρῴδου, Luke 8:3a).”

Viewed in relation to this Gospel’s larger narrative, neither these characters nor the descriptions of the two women in Luke 8:1—3 is a main focus for the evangelist. In Luke the brief account of the women who provided for the needs of Jesus’ group is related to neither the preceding passage concerning the woman accused by the Pharisees (Luke 7:36—50) nor to the following material in the Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:4—8). The description of Mary Magdalene as one “from whom he had cast seven demons” plays a similar role in the LE. As in Luke 8:2b, this detail is not an essential component of the LE’s narrative: what is important is not Mary’s past woe of demonic oppression but rather that Jesus appeared to the Mary identified in Luke 8:2b and John 20:11—18.

d) The Reactions of Disbelief (vv. 10—11, 13)

As discussed above with Jesus’ three appearances in the LE, the two reactions of disbelief also share a number of structural features in common. The syntactical pattern is not merely similar in the two accounts, but, with the exception of two additional descriptive elements in vv. 10b—11, may be regarded as identical:

ἐκείνη περιεύθυνε ἀπήγγειλεν τοῖς μετ’ αὐτήν γενόμενος πνεύματα καὶ κλαίοντον κάκενον ἀκούοντες ἢτις ἐκείνη θέαν αὐτής ἠμέτρηται.

κάκενον δὲ πλεῖστος ἀπήγγειλεν τοῖς λειτουργοῖς οὖν ἔκαστον ἐκπέμπτων.

(v. 13)

Both accounts follow the mention of the resurrection (cf. v. 9b, 12). Two elements of the first account — the description of the emotional state of the disciples (ἐκνομοῦν καὶ κλαίοντον, v. 10b) and the content of what they
disbelieved (ὅτι ζητοῦνταί εἴη στιχήτων, v. 11) — are not repeated in verse 13. One probable reason for the repetitive narrative is that this author wished to heighten the suspense before the final appearance of Jesus in v. 14.

With regard to the particular emphasis of v. 11 in comparison with other early Christian appearance traditions, John Alasp writes,

> It is important to note that an apparently slight but significant shift in terminology has taken place: the verb ἐλθόντως bears the weight of the appearance and for the first time the recipient of the appearance is stressed: καὶ ἔλθοντος ἐξαρατή. The same is to be said of this verb in vs. 14.79

It thus follows that the LE’s author has crafted vv. 9—11 and, by implication, vv. 12—14 — to emphasize those who bear witness to the appearance rather than the event of the appearance itself.

When one considers Mark 16:10—11, 13 in comparison with other early Christian literature, there are minor affinities with Matt 28:17, John 20:24—25, the Gospel of Mary, and more significant similarities with Epistula Apostolorum 10—12 and Luke 24. On the one hand, Matthew, Luke and John each mention doubt or disbelief in some capacity in their post-resurrection accounts. After the disciples’ arrival in Galilee, Matthew alludes to someone who doubted when they saw the risen Jesus: καὶ ἔστωνται αὐτὸν προσεῖνοντος, οἱ δὲ ἐξελευσαμεν (Matt 28:17). Mention of such doubt is hardly integrated into the narrative of Matt 28:16—20, however. Somewhat closer to the context of the LE are the reservations expressed by Thomas toward the end of the Fourth Gospel. Although the motif of disbelief in a report of the resurrection in John 20:24—25 is similar to Mark 16:10—11, 13, these passages share few formal features in common.80 Finally, in the Gospel of Mary the disciples’ disbelief is centered upon the problem whether the Savior could have revealed himself to a woman rather than to them.81


80 John uses direct speech, while the LE’s author relates the exchanges with indirect speech. Thomas also offers the condition upon which he would believe while the disciples of the LE do not.

81 In the Gospel of Mary Andrew reacts to Mary Magdalene’s testimony as follows: “Tell me, what do you think about what she says? I at least (μοναχοί) do not believe (σάρτωσκερείας) that the Savior (στιχήτων) said this. For (γὰρ) certainly these doctrines have other meanings.” Peter then asks the disciples, “Did he (Jesus) then (ὑπόδειγμα) speak privately with a woman rather than with us, and not openly? Shall we turn about and listen to her? Has he preferred her over against us?” (ET [modified]; NF: 3994). Noteworthy is the fact that the author of the Gospel of Mary criticizes those who, in Karen L. King’s words, would “deny the validity of extrinsic revelation and reject the authority of women to teach” (NNH, p. 524). Cf. Gospel of Thomas 114: “Simon Peter said to them, ‘Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of life.’ Jesus said, ‘I myself shall lead her in order to make her

make, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven’” (ET: T. G. Lambdin, NF: 138).

82 Ep. Apostolorum 10; cf. Ep. Apostolorum 9. The Ethiopic translation refers to her as “Mary,” but in the Coptic she is “Martha.” It is most likely that the Coptic “Martha” is secondary. After the disciples believe and Jesus commands another of the women to go and say “this again to them,” the Coptic reads, “Mary came and told us again” (Ep. Apostolorum 10). The statement of the Coptic that Mary came “again” assumes that she had come on the first occasion. Contrast with the Ethiopic, which reports that Sarah came the second time after Mary came the first. Mary’s coming a second time clearly stands in tension with the Lord’s command that “another” of the women go. Someone may thus have changed Mary to Martha without realizing the problem this caused below with the statement that “Mary came and told us again.”

83 As discussed in the previous note, Mary returns, apparently for a second time, in the Coptic, but the outcome is the same.

84 Ep. Apostolorum 11; cf. John 20:20, 27. Jesus also asks Andrew to see that his footsteps are those of a real person and not of a ghost.
The Origin, Date and Literary Forms of the Longer Ending

apostles convinced.85 Differently from John 20:29 and Mark 16:14b, the problem of disbelief is not addressed in Ep. Apostolorum 12. Instead, the apostles' long-awaited recognition of Jesus precedes the command to rise up and await instruction concerning heavenly and earthly matters. Somewhat like the LE, the narrative of disbelief in Ep. Apostolorum 10—12 provides a prelude to a series of Jesus' revelations which begins in Ep. Apostolorum 13.

In Luke 24:9—11 one finds an even closer literary analogy to Mark 16:10—11 and 16:13. Presumably following Mark, Luke, reports that Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James and other women heard from the “two men (δύο ανθρώπων)” that Jesus has been raised.86 The women then went and “said to the apostles these things,” which seemed to the latter “as foolishness, and they disbelieved them” (24:11).87 Whereas in Luke the women’s account of the angels’ report is disbelieved, in the LE the disciples disbelieve the testimony of Mary and the two disciples, who have seen the risen Lord. Nonetheless, numerous formal features of Luke 24:9—11 are reflected in the LE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Reference to the persons who saw the risen Jesus</td>
<td>2) Participles indicating motion away from the tomb</td>
<td>2) καὶ ἀναπληράσθη ὁ θάνατος τοῦ μετέρωσεν</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Participles indicating motion toward the disciples</td>
<td>3) Indication of the reporting</td>
<td>3) ἀπεκάθητος τῶν κυρίων ἡ ἀνάληψις τοῦ θανάτου</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Indication of reporting</td>
<td>4) Mention of those told</td>
<td>4) γὰρ ἤζεικεν καὶ κατέδρυσεν τοὺς λειτουργοὺς</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Mention of those told</td>
<td>5) The state of the disciples</td>
<td>5) ἡ Μαρία καὶ ἡ Μαρία καὶ ἡ Μαρία καὶ Ἡσυχίας καὶ ἀλογονός</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Summary of what they heard</td>
<td>6) Reference to the persons who saw the risen Jesus</td>
<td>6) ἦλθεν πρὸς τοὺς ἀποστόλους τοῦ θανάτου</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Mention of disbelief</td>
<td>7) Mention of disbelief</td>
<td>7) ... καὶ κρίθησαν αὐτές</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

85 Ep. Apostolorum 12. Cf. Ign., Smyrn. 3.1—3; although Ignatius does not explicitly state that “those with Peter” doubted when Jesus came to them, he writes that they believed after touching him (καὶ εὕρετο θάνατος ἡμῶν καὶ δούλωσαν).
86 Luke 24:5—6; cf. Mark 16:5—6, Matt 28:2—6. The account of Mark, of course, ends suddenly at Mark 16.8. The reason for the focus here on Luke is that, unlike in Matthew 28, where it is implicit that the disciples believe the women’s message and travel to Galilee to await the Savior’s appearance (Matt 28:3—10, 16—20), it is only the women of Luke 24:9—11 who do not enjoy such a receptive audience.
87 According to Luke, their report only generated the curiosity of Peter, who went and visited the empty tomb (Luke 24:12). The Lukan narrative implies that Peter verified that the tomb was empty, but did not, as a result, come to believe that Jesus had been raised.

The LE’s author has followed both the order and, to a large extent, the content of Luke on points 2), 3), 4) and 7). The most significant difference concerns the order and content of the first point. Whereas the author of the LE begins by referring to the witness(es) with a personal pronoun (ἐκείνη τε καὶ ἐκεῖνοι) in vv. 10a and 13a, Luke first summarizes the women’s return and proclamation “to the eleven and to all the rest” (Luke 24:9) before offering the names of the three women in Luke 24:10. This difference may be understood in light of the larger narrative of each author: the LE’s author had already identified these people, but Luke had not done so and chose to include this information in 24:10.88

A likely reason for the use of Luke 24:9—11 at this point may be understood in light of the silence of the author of John concerning what took place after Mary reported Jesus’ appearance to her (John 20:11—18). After recording that Mary Magdalene announced τῶν μαθητῶν ὅτι ἦσαν ἡμῖν τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ταύταις εἶπεν ἡμῖν (John 20:18), John writes nothing concerning the response of the disciples. One does not learn if Mary had a favorable and receptive audience like the women of Matthew 28 or a more skeptical crowd like those in Luke 24. John simply reports in the following verse that Jesus himself later came and stood in the middle of them.89

It thus may be inferred that, although both John does not explicitly mention the response to Mary and the two disciples in John 20:18—19, the LE author of the LE concluded that this was an important component of his own narrative. The LE’s author had planned for the appearances of Jesus to culminate in the rebuke of Mark 16:14b, and it was important for him also to emphasize that both Mary’s announcement and that of the two disciples were met with disbelief. In order to bridge this gap between the two reports of the resurrection and Jesus’ reproach of the disciples, this author modeled the LE after the response to the women in Luke 24:9—11, which occurs just before the extensive account of what took place on the road to Emmaus (24:13—31). A significant difference between the progression in Luke and in the LE, however, is that, whereas the author of Luke abandons the motif of disbelief...
after Luke 24:9—11, the LE's author mentions it repeatedly in Mark 16:11, 13 and 14, and develops the idea further in 16:16.

e) The Bereavement of Those who had been "with" Jesus (v. 10b)

The author of the Longer Ending describes the people to whom Mary Magdalene reported her encounter with the risen Jesus as "those who had been with him who were mourning and weeping (τοῖς μετὰ αὐτοῦ γενομένοις πενθοῦτοι καὶ κλαοντεῖς)." As argued in chapter 2, τοῖς μετὰ αὐτοῦ γενομένοις may be understood in light of Mark 3:14 (καὶ ἐποίησεν δόξαν [οὐδὲ καὶ ἄποστολον ἐφόνησεν] ἵνα δοκῇ οὓς μετὰ αὐτοῦ καὶ Ἰνα ἄποστολή αὐτοῦ κηρύσσῃ). At present it remains to explore literary parallels to the disciples who wept and mourned after the crucifixion of Jesus. The Fourth Gospel presents Mary Magdalene weeping at the tomb of Jesus (John 20:11, 15a), but the combination of mourning and weeping in a post-resurrection setting occurs only in extracanonical writings, namely the Epistula Apostolorum, the Gospel of Peter and Pistis Sophia.50

In Ep. Apostolorum 9—109 the three women who visited Jesus' tomb are twice described as weeping and mourning. In the first instance, they are traveling to the tomb and "weeping and mourning over what had happened" (Ep. Apostolorum 9, Ethiopic and Coptic). After they find the tomb empty, their sorrow continues until the Lord comes to them: "... as they were mourning and weeping, the Lord appeared to them and said to them, do not weep; I am he whom you seek" (Ep. Apostolorum 10, Ethiopic). One parallel between the motif of mourning in John 20:11—18, Ep. Apostolorum 10 and Mark 16:10—14 is that mourning precedes an appearance of Jesus to those who were saddened. In the Fourth Gospel and the Epistula Apostolorum this appearance takes place in the same context in which the mourning and weeping are mentioned. Only in the LE does time elapse between vv. 10b and 14.

50 This motif appears to be evident also in the fragmentary Strasbourg Coptic Papyrus, which is translated from the Coptic by W. Schneemelcher, NTApO, 1, 105—105. At one point the disciples are portrayed as crying: "But we, αποστολοι, were weeping, and the Lord said to them: '...'" (p. 104). Toward the end of the fragment there is an allusion to the revelatory words of Jesus: "That I may reveal to you all my glory and show you all your power and the secret of your apostol..." (p. 105).

51 This discussion of the portrayal of the disciples as "mourning and weeping" will build on the thesis of J. Hug, who argues that the author of the LE did not borrow directly from any known written source. Hug also maintains that the LE's author incorporated this common motif into his narrative. This latter point is difficult to maintain, however, since both the Epistula Apostolorum and the Gospel of Peter are arguably later than, and influenced in part by, the LE. On these points see J. Hug, La fin de l'évangile de Marc, pp. 65—69 and the discussion in chapter 2.

Likewise, in the Gospel of Peter the apostle recalls that he and others "hid" themselves from the Jewish leaders after the death of Jesus: "Because of all these things we were fasting and were mourning and weeping (πενθοῦτος καὶ κλαοντεῖς) and day until the sabbath" (Gos. Pet. 7 25—27). The disciples also continue to weep and mourn after the resurrection was announced to the women who visited Jesus' tomb:

Now it was the last day of unleavened bread and many went away and repaired to their homes, since the feast was at an end. But we, the twelve disciples of the Lord, wept and mourned (ἐκπαίδευσαν καὶ ἐκπαράσσομεν), and each one, very grieved for what had come to pass, went to his own home. (14 38—39)

These descriptions of the disciples after the crucifixion correspond to both the context and the wording of the LE. Moreover, if the Gospel of Peter originally continued with an appearance of Jesus like the one reported in John 21, there would be an additional parallel to the progression in the narrative of Mark 16:10—14: the disciples first weep and mourn over what had happened to Jesus and then at a later point Jesus appears to them.

Finally, one distinctive feature about the disciples' fear and weeping in the Pistis Sophia is that they are portrayed as such after the ascension of Jesus into heaven. Although the combination of weeping and mourning does not occur in this text, the pattern of weeping before an appearance is present:

But (64) the disciples (μαθηταὶ) sat together, in fear, and they were exceedingly troubled; but (64) they were afraid because of the great earthquake which took place, and wept with another, saying: 'What then (ὅτι) will happen? Perhaps the Savior (ἱερός) will destroy all places (τόπων).' 524

According to the pattern observed in John and the Epistula Apostolorum, an appearance of Jesus follows mention of the disciples' fear: "While they now said this and wept to one another, then the heavens opened... and they saw Jesus descend..."

To summarize, mourning at the death of Jesus is a common feature shared by the Gospel of John, the Epistula Apostolorum, the Gospel of Peter, Pistis Sophia and the LE. Only the Epistula Apostolorum, the Gospel of Peter and the LE portray followers of Jesus as both mourning and weeping. John, the Epistula Apostolorum, the LE and possibly the original form of the Gospel of Peter share in common the progression that those who weep eventually behold an appearance of the risen Lord.

52 See Gos. Pet. 14 (60): "But I, Simon Peter, and my brother Andrew took our nets and went out to sea. And there was Levi, the son of Alphaeus, whom the Lord..." 525 Of the words of the women in Gos. Pet. 12 (52): "Although we could not weep and lament on that day when he was crucified, yet let us now do so at his sepulcher.

54 ET: NTApO, 1, 365.
f) Jesus’ Final Appearance and the Rebuke of the Eleven (16:14)

Mark 16:14b—18 is the first (and only) point at which the author of the LE reports what transpired during an appearance of Jesus. Accordingly, only this final appearance is to be designated as an “appearance narrative.” Following the general pattern employed in vv. 9 and 12a, the LE’s author begins with a chronological indicator (εἰς ἡμέραν... ταύτην) before recording the setting (ὁ διδάσκων... αὐτῶν) and those to whom Jesus came (τοῖς ἑνδέκταις ἐμπορέσθην). If this account stopped with v. 14a, it would be more accurate to label this appearance, like the earlier two, as a report of an appearance rather than a narrative proper. The approach by Jesus (καὶ ἦν διδάσκοντα τὴν ἀπειθείαν αὐτῶν καὶ σκληροκαρδίαν) and reason for the rebuke (ὅτι Ἰωάννης θεωροῦσαν αὐτόν ἐγκαθμενόν ωσ τόπος ἐπιστασίας) are joined by the transition καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς to the words of Jesus which follow in verses 15—18.

With regard to the problem of disbelief, one somewhat analogous post-resurrection account is Jesus’ confrontation of Thomas in John 20:26—29. Although the occasion of Jesus’ self-revelation after the disbelief of a report of an earlier post-resurrection appearance is similar (cf. John 20:24—25), the language and emphases of the two passages are not. Most striking is the fact that, unlike Mark 16:14b, Jesus’ rebuke of Thomas comes in the form of a beatitude which blesses those who believe even though they have not seen (John 20:29b). Not to be overlooked, however, is one connection John Alsan makes between the LE and John 20:26—29: “...it would be fair to say that this ‘appearance’ [Mark 16:14ff] is handled in principle much like that of the Thomas story of Jn., i.e., it is the occasion for something else.” Just as John attaches primary interest to the blessedness of authentic faith rather than to the appearance itself, the author of the LE does not dwell on the appearance per se but rather focuses on the commissioning which follows in vv. 15—18.

Concerning the statement that Jesus ἔνειδίσκετι τὴν ἀπειθείαν αὐτῶν καὶ σκληροκαρδίαν, the closest formal analogy to Mark 16:14b occurs within the Second Gospel, which portrays the disciples’ lack of understanding and faith in terms of a hardened heart. In an editorial comment, the author of Mark (or his source) explains that the disciples were frightened and astounded at Jesus’ walking on water “because they did not understand about the bread and their heart was hardened (οὐ γὰρ συνήκαν ἐπὶ τὸς ἄρτος, ἀλλ’ Ἰησοῦν χαρία πεπορμομένη).” Likewise, on another occasion Jesus questions the disciples: τῇ διαλογίζεσθε ὅτι ἵππος οὖν ἔχετε; ὅταν νοεῖτε οὐδὲ συνίετε, πεπορμομένην ἔχετε τὴν καρδίαν ὑμῶν (Mark 8:17). It thus stands to reason that the author of the LE portrays Jesus’ rebuke in a way that expands upon the depictions of the disciples’ unbelief in the Gospel of Mark.

2. The Commissioning and Subsequent Departure (Mark 16:15—20)

The remainder of this comparative literary analysis will discuss in turn the formal features of verses 15, 16, 17—18, 19 and 20. As mentioned above, the only detailed study of this subject is by Paul Mirecki, whose careful attention to the literary forms of Mark 16:15—19 contains numerous insights. Standing at the heart of Mirecki’s form-critical analysis, however, is the thesis that Mark 16:15—19 constitutes a hotchpotch of “form-critically discrete traditional materials,” which were secondarily redacted and added to the LE’s core narrative. In all four cases (vv. 15, 16, 17—18 and 19), he argues that a careful literary analysis uncovers the work of a redactor, who substantially altered the earlier expressions of these originally distinct compositional units. If any or all of these arguments prove to be persuasive, it will be necessary, as Mirecki himself does, to consider literary parallels to both the verses preserved in the LE and the traditional materials that were redacted by a later author. The following sections will first mention Mirecki’s history-of-traditions analysis of an individual part of the LE before focusing on literary expressions which merit comparison with what the LE’s author wrote. As noted in chapter 1, Mirecki’s approach to the LE on this issue is flawed. It will be argued that only in the case of Mark 16:19b is there some merit to Mirecki’s argument.

a) The Commissioning Saying of Mark 16:15

According to Mirecki, an earlier form of Mark 15:15ab, 20a belonged to the LE’s earliest recoverable, or “core,” narrative. A later author used this “traditionally formulated saying” and split it up in the final redactional stage of the LE. Mirecki aptly refers to Mark 16:15 as “a traditional commissioning saying.” With regard to the literary features of this verse, Mirecki also notes that the introduction of direct speech (καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς) and ἐνδέξασθε εὐθέως τὴν καρδίαν...

94 Mark 6:52; cf. 636—44. In addition, John 12:40 quotes Isa 6:9—10 with the following description of those who do not believe: τις πολλοὶς αὐτῶν τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ καὶ ἐνδέξασθε εὐθέως τὴν καρδίαν πεπορμομενήν.
96 P. Mirecki, “Mark 16:9-20: Composition, Tradition and Redaction,” p. 34.
97 See the discussion below of the aorism (Mark 16:19b) and the συνέίδησις (Mark 16:19c).
beginning verse 15 is a common “editorial link” and occurs also in Mark 2:19 and 4:40.\textsuperscript{102} It is also surely correct to note the “synonymous parallelism” of 16:15:

προσφέρετες εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἄνωθεν
tρία γιὰ τὴν κίρατε.\textsuperscript{103}

Mirocki also suggests that Mark 16:15, 20a merits comparison with both “commissioning sayings” (Mark 1:38,\textsuperscript{104} Matt 10:5—7, 28:18—20) and “allusions to commissioning sayings” (Mark 1:14b, 3:14, 6:7a, 6:12, 13:10, 14:9, Rom 10:15, Col 1:23).

The following literary analysis will focus on the following elements Mark 16:15 as compared with other commissioning sayings:

1) Introduction of direct discourse (καὶ ἔτον αὐτοῦ); 2) the command to go (προσφέρετες); 3) description of where they are to go (ἐκ τῶν κόσμων ἄνωθεν... πάντα τῇ κίρατε); 4) command concerning what they are to do (κήρυξατε); 5) description of what specifically they are to preach (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον).\textsuperscript{105}

In considering what traditional motifs may have influenced the LE’s author, it is helpful to mention the depictions to the disciples’ mission(s) in the NT Gospels. The author of Mark does not quote the words of Jesus in the mission charge parallel to the description of the departure on the mission and thus substituted the comparatively more Lukan and Markan κηρύχετε!\textsuperscript{106} for the Markan μαθητεύσατε.

The other NT post-resurrection commissions appear in Acts 1:8 and compares with the features highlighted above in Mark 16:15 as follows:

1) ἐν εἰς καὶ πρὸς αὐτοῦ; 2) οὗτοι ὑμεῖς ἕτοι μὴ ἐκκλήσατε καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν ἑαυτοῦ μὴ εἰσελθόντας; 3) πρὸς τὰ πρόβατα τὰ ἐπάλληλα ὑμῶν Ἰς ἔρημος; 4) κηρύχετε καὶ λέγετε ὑμεῖς ὑμῖν ἐπάλληλον τὸν ἐπάλληλον τοῦ ἐπάλληλον ἐρωτών μὴ εἰσέλθης μὴ ἐκκλήσασθε; 5) ἐν τῇ ἐκκλήσῃ καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐκκλήσῃ καὶ λέγετε ὑμῖν ἐπαράσχετε τῷ ἐπαράσχει τῇ γῇ.\textsuperscript{111}

Not present in Acts 1 are two features integral to the commissioning of Mark 16:15, namely commands to go and specific instructions concerning what the disciples are to do.

Moreover, such a command to go occurs in two passages of the Epistula Apostolorum. At one point Jesus gives the disciples a commission to “Go and preach to the twelve tribes of Israel and to the gentiles and Israel to the land of Israel towards the East and West, North and South” (Ep. Apostolorum 30). A similar charge appears in Ep. Apostolorum 46: “But you,

Likewise, the final commission of the Individual Parts of the LE\textsuperscript{108} reflects these features in nearly the same order:\textsuperscript{108}

1) καὶ προσφέρετες ἐν ἡγεμονίᾳ ἐπάλληλον κοσμίων λέγετε; 2) ἢ θυσίαν μὴ πάρετε ἐξοφύλλων καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ θῦσιvasion λέγετε; 3) κηρύχετε καὶ λέγετε; 4) κήρυχτες καὶ λέγετε; 5) πάντα τῇ κίρατε; 6) μαθητεύσατε καὶ λέγετε; 7) πάντα τῇ κίρατε; 8) μαθητεύσατε καὶ λέγετε; 9) λέγετε ὑμεῖς ἐν τῇ ἐκκλήσῃ καὶ λέγετε; 10) μαθητεύσατε καὶ λέγετε; 11) ἐν τῇ ἐκκλήσῃ καὶ λέγετε.

As noted in chapter 3, probably the most compelling reason for the choice of the word κηρύχετε in Mark 16:15 (προσφέρετες... κηρύχετε) can be understood by comparing Matt 28:18a (προσφέρετες... μαθητεύσατε) and Mark 16:20a (κηρύχετες... κήρυχτες). The author of the LE made the mission charge parallel to the description of the departure on the mission and thus substituted the comparatively more Lukan and Markan κηρύχετε! for the Markan μαθητεύσατε.

\textsuperscript{102} P. Mirocki, “Mark 16:9—20: Composition, Tradition and Redaction,” p. 35.

\textsuperscript{103} P. Mirocki, “Mark 16:9—20: Composition, Tradition and Redaction,” pp. 36—37.

\textsuperscript{104} The comparison with Mark 1:38 is problematic in that the Markan verse is not a commissioning saying. Jesus exhorts that the group go to another place where he (not they) will preach, and there is no verb of departure. Thus, characteristics 3) and 4) of Mirocki’s list are missing in this text.

\textsuperscript{105} Compare Mirocki (“Mark 16:9—20: Composition, Tradition and Redaction,” pp. 35—37), who focuses on the following four characteristics: 1) a “verb of going,” 2) designation of the location, 3) the presence of κηρύχοντας and 4) a “verb of going out.”

\textsuperscript{106} Matt 10:5b stipulates where the disciples are not to go.


\textsuperscript{109} Elements of passages which are different from those of the LE are marked with an asterisk (*).

\textsuperscript{111} See below for a discussion of Mark 16:20a in relation to Mark 6:12.

\textsuperscript{111} Cf. Peter’s speech in Acts 10:42, where Peter challenged the Jews to repent and be baptized, and the Gentiles to believe in the name of Jesus and be baptized.
as you go, preach and teach truly and righteously, and respecting and fearing the person of no one. . . .” Besides the command to go and preach, there are no other notable similarities between Mark 16:15 and Ep. Apostolorum 30 and 46.

Mention should also be made of Colossians 1:23, whose relation to the Mark 16:15 remains enigmatic:

ο Λ ιγ δε στυλαιεη αν τη παμελομιεναι και κατα τους και μετακαταμενονοις ἀπο της ελατος τοις εν άνθρωποις οι μελοταται, το την ορθοπαιδιαν εν και της κιετα τη βραδύν, και κατα των σαβανθω, ο δε ανκεται και πολλες δισκομενοι.

As is the case for the Mackan texts, although the possibility — especially in the case of παση της της κιεται, Mark 16:15 — of some borrowing of terms cannot be excluded, there is no indication that Col 1:23 directly influenced Mark 16:15.

In conclusion, while Mirecki is correct to state that “Mark 16:15 constitutes a form-critically discrete unit which can be identified as a commissioning saying,” caution is in order with regard to the concomitant assertion that this verse necessarily points to “an oral context” like “a commissioning ceremony in which individuals were commissioned for service in the gentile mission.” Although the questions of the LE’s dependence on Matthew and similarities with literary forms present in Matthew are different, the similarities of Mark 16:15 with an earlier text, Matthew, indicate that an oral context is not the only explanation for the origin of this verse.

b) The Alternative of Mark 16:16

In Mirecki’s history-of-traditions analysis, Mark 16:16 is deemed the first major addition to the LE’s core narrative on the grounds that this verse “appears to be a form-critically discrete unit that is capable of existing independently of its present narrative context.” Accordingly, he studies the function of similar sayings in other literary contexts in an effort to ascertain the origin of this “antithetic prophetic saying.” He rightly begins by calling attention to the antithetic parallel structure of Mark 16:16:

ο πιστευει κατα και οφθηκε κατακρατηκεν;

Although the promises of salvation in Isa 28:16b (ο πιστευουν εις αυτον ου μη και σησανον) and Mark 16:15b (ο εις αυτον ου δοσος σωσιν) Rom 10:9, Did 16.5 and Asc. Isa 3:18 are somewhat similar to Mark 16:16a, there is no parallel in these passages for the negative message of condemnation for those who disbelieve.116

The closest analogies to Mark 16:16 occur in the Fourth Gospel (John 3:18) and the Kerygma Petri (Clement, Stromateis vi.6.48), which parallel both the language and structure of Mark 16:16.117 The words attributed to Jesus in John 3:18a118 contain obvious similarities to the LE’s antithetic parallel statement:

ο πιστευον εις αυτον ου κρινότα,

Mirecki rightly notes that Mark 16:16 and John 3:18 “are structurally identical” but minimizes the similarities in wording in that “[t]he two texts are . . . not equivalent . . . πατη κειθενει.”119


115 P. Mirecki, “The Antithetic Saying,” pp. 230–231. Not to be overlooked is the fact that, in its present context, the antithetic parallelism in Mark 16:16 follows after the synthetic parallelism of Mark 16:15:

πορευθηκεν εις τον κοιμον αυτον κατα γυναικα της πατη κειθενει.

Yet Mirecki also discusses Mark 16:15 in relation to Romans 10:15 (“Mark 16:9-20: Composition, Tradition and Redaction,” pp. 41–42), comparing also Mark 16:16 with Rom 10:9 (pp. 50–51). On the contrary, this suggests that the same author could discuss the concepts of Mark 16:15–16 in the same passage (Romans 10).

116 The three parts of John 3:18 are designated here as follows: δ ο πιστευει εις αυτον o πιστευει o κρινει (v. 18a), ο δε μη πιστευει ο πιστευει (v. 18b), ο δε μη κρινει ο κρινει (v. 18c).
neither terminologically nor thematically identical." To the latter comment comes in response to the claim of C. H. Dodd and R. E. Brown, who maintain that John and the LE's author offer "variants on the same saying." To dispute this explanation, Mirecki highlights the differences between the two texts, arguing that belief εἰς αὐτὸν in John reflects a "christological" interest, while faith combined with the act of baptism (cf. καί βαπτισθείς) in the LE points to a "sacramental" function. In his effort to dismiss the explanation of Dodd and Brown, however, Mirecki overserves the differences between John 3:18 and Mark 16:16.

In light of the previous chapter's argument concerning the LE's literary dependence on the NT Gospels, it would perhaps be warranted to describe Mark 16:16 in terms of a rewriting of the Johannine verse, and thus to analyze its function in the LE with reference to the narrative of John 3. This possibility, however, must be considered in light of a part of the Kerygma Petri, which also parallels the structure and content of John 3:18ab and Mark 16:16:

οἱ ἀκούσαντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες σωθήσονται. οἱ δὲ μὴ πιστεύσαντες ακούσαντες μαρτυρησονται. Like Mark 16:16 (ο πιστεύσας καὶ βαπτισθείς), the Kerygma Petri contains two participles (οἱ ἀκούσαντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες) in the first part of the statement. Unlike the LE (οὶ δὲ ἀπίστασας) and the Johannine verse (οὶ δὲ μὴ πιστεύοντες), there are also two participles (οἱ δὲ μὴ πιστεύσαντες ἀκούσαντες) in the second half of the parallel statement. Both common features and distinctive elements of each of these three verses may be illustrated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>John 3:18ab</th>
<th>Kerygma Petri 3. b)</th>
<th>Mark 16:16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>δὲ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν</td>
<td>οἱ ἀκούσαντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες σωθήσονται</td>
<td>δὲ πιστεύσας καὶ βαπτισθείς</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>εἰς αὐτόν</td>
<td>σωθήσονται</td>
<td>οἱ δὲ μὴ πιστεύσαντες ἀκούσαντες μαρτυρησονται</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>οὐ κέρδισαι</td>
<td>οὐ δὲ ἀπίστησις</td>
<td>καταθυμηθεῖσαι</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accordingly, each of these three verses compares with parts of the other two but also has its own distinct structural characteristics. Not to be overlooked is larger context within which the antithesis is given in the Kerygma Petri:

οἱ ἀκούσαντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες σωθήσονται
οἱ δὲ μὴ πιστεύσαντες ἀκούσαντες μαρτυρησοσονται
οὐς δὲ κέρδισαν ἢ πιστεύσαντες ἢ ἠκούσαντες
οὐς δὲ εἰς τὸν κόσμον γένοισαν οὐκ ἔχοντες πόνον.

Those who hear and believe will be saved. But those who do not believe when they hear will testify that they do not have an excuse to say "we have not heard." (Kerygma Petri 3. b)

As Mirecki notes, "The two-part schema of belief-salvation in Mark 16:16 and John 3:18 is not employed in AP, which favors a three-part schema of hearing-belief-salvation." The only example Mirecki cites to support the classification of Mark 16:16 as an "antithetic prophetic saying" (emphasis added) is John 3:18ab. Comparing the Kerygma Petri with these two texts, he also argues that the traditional prophetic formula "has been expanded by the addition of [new] elements." Accordingly, it is unpersuasive to argue that connecting the element of 'hearing' to belief and salvation is a novel expansion of an earlier form. Moreover, in comparing Mark 16:16 and John 3:18, Mirecki consistently cites only the first parts of the Johannine verse and, as is also the case with regard to the Kerygma Petri fragment, does not consider the entire statement in the Fourth Gospel:

δὲ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτόν ὁ κρίνεται
οὐ δὲ μὴ πιστεύοντες ἀλλὰ κρίνεται
οὐς δὲ κέρδισαν ἢ πιστεύσαντες ἢ ἠκούσαντες
οὐς δὲ εἰς τὸν κόσμον γένοισαν οὐκ ἔχοντες πόνον.

The one who believes in him is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. (John 3:18)

John 3:18, taken as a whole, is hard to imagine as a prophetic saying aimed at converting those who do not believe. Instead, this warning is more readily understood within the context of the teaching — perhaps, not necessarily,

122 In doing so, Mirecki poses a non sequitur in his argument for the independence of Mark 16:16: because the words of the passages do not line up exactly, the formulations must thus be independent of one another.
123 This section of the Kerygma Petri is designated as fragment "3. b" in W. Schneemelcher, NTPro, 2.39; ET: NTPro, 2.39.
124 Cf. the singular formation of John 3:18b: δὲ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτόν.
126 p. Mirecki, "The Antithetic Saying," p. 234. Mirecki infers from this difference that "a traditional antithetical form of the saying of belief-and-salvation (and the antithetical disbelief-and-condemnation) has been expanded by the addition of elements referring to the hearing (discourse) of the message (ὁ δὲ εἰς τὸν κόσμον τῆς ἡμείας)" (p. 234, emphasis added).
127 Writing decades before the composition of all three texts under discussion, the apostle Paul dwells on this very question and asks, Ἡδεὶς ὁ πῶς ἐναπαύεσθαι εἰς δὲ δυὸ ἐπιτίθενται, τὸς δὲ πιστεύσαντος δόθη τὸ κέρδος τοῦ ζησείας τοῦ κόσμου (Rom 10:14; cf. 10:9—10).
128 The parts of this verse which parallel the structure of Mark 16:16 are designated here as John 3:18ab.
delivered by a prophet — on the implications of belief in the Johannine message.

By contrast, the context of the post-resurrection mission in the *Kerygma Petri*, which offers a saying of the risen Lord to the disciples, is much closer to that of the LE:

I have chosen you twelve because I judge you worthy to be my disciples. And I send them, of whom I was persuaded that they would be true apostles, into the world to proclaim to men in all the world the joyous message that they may know that there is (only) one God, and to reveal what future happenings these would be through faith in me, to the end that those who hear and believe may be saved, and that those who believe not may testify that they have heard it and will not be able to excuse themselves saying, ‘We have not heard.’

Viewed in this light, Mark 16:16 may also be understood as “missionary instruction” in that the saying stems from reflection on the kerygma in relation to the sending out of apostles by the risen Jesus.

This observation does not exclude the literary label of “antithetic prophetic statement” Mirecki proposes. The supposed oral history of this material, however, is unnecessary to explain the origin and present form of Mark 16:16. Mirecki also does not demonstrate that Mark 16:16 lost its “earlier frame of reference and inadvertently acquired a more obscure nature” within the context of Mark 16:9–20. There is nothing “obscure” about this verse except when one divorces it from the LE’s context. Moreover, the fact that the context of the LE is necessary to interpret this verse could be taken to imply that an oral stage of the tradition behind Mark 16:16 never existed. At the very least, the thesis that Mark 16:16 reflects a novel composition intending to offer perspective on the missionary activity of Jesus’ followers should be regarded as plausible since written traditions as old as John 3:18a and even Romans 10:9 (mentioned above) predate the writing of Mark 16:16. This is not to say, however, that Mark 16:16 never could have served an oral function. It is entirely conceivable that the author of the LE conceived of those commissioned in Mark 16:15 as proclaiming the wording of 16:16, which would then be authenticated by the signs of 16:17a–18.

With regard to the form of Mark 16:16, the brevity of this verse stands out in comparison with the other two verses:

- ὁ πρῶτος εἶς αὐτὸν ἐκ τῆς κόσμου
- ὡς ὁ πρῶτος εἶς τῷ κόσμῳ

Τίς μὴ προφητεύεται ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων τοῦ μανθανὸν τοῦ τοῦ ήλιον (John 3:18)
- ὁ δὲ πρῶτος ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ
- ὁ δὲ πρῶτος ἐκ τοῦ πατεροῦ

ὁ δὲ πρῶτος ἐκ τοῦ πατεροῦ ἐκ τοῦ πατεροῦ
οὐκ ἔχει τινος ἀπολογίαν ἔχειν τοῦ πατεροῦ (Kerygma Petri 3. b)
- ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πατεροῦ

The other two texts offer an explicit frame of reference within which the implications of belief and unbelief are explicitly stated. There is a reason for the judgment of unbelievers (John 3:18a) and an explanation of the circumstances under which unbelievers will confess their guilt (Kerygma Petri 3. b).

A likely reason for the brevity of the LE’s formulation may be found in the fact that Mark 16:15 already provides such a framework for Mark 16:16: salvation or condemnation is based upon belief in the message of those who preach the gospel. It is thus not necessary, as Mirecki does, to posit the existence of an earlier, written form of Mark 16:16 before the composition of the LE. When one considers the fact that John 3:18a was not necessary for the purposes of the LE’s author and the selective way the LE’s author appropriated other written traditions, it is not unthinkable that Mark 16:16 reflects a shortening and adaptation of the antithetic prophetic statement in John 3:18b, which happens to parallel the later function of Kerygma Petri 3. b.

Another distinctive characteristic of Mark 16:16 concerns the connection of one’s baptism with the promise of salvation: ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πατεροῦ. This expression stands in contrast with the other two analogous texts — mentioning only belief (ὁ πρῶτος; John 3:18a) or hearing and belief (ὁ δὲ πρῶτος ἐκ τοῦ πατεροῦ; Kerygma Petri 3. b) — but not a site of initiation like baptism. As noted in the preceding paragraphs about this verse’s brevity, an understanding of Mark 16:16 in relation to 16:15, as well as its source, Matt 28:19, also sheds light on the occurrence of καὶ βαπτισθείς in v. 16a.

As argued in chapter 3, a likely source for this distinctive element in Mark 16:16a is the mission charge of Matt 28:19: ἰσχυρότερον σὸν

resurrection context of Mark 16:16. In addition, the author of the *Kerygma Petri* could have expanded the compact formulation of Mark 16:15–16. In light of the fact that the origin of the ideas in all three texts is a question that requires further clarification, a firm stand on this issue will not be taken here.
The Origin, Date and Literary Forms of the Longer Ending

...the origin of the LE shows no interest in the Matthewian trinitarian statement, it is likely that he noticed the mention of baptism in Matt 28:19 and incorporated this into Mark 16:16a. Moreover, an important difference between Matt 28:19 and Mark 16:16a contributes toward an explanation of the distinct presentation of mission in Mark 16:15—18 as compared with Matthew 28. The brief mention of baptism in Mark 16:16a can be viewed as a way of using part of the Matthewian tradition to make a somewhat different point. Instead of "...and baptize" (Matt 28:19), the LE's author states that "...the one who believes and is baptized will be saved." Matthew mentions baptism from the perspective of the start of the mission while the author of the LE considers the effects of evangelization and the response of the believer in baptism. Such a difference as compared with Matthew could also reflect the influence of Acts 2:38, which, like Mark 16:16, emphasizes the importance of baptism for those who respond to Peter's Pentecost speech: "...for the promise is for you, and for your children, and for all who are far off, whoever..." (Acts 2:39).

One inference following from the different portrayals of baptism in Matt 28:19 and in Mark 16:15 is that vv. 15—18 point to a chronological progression in how the mission is presented in the LE. At first, Mark 16:15 (προβάλλοντες...καταρτίζετε κτλ.) reflects much the same emphasis as Matt 28:19a (προβάλλοντες...καταρτίζετε κτλ.) with the charge to begin the mission. Whereas Matt 28:19b (βαπτίζοντες...κτλ) continues in the same vein, Mark 16:16a jumps ahead in time to the status of those who do (and do not) respond to the missionary preaching: those who believe will also be baptized and enjoy assurance of eternal salvation.

This source- and redaction-critical analysis accounts for both the distinctive allusion to baptism in Mark 16:16a and the relatively incontiguous shift in emphasis from the past mission (v. 15), to the status of those converted (v. 16), and then toward the present mission, which is to be accompanied by miraculous signs (vv. 17—18).

To summarize, in Mark 16:16 one finds a definition of faith analogous to John 3:18ab which has been augmented by the allusion to baptism in Matt 28:19b and perhaps also Acts 2:38. As compared with the similar sayings of John 3:18ab and Kerygma Petri 3, b, the brevity of this verse may be explained as follows: the context provided by Mark 16:15 allows for a more compact expression in 16:16. Likewise, the shift in emphasis from mentioning baptism at the beginning of the mission (Matt 28:19b) to alluding to the effects of evangelization (Mark 16:16a) accounts for the presence of καὶ βαπτίζετε in the LE.

c) The Miracle List of Mark 16:17—18

Mark 16:17—18 makes the intriguing claim that "those who believe" will perform the following five miracles:

- σημαίνει Ἀρίσταρχος ταῦτα παρακολουθημένος ἔν τῷ ἄγγελῳ ὑμοῦ, οὐ μὴ ἐβαπτίσθησιν ἡμῖν. 
- γλῶσσας ἔλαβον καὶ ἀναφήματα ἐξέχρισαν, καὶ ἐπέλεξαν ἑαυτοὺς ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ τῆς ἁγίας Λατρείας, 
- εἰς ἑαυτούς ἑξετάζων καὶ ἀπελεύθερων καὶ καυχάτω ἐξετάζων. 
- καὶ ἄνευ άγγελου ἐπέλεξαν ἑαυτὰς ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ τῆς ἁγίας Λατρείας, 
- καὶ ἄνευ άγγελου ἐπέλεξαν ἑαυτὰς ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ τῆς ἁγίας Λατρείας.

As in previous sections, the primary aim here is to compare the literary features of this text with analogous formulations in Christian writings of the first three centuries. In certain respects, however, the discussion of verses 17—18 will differ from the analyses of other parts of the LE because, unlike in the case of, for example, the post-resurrection appearances and the ascension, no one to date has offered a comprehensive study of miracle lists in early Christian literature. Accordingly, observations about miracle lists in general are offered here with the understanding that much remains to be done in this neglected area. This discussion will investigate in some detail the formal features of these two verses in relation to other ancient lists of wonders and will, as a result, be more extensive than other parts of this chapter.

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133 Note also the interest of Tertullian (De Bapt. 13.3) and Cyprian (Ep. 27.3) in Matt 28:18—20 for its mention of baptism, and see E. Haüßler, "Der Schluss des Markusvangeliums (Mk 16, 9—20)," p. 343; pp. 495—56, esp. p. 54; Martin Goodman, Mission and Conversion: Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994) 107. On the omission of the Matthewian trinitarian statement, see also the Excursus in chapter 5.

134 Cf. the comment of Eugene LaVerdiere: "What follows the basic commission (16:15) is very different from the commission in Matthew 28 and Luke 24. In both Matthew and Luke, Jesus continues to develop the commission. The focus is on the Eleven, those who are sent on mission. In the alternate ending, the focus shifts from those who are sent on mission to those to whom they are sent, those who should benefit from the mission" ("The Gospel According to Mark: The Longer Ending. An Alternate Ending [16:9—20] Interpretation [conc."], Emmanuel 105 [June, 1997] 290, emphasis added).

I) Critique of Paul Mirecki’s History-of-Traditions Analysis

As he does with Mark 16:15 and 16:16, Paul Mirecki offers a form-critical analysis of the LE’s miracle list in an effort to reconstruct the oral and compositional history of Mark 16:17—18. Because of the literary features of such lists in the NT Gospels and certain other ancient writings, he argues that a much shorter group of oral ‘couplets’ underwent significant change when written down, and was subsequently expanded by the redactor of Mark 16:17—18.136 In light of other miracle lists “in poetic form with four or more lines in asyndeton,” he concludes that the following oral statement originally stood behind what eventually came to be expanded into the LE’s miracle list:

διαμαντα ἐκβάλετον
gλώσσας καλότεραν
dέξει ἄροτρον
cέρας ἐπίσημουν.137

The plausibility of this argument depends heavily upon his analysis of two Matthean miracle lists which exhibit literary features similar to those of Mark 16:17—18:

ἀσφαλέντος δοράτους, νεκροῦς ἐγέρετο,
λεπτοὶ καθώστικες, διαμόνα ἐκβάλετον (Matt 10:8a)
tοῦ διὰ ἀναπλήρωσιν καὶ χολοὶ ἐπεταπροάσκουν,
περίπλοθοι καθηύνονται καὶ καφαὶ ἐκπέφυγον.
καὶ νεκροὶ ἐγέρονται καὶ ποιοῖ οἰκεῖοι εὐλογηλόμονται (Matt 11:5)138

As will be discussed further below, Mirecki’s form-critical conclusions are based upon a comparison of Mark 16:17—18 with only certain miracle lists and do not inspire confidence.

With regard to the function of such lists, Mirecki writes that “in narratives which are devoid of miracle stories (Matt 10:1—42; Mark 16:9—20) the same lists (Matt 10:8a; Mark 16:17—18) bring such narratives into the orbit of the aetiological and propagandistic, however secondary that might be to the immediate concerns of those narratives.”139 Part of his argument concerning the origin of Mark 16:17—18 thus hinges on the tenous thesis that, just as Matt 10:8a is a secondary addition to an earlier form of Matthew 16, Mark 16:17—18 reflects a similar redactional expansion of the LE.140 To support this position, Mirecki examines the history of the traditions behind Matt 10:8a and 11:5. With regard to the latter verse, he argues that, unlike Luke 4:18—19 and Barnabas 14:9, the “sixth part Q list” of Matt 11:5/Luke 7:22b “is heavily laden with various mnemonic devices,” which he deems a “definitive element of the subgenre” of miracle lists.141 Building on the discussion of rhythm, assonance/consonance and rhyme by Joachim Jeremias, Mirecki argues that the LE’s miracle list, like Matt 10:8a, “also contains a mnemonically structured oral rhyme.”142

Noteworthy is the way in which Mirecki’s literary observations relate to his history-of-traditions analysis of Mark 16:17—18. As noted above, the use of “mnemonic devices” is first offered as a “definitive element of miracle lists. As a result, since certain parts of the LE’s list of miracles do not meet this criterion (for example, καὶ τοὺς τα ἐξουσίας τούτης ἐπίσημουν καὶ καφαὶ ἐξερρέονται), Mark 16:17b—18 as a whole cannot reflect a composition of one author and must therefore be the result of a later expansion of a more compact, parallel and mnemonically constructed list.

Moving from a discussion of an oral to a written medium of communication, Mirecki posits that “the redactor,” who compiled the final form of LE, reworked an earlier miracle list and bracketed it with an introductory appeal to ἐξερρέων τούτους τα ἐπισθενήθης, 16:17a) and concluding ἔλεγχον τα ἐπισθενήθης τούτους σημείων, 16:20c) framework.143 After its initial textual stage, an additional change in the formal material is also said to have occurred:

Once removed from its acoustic sphere by absorption into the textual, and having thereby lost any oral function, the list was subjected to at least one scribal hand which glossed it at five points in an attempt to explain the unusual sense. . . .144

140 In the case of Matthew 10, this point is stated rather than argued. With regard to P. Mirecki’s analysis of the LE’s earlier “core narrative,” see the discussion above on the unity of the LE.
The Literary Forms of the Individual Parts of the LE

Having thus traced three (or more) steps of the oral and compositional history of Mark 16:17—18, Mirecki concludes that this remarkably compact and parallel list is the earliest recoverable form of the following list:

διαμενεν εκβαλοντι
gλοσσανα λαθράσισιν
dεσμις προσων
cχαρις επλήσφουσιν. 146

This four-line series of couplets does parallel the third and fourth noun-verb constructions of Matt 10:8a (cited above) but not the first two items of Matt 10:8a, which comprise a participle and a substantive adjective. Moreover, the construction of Matt 11:5 (cited above) is also somewhat different from the LE's miracle list, since in Matt 11:5 the nouns are the subjects, not the objects, of the verbs.

Furthermore, the thesis that the LE's miracle list ever existed in an oral form is suspect, for it is dubious that the second and fourth couplets—
gλοσσανα λαθράσισιν and cχαρις επλήσφουσιν ("in languages they will speak" and "by the grace they will lay on")—would be intelligible as spoken statements. Mirecki's form- and reduction-critical analysis of the LE's miracle list could nonetheless have a measure of plausibility if the passages upon which he concentrates offered the closest literary analogies to Mark 16:17—18. As the discussion to follow indicates, however, a selective and somewhat tendentious treatment of only certain miracle lists is partly responsible for his flawed analysis.

2) Mark 16:17b—18 in Comparison with Other Ancient Miracle Lists

Before comparing Mark 16:17—18 with other miracle lists of the ancient world, a definition of terms is in order. Mirecki offers a literary designation for these verses as follows: "In terms of genre relations, the semeia lists find their closest generic counterparts in the miracle story. It is in this relation that the semeia list can be considered a subgenre." 147 Mirecki is certainly correct that this literary designation applies to the LE's list of signs. This discussion, however, will use the designation "miracle list" because in the ancient world miracles, and thus lists of wondrous acts, were described with a variety of terms (for example, δεινος, λαθρος, ἡγομαι) and not just the one which occurs twice in the LE (Mark 16:17a, 16:20c). 148

Mirecki's second point—that miracle lists should be considered a subgenre of miracle stories—is open to debate, however. Julian Hills correctly distinguishes between collections of miracles and "summaries" of them:

Miracle lists, to be distinguished from the semeia source widely held to have been a forerunner to the Gospel of John, and from the series of miracle stories or "miracle accounts" claimed to stand behind the Gospel of Mark, are the most simple of miracle format summaries, as if by title or essential content, of mighty deeds. 149

While collections of miracles and "summaries . . . of mighty deeds" are clearly related to one another, there is no compelling reason that the latter are to be designated as a subgenre of the former. 150

With regard to defining the specific characteristics of any miracle list, the following features will receive attention here:

1) the content of the list (that is, what miracles receive mention); 2) the form (how the miracles are described); 3) the performer(s) of the miracles; and 4) the deception of when the miracles take place.

In discussing the point at which the miracles take place, in certain cases it will be important to take into account the vantage points of both the original saying and the intended audience. 151 In order to illustrate these

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With regard to Julian Hills' description of miracle lists as "summaries . . . of mighty deeds," in the LE there are brief descriptions of miracles, but it is not clear whether all five signs of Mark 16:17—18 can apply to the LE's second sign of speaking in new languages or to the fourth sign of surviving poison. This issue will be discussed further toward the end of this section.

151 For example, in Matt 10:5—15 (cf. 10:16—42) Jesus commissions the disciples and instructs them in 10:8 to perform miracles. From the standpoint of the narrative, the miracles are anticipated in the imminent future, but the evangelist Matthew reports them to his audience as a past event.
characteristics, an analysis of four test cases will suggest how, in a preliminary way, one may define both characteristic and distinctive features of Mark 16:17—18.

i) An Initial Test Case: Isaiah 35:5—7

In Isa 35:5—7 the prophet offers a vision for what will come to pass when God brings salvation upon Israel (cf. Isa 34:1—35:4):

Although only verses 5—6a refer to miracles which affect people directly, this list should be interpreted within its larger context of a promise concerning a renewal of the land as a whole, when “waters will spring forth from the wilderness” (vv. 6b—7).

With regard to the content of the list, there are four miracles: the blind will see; the deaf will hear; the lame will leap like a deer; the tongue of the dumb will be made clear. The rigid translation of the LXX preserves this syntax but alters the voice and meaning of the second verb (Δαισκέιναι):

This initial pattern, however, is not continued in the remainder of Isa 35:5—7. The third miracle (δεσμὴ ἀνδρός μοι; τότε ἄλεσθαι ὡς ἄλεσθαι ὁ γάλακτος) is expressed by means of a simile (7; ὅργ.): “the lame person will leap like a deer.” As with the first two miracles, the fourth also contains absolute and construct nouns (εἰς τὴν ἀληθινὴν γλῶσσαν μοιγίδαλων). On the other hand, whereas in the Hebrew the verb “to be” is implied by the presence of the predicate ἔστω, in the LXX, the same — and, within this list, distinctive —

predicate nominative construction appears, but the verb is supplied: τραυμα ἔστιν (“the tongue of the dumb will be [made] clear”). As noted above, the prophet connects these miracles with a future restoration of the devastated land (...). Finally, the prophet implies, but does not specifically state, that the Lord is the one who will bring about these miracles and that they are to take place at some point in the future, perhaps when the Israelites return from exile.

ii) A Second Test Case: Matthew 15:31

In its present context, the miracle list of Matt 15:31 must be read with the two verses that precede it:

καὶ μετὰ αὐτῶν ἐκκλησία διδάσκοντα καὶ τῆς διδασκαλίας τῆς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ συνεργητής τοῦ διδάσκαλου ἔφη, καὶ προσέβλεξεν αὐτῶν ὁ Υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ πολλοί ἔργαι ταῦτα ἐν τοῖς ἀστέρισιν τοῖς τόμοις αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐσκοπήσαντον αὐτῶν. Αὕτη ἡ ἐκκλησία τῶν ἀδελφῶν βλέποντας καὶ λαλοῦντας, καὶ κυρίως ὁ γηγενής καὶ ἔκκλησαν τὴν ἀδελφὴν τοῦ τοίνυπτρίου (Matt 15:28—31)

This passage begins with a transitional introduction (v. 29) and then a summary statement concerning those who came to Jesus seeking healing (v. 30a). In v. 31 the crowd marvels at the healing of the dumb, maimed, lame and blind. In the miracle list the parallel noun-participle construction occurs in the first, third and fourth items (κύριος λαλοῦντας ... χαλεπός πεποίθοται καὶ τυφλοὶς βλέποντας), but the second contains a noun followed by a predicate adjective (κυρίως ὁ γηγενής). Jesus is presented as the performer of these specific acts. From the point of view of Matthew and his audience, these miracles occurred in the past.

iii) A Third Test Case: Sibylline Oracles 6:13—16

In Sibylline Oracles 6, which comprises a hymn to Christ of some twenty-eight lines, the following list of miracles occurs:

κυρίαν πεζόσεβος, κοίματ' ἄνθρωπον ἀπὸ αἰεῶν, ὁρώνεις τοιχοῦσας, ἀποδίδετ' ἑκεῖνα θαλαμός ἔφετε, καὶ ἐκ τῆς πλῆθος ἄνθρωπος ἄνθρωπον, ὅπως ἦν λαοῦ ῥητό ἄριστον ....

152 It may or may not be a coincidence that the LXX translates chosen deponent verb (Δαισκέιναι), which, like δαισκόνται, is middle in form but active in meaning and corresponds to the morphemes of the previous verbs (Δαισκέιναι and δαισκόνται).
He will walk the waves; he will undo the sickness(es) of people; he will raise the dead. He will repel many woes. From one walled man will have suffiX of bread when the house of David brings forth a shoot. . . .

This author apparently points to Jesus’ walking on water (Mark 6:45—52), healing ministry, raising the dead and feeding the multitudes (for example, Mark 6:30—44, 8:1—10). It is not clear, however, to what the repelling of “many woes” refers (Sib. Or. 6.13—15).

With regard to the formal features of this list, all five items contain a future indicative verb (for example, πεζέυεται). In the first two wonders the verb appears after the object, while in the next two it occurs in the initial position. Although the brevity of these first four items seems intentional, there is little discernable parallelism in the substantives (σῶμα, νόσον διαφόρων, τεράτων, ἅλεγον πολλά). The final miracle stands out from the first four in both its length and use of descriptive adjectives. In contrast with Paul Mirecki’s above cited generalization, Sib. Or. 6.15 offers a witness that both a degree of parallelism within a miracle list and a notable departure from such parallelism are compatible within the same list. The performer of the miracles, of course, is Jesus, and in this ex events prophecy the wonders are portrayed as occurring at some future point. Both the author and the audience, of course, would have associated the miracles with the past ministry of Jesus.

iv) A Fourth Test Case: Acts of Andrew and Matthias 10

In the Acts of Andrew and Matthias 10 Andrew is unaware that he is speaking with the risen Jesus (cf. Luke 24:13—30, John 20:15). The apostle asks, “Have you not heard the miracles which he did before them?” and then recites the following list of Jesus’ miracles:

τύχει σώμα πεζέυεται, νοσόν διαφόρων, καβούρα ἁλειπόει, λειψάνου ἐκείθερον, καὶ λαβὸς πάντα ἄραντι καὶ δύο ἐρῆμα ἐποίησεν ἰδρύμων ἀνακολούθησαν ἐν χώρᾳ, καὶ εὐλογηταὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν· ἦσαν δὲ οἱ δομικοὶ κεντρικοῖς ἄνθρωποι καὶ ἐχορτάσαντον καὶ ἦσαν τὰ περιστάτονα αὐτὸς ὄνωπος κοινὸν κλαμπίσαν.


135 Similar ex events prophecies about Christ’s miracles appear in Sib. Or. 1.331—339 and 8.269—281, as well as in the Testament of Adam 3:1.

He made the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, he cleansed lepers, he changed water into wine; and taking five loaves and two fishes, he made a crowd recline on grass, and after giving thanks he gave it to them to eat. And those who ate were five thousand men, and their hunger was satisfied. And they took up what remained among them: twelve baskets of leavings.156

After the list the author concludes, “And (even) after these things all did not believe in him!” This list of miracles mentions the healing of the blind, lame, deaf, as well as the specific wonders of changing water into wine and feeding the five thousand. The first three items reflect a marked interest in both brevity and grammatical parallelism in that the three infinitives (ἀνεπίθετον, πεζεύεσθαι, ἀλειποῖον) complement the verb ἐποίησεν. In addition, the single-word, indefinite object of each infinitive (τυχεῖν, τοῖς οὖν, κατεργάσει) appears in the initial position. The fourth miracle (λεπίδοι ἐκείθερον) substitutes a finite verb for the infinitive, and the fifth (δοῦνα ἄραντα) also comes rather close to this parallel structure. As noted in Sib. Or. 6.15, however, the final miracle relating the feeding of the five thousand (καὶ λαξίν γένετο ἄραντι καὶ δύο ἐρήμων eil.) departs radically from the brevity and parallel structure of the other five miracles. As is discussed below, such use of a parallel structure in some, but not all, of a miracle list occurs also in the Acts of Peter and Paul 41 and at a number of points in Epistula Apostolorum 4—5. Finally, as is the case in the majority of early Christian miracle lists, the Acts of Andrew and Matthias 10 recalls the past wonder-working of Jesus during his earthly ministry.

v) Summary of the Four Test Cases

The features noted in Isaiah 35:5—7, Matthew 15:31, Sibylline Oracles 6.13—16 and the Acts of Andrew and Matthias 10 concerning the four elements examined in each passage — 1) the miracles enumerated in the list; 2) recurring formal features in the list; 3) performance(s) of the miracles; and 4) the time the author relates the miracles occurred or are to occur — may be summarized as follows:

magnificence in a different way. The author of Matthew lists some of the miracles of the earthly Jesus which the apostles witnessed. The author of Sib. Or. 6:13—16 crafts an ex eventu prophecy, according to which Jesus’ miracles authenticate Jesus as the messiah. Finally, Andr.Math. 10 reflects the polemical intent of condemning those who were not persuaded by Jesus’ miracles. At present it remains to discuss certain other lists of miracles that shed light on the method of composition and peculiar formal features of Mark 16:17b—18.

vi) Implications for the Interpretation of Mark 16:17b—18

As mentioned above, the LE’s miracle list contains a total of five signs, namely exorcising demons, speaking in new languages, picking up snakes, surviving a deadly drink and performing healings:

- ἐν τῷ ὄνοματί μου διαμόνα καυλάσων,
- γλῶσσας λαλήσωμεν κανάν,
- δεῖξεν ἀρέσκουν
- καὶ ταῦτα ἕνεκας τί πάσην σοὶ μὴ αὐτοῦ μᾶλλις,
- ἐπὶ ἀρεσθόντος χειρός ἐκθέοντος καὶ καλὸς ἑξοισιν.

Unlike the passages in Isaiah and Matthew, but somewhat closer to Sibylline Oracles 6:13—16 and Acts of Andrew and Matthias 10, the list in the LE reflects a variety of formal features. The signs vary in length from a two-word statement (δεῖξεν ἀρέσκουν, 16:18a) to a conditional sentence (καὶ ταῦτα ἕνεκας τί πάσην σοὶ μὴ αὐτοῦ μᾶλλις, 16:18b).

Despite these differences between the five miracles of Mark 16:17b—18, the type of parallelism discussed by Paul Mirecki in the noun-verb constructions — διαμόνα καυλάσων, γλῶσσας λαλήσωμεν... δεῖξεν ἀρέσκουν... χειρός ἐκθέοντος, and perhaps also καλὸς ἑξοισιν — seems intentional on the part of the LE’s author. Equally interesting in this fourfold repetition, moreover, is the degree of variation one observes in each instance: no two grammatical constructions are alike in this list. Only one sign, δεῖξεν ἀρέσκουν, is limited to a simple noun-verb formulation. The first sign is prefixed by ἐν τῷ ὄνοματι μου, and the second includes the adjective κανάν after γλῶσσας λαλήσωμεν. The last sign places the noun-verb construction in the middle of the phrase, designating at the beginning those upon whom hands will be laid (ἐπὶ ἀρεσθόντος) and promising at the end that the sick will recover (καὶ καλὸς ἑξοισιν). By contrast, the most anomalous construction in this list is the fourth sign, which promises, “and if they should drink anything deadly, it will not harm them.”

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157 Strictly speaking, the LE’s miracle list appears in vv. 17b—18. Verse 17a connects this list to the expectation that signs will accompany those who believe. These preliminary observations concerning the unity and diversity of features occurring in miracle lists and the implications for the interpretation of Mark 16:17b—18 would probably need to be revised in light of a comprehensive examination of miracle lists in the ancient world. Such an examination would perhaps follow lines similar to those outlined above. As noted at the beginning of this section, such a comprehensive study remains a desideratum but lies outside the scope of this investigation.


159 Such a diversity of formal features within each of these texts supports the above point that Paul Mirecki’s search for a single, parallel original form of miracle lists like Mark 16:17b—18 is misguided. This diversity also demonstrates that written lists like Isa 29:18—19, 35:5—7 and 61:1—3a existed centuries before the oral stages of early Christianity.

160 Of course, the concluding adverb-verb construction (v. 18c) differs slightly from the others, but the rhythm of these two words corresponds to that of the list as a whole.
In addition, Mark 16:17a promises that “those who believe” will perform miraculous signs. Although this saying occurs in the context of a mission charge directed toward the eleven (cf. 16:14—15), the designation τῶν πιστώσαντων cannot be limited to the first apostles. The question who is to perform these miraculous signs is tied to the question when they are to occur. According to Mark 16:9—20, the risen Jesus appeared to the eleven and gave them a mission charge (vv. 14—18). After the ascension and session (v. 19), they departed on a mission, which was to be characterized by signs granted by the ascended Lord (τοῦ κυρίου συγγενέτου καὶ τῶν ἱκάνοντος ἀνθρώπον συμπαθείς, v. 20b). Thus the time frame for the fulfillment of Mark 16:17—18 is the period after the ascension, which continued to (and beyond) the time of the author of the LE. Recipients of the LE, like those who first listened to Isa 35:5—7, but unlike the first audience of Matt 15:31, could thus be led to have present and future expectations based on this text. The following sections will address the two parts of Mark 16:17—18 highlighted above, namely the expectation that believers will perform miracles (16:17a) and the formal and compositional features of the LE’s list of five miracles (16:17b—18).

3. Miracle Lists Attributed to Early Christians

The vast majority of early Christian miracle lists refer to deeds of Jesus. 161 Those describing the miracles of Jesus’ followers are much less common and, in most cases, also point to the past deeds of apostolic figures rather than to a present or future expectation of miraculous phenomena. 162 Exceptions to the latter group are Irenaeus’ list of miracles performed by believers of his day (Adv. Haer. ii.31.4) and an unusual passage in the Pistis Sophia (iii.110) claiming that all people can be able to perform a number of “mysteries,” which are interpreted as miracles. 163 Although neither Adv.

161 See, e.g., Matt 4:23—24; 10:5a, 11:5, 15:31 (cf. Mark 7:37); Luke 4:38—39 (citing Isa 61:1—2); Luke 7:22b; Justin Martyr, Apol. 1.48.1—2; Melito of Sardis, Vita Dom. fragment 15; Tertullian, Apol. 21.17; Cyril of Alexandria, Contra Noectum 1, 18.6—7; Pseudo-Hippolytus, frag. in Psalms 2; Apostolic Constitutions 5.7.24—28; Commodian, Carm. aequal. 659—660; Abgar’s letter in the Teaching of Addai, Acts of Pilate 1.1; Acts of Peter and Paul 41; Acts of Palestine 5 (in H. Munsell, Acts of the Christian Martyrs, pp. 335—355; cf. the longer list in 4.3 of the Latin version, pp. 438—439); Epitome Apostolorum 6, Passion of Bartholomew 7; Testimony of Truth 32.2—33.9; Vindiciae Apostolorum 4—5; Sib. Or. 1.351—359; 5:80—281 and Testament of Adam 5:1. See the discussion below of Ps.-Cl, Rec. 3.60, the Acts of Andrew (Martyrdom 1.3), The Act of Peter 123.10—17a and the Acts of Philip 1.2. Such an interest in reporting past miracles also parallels certain Hellenistic texts like Iamblichus, De Vita Pythagorica 135—137; Lucian, Alexander 26; as well as the claims of the emperor Julian as related by Cyril of Alexandria, Contra Julianum Book 6 (PG 76.805a—808b).

162 Of related interest is Sib. Or. 8:205—208, which expects miracles but does not mention who will perform them. Occurring within a “Christian eschatological context” (G. J.

Haer. ii.31.4 or Pistis Sophia iii.110 offers an exact match for Mark 16:17—18, these texts offer the closest analogies associated with a miracle list. Unlike the preliminary discussion of four test cases, this section is not primarily concerned with the literary characteristics of these miracle lists but will focus on the future expectation of miracles in a certain list. As mentioned above, certain miracle lists point to the past deeds of apostolic figures. For example, in the Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions 3.60 Peter draws a parallel between Jesus’ miracles and those that the apostle himself performs:

[Jesu] gave sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf, raised up the dead and the lame, drove away sickness and demons, raised the dead, and did other like things, as you see also that I (Peter) do. 164

In light of this text, David Frankfurter posits that “it is certainly possible that missionaries used miracle-lists to compare their own powers to Jesus the Mosaic prophet—Jesus did X, Y, and Z, and so have I.” 165 Although this explanation is plausible, it is not compelling in the case of Ps.-Cl, Rec. 3.60 because Frankfurter underestimates the difficulty of basing a historical conclusion on a literary fiction. This text points to the past deeds of one apostle who had passed away long before the composition of the Recognitions. It is therefore very difficult to base conclusions on Ps.-Cl, Rec. 3.60 about missionary activity at the time in which this author wrote. This same line of interpretation applies also to the depictions of past apostolic miracles in the Acts of Andrew (Martyrdom 1.3), The Act of Peter

Collins, OTP, 1.410, this miracle list delineates what will take place at some future point:

There will be a resurrection of the dead and a great storm raising of the lame, and the deaf will hear, the blind will see, those who cannot speak will speak, and life and wealth will be common to all. 166 Regardless of the means by which these miracles are to occur, they are clearly regarded as signs of the anticipated time of fulfillment. The closest literary analogy to this text are the prophecies of Third Isaiah, which also anticipate a future restoration of the earth. Frankfurter, “Origins of the Miracle-List,” p. 367 notes that the “apostle Peter is in fact uses a miracle-list of Jesus to legitimize himself (in competition with Simon Magus).”

164 D. Frankfurter, “Origins of the Miracle-List,” p. 367. On the contrary, the opposite interpretation may be justified: rather than claiming that the similarity of Peter’s miracles to those of Jesus lends credulity to the apostle, the author may reason that Peter’s miracles authenticate Jesus’ signs for people who witnessed those performed by Peter. In addition, Frankfurter’s claim about comparing one’s own miracles to those of Jesus would not necessarily apply to the LE, for only two of the five miracles—performing exorcisms and healing the sick—are attributed to the earthly Jesus in early Christian literature. In the case of the other three signs in Mark 16:17b—18, another motivation must be at work.
128.10—17a and the Acts of Philip 12. For example, in the Acts of Andrew (Martyrdom 3), Julian Hills observes an apologetic motive: “The specifics of Andrew’s list ... appear to be directly or indirectly indebted to the Marthian version of the commissioning of the Twelve; the vocabulary is not identical, but the categories correspond exactly in Matt 10:8.”166 This similarity suggests that the miracle list demonstrates “that Andrew has fulfilled the biblical, dominical commission.”167 Such an apologetic desire to legitimate Andrew as an apostle because he has fulfilled the command of Jesus recorded in the NT is markedly different from the LE’s expectation of future miracles. In like manner, both The Act of Peter 128.10—17a168 and Acts of Philip 12169 record the past miracles of these apostles but do not claim to offer information concerning a contemporary situation.

i) The Miracle Lists of Adv. Haer. ii.31.2—32.4

Toward the end of Book ii in his work Against Heresies, Irenaeus places in a negative light “those ... who belong to Simon and Carpocrates, ... who are said to perform miracles (qui ... utruses operari dicuntur)” and offers a


168 The Act of Peter 128.10—17a: “But on the first day of the week, which is the Lord’s day, a crowd collected, and they brought many sick people to Peter for him to heal them. But one of the crowd ventured to say to Peter, ‘Look, Peter, before our eyes you have made many (who were) blind to see and the deaf to hear and the lame to walk, and you have helped the weak and given them strength’” (ET: James Brandor and Douglas M. Parrott in Nihil, p. 529). As J. Hills observes, “this brief miracle list serves only to establish the prowess of the apostle in the immediate narrative context” before he heals his own sick daughter (“Miracle Lists in Apocalypsic Acts,” p. 385). The author does not call attention to contemporary miracles but simply offers this list as a preface to the narrative of a miracle which is said to have occurred in the past.

169 A letter written to the high priest at Jerusalem summarizes the deeds of Philip’s miraculous ministry in Greece and Macedonia. The letter reads, in part, “And he does the wonderful things (τα θαυματουργα) which we write to you: he cast out demons who have lingered in people, he makes the deaf to hear, the blind to see, and the most amazing things, which should have been reported first: he raised those who have completed their life and died. And his fame has spread to all Greece and Macedonia, and many are those who are coming to him from the surrounding cities and bringing those who have been harmed by various diseases, and he heals all through the name of Jesus.” The narrator of this letter asks the high priest to come and give advice concerning the teaching and activities of Philip. The Greek text of Acts of Philip 12 appears in C. von Tischendorf, H. A. Lipsius and M. Beneck, Acta Apostolorum Apocalypsis post Constantinum Tischendorfii, 2:26—7. The ET is my own.

170 The Literary Forms of the Individual Parts of the LE

171 Irenaeus lists four miracles — curing blindness, deafness, demon possession and other acts of healing — which heretics cannot perform. He then contrasts their impotence in performing miracles with the activity of Jesus, the apostles and contemporary believers.

And so far are they from being able to raise the dead, as the Lord raised them, and the apostles did by means of prayer, and has been frequently done in the brotherhood on account of some necessity (et in fratres saepissime propter aliquid necessarium) ... that they do not even believe this can possibly be done.171

This statement highlights especially one act of power, the performing of exorcisms within the church, at which believers excel in contrast with their heretical adversaries.

Moreover, a different list of miracles occurs later in this passage and constitutes one of two responses172 to the charge that the miracles of Jesus were not authentic:

Wherefore, also, those who are in truth his disciples, receiving grace (gratia; χάρις) from him, do in his name perform [miracles],173 so as to promote the welfare of others, according to the gift which each one has received from him.

Per some do certainly and truly drive out devils, so that (et etiam saepissime; καὶ τοιοῦτον) those who have thus been cleansed from evil spirits frequently both believe and join themselves to the church (credent ... et sit in Ecclesia; πίστευσε ... καὶ είναι εν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ).

172 Adv. Haer. ii.31.2: cf. ii.32.3. Throughout ii.31.2—32.4 Irenaeus is not primarily interested in the miracles of contemporary believers, which he mentions to serve as a foil for illegitimate miracle-workers and to support the authenticity of Jesus’ miracles. Moreover, Irenaeus does not deny that heretics perform miracles but instead questions the character of those miracles and the motivation of those who perform them.

173 Adv. Haer. ii.31.3. Irenaeus continues this contrast in that “without fee or reward” in the church people “are cured very frequently (saepissime).” See further the discussion of this passage in chapter 5.

174 The first of two responses concerns the fulfillment of OT prophecies about Jesus’ miracles: ‘If, however, they maintain that the Lord too performed such works simply in appearance, we shall refer them to the prophetic writings, and prove from those both that all things were thus predicted regarding him, and did take place undoubtedly, and that he is the only Son of God’ (Adv. Haer. ii.31.4).

175 The addition of the word “miracles” in brackets constitutes a reasonable inference since there is no object for the verb perisseian (περισσεῖαν).
The Origin, Date and Literary Forms of the Longer Ending

Others have foreknowledge of things to come; they see visions, and utter prophetic expressions. Others still heal the sick by laying their hands upon them, and they are made whole. Moreover, as I have said, the dead even have been raised up and remained among us for many years. (Adv. Haer. ii.32.4)

This list of what contemporary believers are said to perform in the Lord’s name includes exorcisms, prophetic utterances, healing, and raising the dead. Formal features typical of miracle lists are lacking; in particular, neither parallelism nor brevity is attempted. These distinctive elements in Irenaeus’ writing may well point to the adaptation of the genre of miracle list for the purpose of polemical argumentation. Irenaeus does not elaborate on the identity of the faithful who perform the miracles of the second list, but they seem to be ordinary believers rather than revered apostles like Peter, Andrew, and Philip (ii.32.4). This claim associated with a miracle list bears a certain parallel to the LE in that believers in addition to the first apostles are said to perform certain miracles.

ii) An Unusual Miracle List in Pistis Sophia iii.110

In the Nag Hammadi writing known as Pistis Sophia, much remains enigmatic about Jesus’ response to Maria that “not only you [Maria] but all men’ can have the ability to perform “mysteries,” which are portrayed as miracles. At the beginning of this passage, Maria asks a question concerning the performing of “mysteries” by itinerant evangelists:

My Lord, have you not brought mysteries to the world concerning poverty and riches, and concerning weakness and strength, and concerning plagues and sound bodies, in a word, all things of this kind? So that when we go to places of the country, and they do not believe us and they do not listen to our words, and we perform a mystery of this kind in those places, then they know truly and verify that we are preaching the words of the God of all.174

Maria’s question implies that the performing of “a mystery” plays a role in convincing outsiders about the truth the disciples’ message. The Savior’s response does not seem intrinsically related to Maria’s question, but it does show that the term “mysteries” designates miracles and offers, moreover, two lists of miracles which could be performed by all people:

Concerning this mystery upon which you question me, I gave it to you once, but I will repeat again and say the word to you: Now at this time, Maria, not only you but all men will complete the mystery of the raising of the dead; this cure demons and all pains and all sicknesses and the blind and the lame and the maimed and the dumb and the deaf, this I have given to you once.

174 Pistis Sophia iii.110. ET of the Coptic by Violet MacDermot, Pistis Sophia (NHS 9; Leiden: Brill, 1978) 278–279. Here and elsewhere words in italics are original to MacDermot’s translation.

The Literary Forms of the Individual Parts of the LE

He who will take a mystery and complete it, if now afterwards he asks for anything: poverty and riches, weakness and strength, plague or sound body, and all curses of the body and the raising of the dead, and curing of the lame and the blind and the deaf and the dumb and all sicknesses and pains, in a word, he who completes that mystery and asks for any thing which I have said, it will happen to him with speed. (Pistis Sophia iii.110)

This statement attributed to Jesus gives rise to a number of questions, many of which are probably unanswerable. For one thing, it is unclear what completing “the mystery of the raising of the dead” entails. Whatever is meant by the phrase, it is not a privilege for only a well-known disciple like Maria but constitutes a possibility for all believers. The author connects this, albeit unexplained, “mystery” to the first of two lists contained in the above passage. The first is a miracle list and concerns the curing of eight different ailments: demon possession, pains, sicknesses, blindness, the lame, the maimed, the dumb and the deaf. The second list enumerates a list of ten petitions that will be granted to the person who has completed a “mystery.” The first three petitions — poverty and riches, weakness and strength, plague or sound body — are very similar to the components of Maria’s question, and the last six petitions repeat in a different order certain items from the first miracle list.

Because the fourth item in the second list of petitions repeats “the raising of the dead,” which is the prerequisite for performing the miracles of the first list, it is likely that Pistis Sophia iii.110 reflects the selective use of one or more sources. The author first claims that the one who completes “the mystery of the raising of the dead” will perform the miracles of list one. This person will also have the benefit of asking for the petitions of the second list, which includes “the raising of the dead.” The tension within the narrative is evident in that, if these people had already completed “the mystery of the raising of the dead,” they presumably would not need to make this request again. Thus this author may have borrowed and adapted a miracle list from another source and rephrased it in the second list of petitions. If so, the tension created by the different meanings associated with “the raising of the dead” in the first and second lists would be accounted for. This hypothesis would also explain why the first part of Jesus’ response to Maria’s question appears secondary in that it does not address what she had asked concerning the performing of “mysteries” by itinerant evangelists.

Regardless of how one sorts out the source-critical questions of Pistis Sophia iii.110, the miracles enumerated in this passage are clearly not to be performed by only certain individuals like Maria. When Jesus says, “Now at this time, Maria, not only you but all men who complete a certain requirement — namely, completing “the mystery of the raising of the dead” — will perform miracles, the expectation is similar to the LE in that any dedicated believer could fit this profile. The difference lies in the fact that in Mark 16:17a belief qualifies the faithful to perform miraculous signs, but, according to Pistis...
Sophia iii.110, believers must take their faith a step further before realizing this goal.

To summarize, no exact match survives for the expectations of Mark 16:17b—18. A number of passages (Ps.-C., Rec. 3.60, Acts of Andrew (Martyrdom I.3), The Act of Peter 128.10—17a and Acts of Philip 12) simply report the past miracles of a certain apostle without making an explicit connection to the activities of present or future wonder-workers. Irenaeus comes a step closer when he offers a list of miracles performed by believers of his own day. The somewhat curious list in Pistoia Sophia iii.110 promises that all people will be able to perform a list of “mysteries,” provided that they meet the prerequisite of completing “the mystery of the raising of the dead.”

While Irenaeus maintains that certain believers do perform miracles, the author of Pistoia Sophia iii.110 offers abilities open to all who meet the additional requirement associated with “the raising of the dead.”

4) Miracle Lists and the Future

The fact that the majority of early Christian miracle lists point to the past miracles of Jesus or, less often, those of an apostle gives rise to the question whether the change in emphasis noted in Irenaeus, Pistoia Sophia and the LE is a novel invention. It will be argued here that the most satisfactory answer is in certain respects both “yes” and “no.” On the one hand, the earliest miracle lists in Isaiah point toward the future. The same may be said of two other Jewish texts of the Second Temple Period (Sib. Or. 3.63—70 and 4Q521). On the other hand, the majority of early Christian miracle lists (for example, Matt 15:31, Luke 4:18—19 citing Isa 61:1—2, Ando-Matth 10, Justin, Apol. L.48.1—2 citing Isa 35:5—6) reflect a different application of this form in calling attention to Jesus’ past miracles.

Concerning such lists in Jewish writings, it has been noted that Isaiah 35:5—7 points to a time of salvation in the near or distant future that will be characterized by miracles, such as the blind receiving their sight and the lame leaping like a deer. Lists which contain similar future expectations and mention miracles occur also in Isa 29:18—19 and 66:1—3a. Also writing with an eye to the future, but with a markedly different expectation, the first-century CE author of Sib. Or. 3.63—70 enumerates the miracles that will characterize the advent of Beliar:

Then Beliar will come from the Schasten of the stars and he will raise up the height of the mountains, he will raise up the sea the great fiery sun and shining moon, and he will raise up the dead, and perform many signs for men. But they will not be effective in him. But he will, indeed, also lead men astray, and he will lead astray many faithless, chosen Hebrews, and also other lawless men who have not yet listened to the word of God. 175

A similar expectation appears in the Apocalypse of Elijah 3.2—10, whose third-century Christian author first outlines signs to be seen when Christ returns “with all his angels surrounding him” and afterward offers a list of miracles to be performed by the “Son of lawlessness” before the parousia. 176

Likewise, the author of the fragmentary 4Q521 connects certain miracles prophesied in Isaiah 61 with the works of a future, eschatological, prophetic figure. 177 The fragments of this writing found at Qumran contain two lists of miracles which are to be performed:

(7) For he will glorify the pious on the throne of an eternal kingdom,
(8) releasing captives, giving sight to the blind and raising up those who are held down.
(11) . . . and the glorious things that have not taken place the Lord will do as he [said],
(12) for he will heal the wounded, give life to the dead and preach good news to the poor.
(15) and he will [satisfy] the [wasted] ones and lead those who have been cast out and enrich the hungry. 178

As John Collins observes, many of these deeds reflect the expectations of Isaiah 61. 179 The glaring exception is that “the relevant passage in Isaiah 61 does not promise raising of the dead,” a component of many early Christian miracle lists like Matt 11:2—5 and Luke 7:22. 180 Therefore, some of the earliest Christian miracle lists depicting Jesus’ wonders for example, the “Q” tradition preserved in Matt 11:2—5 and Luke 7:22 may be understood as an argument that Jesus fulfilled the messianic expectations of Isaiah 61 as interpreted (and modified) by expectations very much like, if not identical to, those in 4Q521.

3.66—62 and 3.75—92. Whereas the latter passages date to the first century BCE, verses 63—74 presuppose that Rome had already officially taken control over Egypt, and most probably . . . should be taken as a reference to [the emperor] Nero.” As such, this narrative lists reflects the “eschatological expectations” of certain Jews “sometime after A.D. 70” (Collins, OTP, 1.360; cf. D. Frankfurter, “Origin of the Miracle-List,” pp. 359—360).

175 ET: OTP, 1.745. Note also that 2 Thess 2:2 and Rev 13:13 expect, respectively, the antichrist or beast from the land to produce signs, but do not enumerate them. Cf. D. Frankfurter, Elijah in Upper Egypt: The Apocalypse of Elijah and Early Egyptian Christianity (Studies in Araligucy and Christianity; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993) 112—117.

177 For an argument that 4Q521 (4QMessianic Apocalypse) refers to a coming eschatological prophet, see John J. Collins, “The Works of the Messiah,” Dead Sea Discoveries 1 (1994) 98—112. Collins’ argument that a prophetic agent is implied rests on the reference to an anointed one in the first line of the fragment, as well as the inference that preaching good news (1.12) is the work of a herald, not of God.


Although the earliest Christian miracle lists reflect a transition from future expectation (cf. Isa 35:5—7, 61:1—3, Sib. Or. 3.63—70, 4Q521) to past fulfillment, an additional change in emphasis can also be noted in lists summarizing the first apostles’ miracles (for example, Ps.-Cl., Rec. 3.60) rather than those of Jesus. In addition, the interest in lists of present and future miracles to be performed by believers of later generations reflects an even later development that is analogous in certain respects to the future-oriented expectations recorded in Isaiah. To summarize, the departure from enumerating past miracles in Adv. Haer. ii.31.2—32.4, Ptolemais Sophia iii.110 and Mark 16:17—18 reflects an innovative use of this literary form. Given that lists in Isaiah, Sib. Or. 3.63—70 and 4Q521 all have a future orientation, these three Christian writings do reflect a completely novel expression.

5) The Compositional Technique Employed in Certain Miracle Lists

The earliest Christian miracle lists reflect an interest in both brevity and grammatical parallelism. These characteristics have been observed above in Matt 15:31183 and are also evident, for example, in the “Q” tradition182 of Matt 11:5/Luke 7:22:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matthew 11:5</th>
<th>Luke 7:22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>των άνθρωπων</td>
<td>των άνθρωπων</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>καὶ ελεημονας</td>
<td>καὶ χωλος</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>λεπροι</td>
<td>λεπροι καθαρισθησαν</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>καὶ κοροες</td>
<td>και κοροες</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>καὶ νεκροι</td>
<td>νεκροι ιζηθησαν</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>και πεποιθησιν</td>
<td>παιδια Εσωτερικην</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such brief, parallel formulations in lists of wonders may be observed in many other miracle lists of the first three centuries, but do not occur in all miracle lists.183

This section proposes to offer a reason for the difference between the formal features of Mark 16:17—18 and miracle lists like Matt 11:5/Luke 7:22. It will be argued that the longer descriptions of some of the LE’s five miracles parallel certain later miracle lists like Acts of Andrew and Matthias 10, Acts of Peter and Paul 41 and Epistula Apostolorum 4—5. Moreover, in the

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182 Matt 15:31: ὡς των ζων θανατους: βλέποντας και ελεημονας, καὶ νεκροι και χωλος καθαρισθησαν και ελεημονας των ζων θανατους.

183 The earliest surviving Christian miracle lists stem from “Q.” Although Paul’s list of sufferings (2 Cor 11:21—29) is sometimes taken as an affront to a list of his opponents’ miracles, the apostle’s writings also do not contain a miracle list. Likewise, the Gospel of Mark contains summary statements of wonders performed by Jesus (e.g., Mark 7:37) and the disciples (Mark 6:12—13) but no miracle lists.

184 Distinctions between “collective reports,” “individual reports,” and “narratives” in miracle lists are discussed by J. Hills, “Miracle Lists in Apocalypse Acts,” p. 376. According to Hills, a collective report refers to “a specific group of people: he made the dead to hear.” Individual reports designate specific miracles performed by the earthly Jesus, e.g., “he made one see who was blind from birth.” Finally, narratives refer to “prose miniatures often including circumstantial or interpretive comments,” which “are especially common in the later lists.”

185 J. Hills, “Miracle Lists in Apocalypse Acts,” pp. 380–381. Hills calls attention to the use of the verb μεταβαλλω in later patristic literature and suggests that the use of this verb
of the longer Johannine narrative. Moreover, the wording chosen for this list follows the syntactical pattern of the previous four miracles: the indefinite noun (contrast John 2:9 and 4:46; τὸ δέος) and then the verb. Such a compositional technique could explain the wording of the LE's second and third signs — γιλσάτας ἐκλήσαιν αἴτιον and ἔσχες ἐπόδημον — which correspond to the noun-verb pattern of the first and fifth signs (θαλάσσια ἐκμάθησθαι and χήρας ἐπίθετην).

Also noteworthy is the fact that the grammatical structure of the sixth and final miracle in the Acts of Andrew and Matthias 10 departs significantly from the pattern set in the earlier items of the list. When this author offers a longer narrative description of a miracle (καὶ λαβὼν πέντε ὄρους καὶ ἔτοσα ἵματος κτλ.), no attempt is made to preserve the earlier parallel structure. Such an anomaly within a miracle list otherwise reflecting parallel features offers an analogy to the LE's fourth sign (καὶ πέτασαν τὸ πλατάνιον ὑμῖν ἀνά τοῦ στόματος βλάχης), which is longer than the others in Mark 16:17b—18 and does not conform to the noun-verb construction of the other four signs.

The Acts of Peter and Paul 41 offers another example of a narrative summarized in a miracle list. In this passage, however, the epitome conforms to the structure of other items in the list. This letter, ostensibly written by Pontius Pilate to the emperor Claudius, recounts Pilate's listing of seven miracles which he (or others) saw Jesus performing:

καὶ ἔδωκε στὴν
τοιαύτῃ προφητείᾳ,
εἰς τοὺς ἐκτός
παρακολουθοῦντον,
καὶ εἰσῆλθεν ἐκ
βιβλίαν
τοὺς ἐκ

καὶ κατὰ τὸν τοῦ τοῦ
corresponds to the usage of later patristic authors like Hippolytus and Clement of Alexandria. Another possible motivation for not using παρακολουθοῦντον, παρακολουθείσαι, παρακολουθοῦν, παρακολουθοῦσιν, of this author read John 2:9 and 4:46 — both of which use the verb παρακολουθήσει rather than παρακολουθεί. The author of the Acts of Andrew and Matthias 10 may have had a reason to avoid repeating the verb παρακολούθησε, because it had already been employed as the main verb (ἐπιστάσθησεν) upon which the three following complementary infinitives depend (ἐπιστάσθησαι, περιηγηθήσομαι, ἔκλησθησον).

Contrast Pindarica Salvatoria 6, which seems to paraphrase John 2:11 and 2:1: in offering a longer summary of this miracle: "As his first miracle in Cana of Galilee, he made wine from water." 187


188 Mark 3:26: καὶ διερείπθη ἐκπεπλησσότως τοῦ δύναμεν καὶ ἐπέτειλε τὴν θαλάσσην. Ἡσύα, πεισθῶσα. καὶ ἐπέστασαν ὁ δύναμις καὶ ἐγκεκριμένον γενέσθαι μεταξύ. 189
disciples saw (οἱ δὲ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν), just as ἐξίσους θαλάσσας τετελείσθη, delineates what Plute (or others) saw (καὶ ἔδεικαν αὐτὸν). 190

There are two differences from the Markan account, however. First, Mark 6:38—39 relates more briefly that Jesus walked “on the sea” rather than “on the waves of the sea.” Second, Julian Hills notes that the verb πεζέων does not occur in the LXX or the NT but is used “of the walking on the sea” in the miracle lists of Sib. Or. 1.356 and 6.13. 191 It is noteworthy that both of these differences in Acts of Peter and Paul 41 from the Markan account correspond to these two miracle lists in the Sibylline Oracles:

Mark 6:38  ἔφθασεν πρὸς αὐτὸν πεζέων ἐπὶ τὴν βάλασσαν
Mark 6:39  οἱ δὲ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὴν βαλάσσαν πεζέων
Sib. Or. 1.356  κύματα πεζέσθαι
Sib. Or. 6.13  κύματα πεζέσθαι
A Peter Paul 41  ἐπὶ κύματα βαλάσσας πεζέσθαι

The correspondence to elements in both Mark and Sib. Or. 1.356 and 6.13 suggests that the seventh and final miracle in A Peter Paul 41 reflects a combination of traditions very much like, if not the same, as those from Mark 6:38—39, on the one hand, and Sib. Or. 1.356 and 6.13, on the other. The author of A Peter Paul 41 has woven together two different traditions so that the grammatical brevity and parallelism are to a large extent kept intact and thus conform to the structure of the earlier items in this list.

A final illustration of this compositional technique, and arguably the example par excellence for documenting the development from brief lists of “collective” miracles into shorter and longer epistles based on miracle stories, is Epistula Apostolorum 4—5. A number of Julian Hills’ observations concerning this longest of all known miracle lists bear upon this discussion. 192 Hills calls attention to certain distinctive features of this list, which include the presence of “narratives interspersed among its reports,” the extraordinary “length of the list,” “the apparent grouping of the miracles into three smaller lists” and “the presence of dialogue in the narratives.” 193 The structure of Ep. apost. 4—5 may be summarized as follows:

191 J. Hills, “Miracle Lists in Apocryphal Acts,” in Sibylline Oracles, p. 386. Hills mentions this and other examples from this list to highlight the fact that this author often “not simply a patchwork of biblical phrases” (p. 386).
193 J. Hills, Episula Apostolorum, p. 44, emphasis original.

Hills also discusses the combination and adaptation of different traditions, which at times resemble those of the NT but at other points have no NT parallel. For example, in Ep. apost. 5:10—11a, which introduces the exorcism of the Legion (cf. 5:10—12),

the closest resemblance is not to the canonical Legion story (Mark 5:1—20 par.) but to the exorcism in the Capernaum synagogue (Mark 1:21—28 par.). A combination of the two stories seems to have arisen. 194

Thus, in the case of Ep. apost. 5:10—12, parts of two different miracle stories are epitomized and combined into the narrative of one exorcism in a miracle list.

6) The Compositional Technique Likely to Have Been Employed in Mark 16:17b—18

The passages discussed above in Acts of Andrew and Matthias 10, Acts of Peter and Paul 41 and Epistula Apostolorum 4—5 demonstrate that epitomizing accounts of longer narratives was a relatively common practice in miracle lists after the first century. Something similar seems to have taken place in the composition of the LE’s first, second and fifth miracles:

The first sign: Exorcising Demons

ἔφθασεν πρὸς αὐτὸν διωνύσιον, διωνύσιον τινι ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ του ἐξισώντων ἐξισώντων, διωνύσιον τινι ἐν τῇ οἴκῳ του ἐξισώντων ἐξισώντων (Mark 9:39; cf. 6:13) ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ του ἐξισώντων ἐξισώντων (Mark 16:17b)

194 The above is my paraphrase of J. Hills, Epistula Apostolorum, pp. 45—46. Hills’ own translation of the Ethiopic (Epistula Apostolorum, pp. 48, 49, 50, 52, 56, 57, 58) applies attention to this structural organization on his book. Another translation by C. Dolf G. Miller appears in NTAp, p. 1.253. Hills also observes that the pattern and sequence in Ep. apost. 4—5 are similar to those in Molto, Pass. Rom. frag. 15 and the Acts of Paul 10 (Epistula Apostolorum, pp. 46—48). The distinguishing feature of Ep. apost. 4—5 is that miracle “reports are developed into narratives and narratives into dialogues” between Jesus and the disciples (p. 48).

195 J. Hills, Epistula Apostolorum, p. 56, emphasis added. Ep. apost. 5:10—12: “And the demons, that is a man had, was exorcised, and said, ‘Before the day of our destruction has come You have come to turn us out.’ But the Lord Jesus rebuked him and said to him, ‘Go out of this man without doing anything to him.’ And he went into the swine and drowned them in the sea, and they were choked” (MT by J. Hills, Epistula Apostolorum, p. 50). In addition, Hills notes that Ep. apost. 5:13 “looks like an abbreviation of Matt 14:22—33 par. and Mark 4:39—41 par. But the phrase, ‘and the winds blow,’ is not a part of the NT accounts” (p. 50).
The second sign: Speaking in New Languages

The second sign: Speaking in New Languages

The fifth sign: Performing Healings

The LE’s first sign concerning exorcisms may have been based in part on the reported speech of Mark 9:38. 136 It is also no accident that the summary statement of Mark 6:12—13, which describes the preaching and miracles associated with the mission of the twelve disciples, corresponds to the first and last signs of Mark 16:17b—18. 137 Moreover, standing behind the final sign of performing healings is a summary statement of Jesus’ healings in Nazareth (Mark 6:5). In explaining what the disciples of Jesus would do, the LE’s author built on the description of the Markan summary statement and modified the descriptions of exorcisms and healings in light of Jesus’ activities as portrayed in Mark. The adaptations of these Markan traditions result in the message that what the disciples had done after Jesus sent them out (Mark 6:12—13) is now to characterize the missionary activities of those who believe.

Furthermore, the similarities of the second sign to Acts 2:4 and 2:11 suggest that the LE’s author had a similar view of speaking in ‘new’ or ‘other’ languages. Just as the Holy Spirit then moved members of the community to ecstatic utterances, so shall the same be the experience of those who believe as they preach the gospel. 138 Such a claim concerning believers, of course, does not appear in Mark 6 or Luke 9. Nonetheless, noteworthy here is that the author of the LE has adapted texts from Mark and traditions very much like, if not the same as, Acts 2:1—11 in the same way: a specific incident or report is interpreted as the precedent for the continued experience of believers.

Heretofore, however, this discussion has revealed no obvious source for the LE’s third and fourth signs:

136 See also Mark 6:5 and 6:13. As argued in chapter 3, these Markan passages influenced much of the wording of the LE’s first and fifth signs (cf. Mark 6:12—13 and the discussion below).

137 Mark 6:12—13: καὶ ἔθεσαν ἐκ τῆς ἡλίου ἐνα μετανοουσὶν καὶ διώκοντο πολλαὶ ἐξétaλλοι, καὶ κωποῦν πολλοὶ παρὰ ἐκτισμοῦς καὶ ἐφέτερον (Mark 6:12—13).

138 Cf. Acts 10:46 (ὑπὸ τούτων ἐκ τῆς ἡλίου ἐνα μετανοουσὶν καὶ μεταλλουσὶν τὸν θεόν), in which those who have recently converted speak in other languages. According to Acts 19:6b (δέ, τοῦ πνεύμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκ τῶν μισθωτῶν, ἐλάλησεν σε ἐκτισμοῦς καὶ ἐφέτερον), moreover, speaking in other languages and prophesying signify that these “disciples” (ἀποστάλτων, 19:1) had received the holy Spirit.

It is possible that a similar compositional technique also lies behind Mark 16:18b. An insight of Paul Mirecki concerning Mark 7:32 and the longer parallel statement in Matt 15:30 offers some support for this possibility. Mirecki notes an “editorial and scribal tendency to create or expand some of the miracula lists by the addition of extra sign elements.” 139 Such a tendency, already evident in the Synoptic tradition, may help explain the addition of miracles, like picking up snakes and surviving poison, which stem from NT or other narrative traditions. If this was the case, one would expect to find one or more longer narratives discussing similarly the exertion of power over snakes and immunity to poison. This possibility will be considered in chapters 6 and 7, which include Greco-Roman, Jewish, and Christian depictions of snakes and poison. A final prolegomenon to this line of inquiry concerns the miracle lists in Origen’s Contra Celsum 2.48, which presents an allegorical understanding of snakes and poison in connection with miracles performed by believers.

Excursus: Origen’s Miracle Lists (Contra Celsum 2.48)

Three different miracle lists occur in Origen’s Contra Celsum. The last of these lists mentions snakes and poison in conjunction with the miracles that Jesus’ disciples are said to perform. An analysis of Origen’s statements is essential for weighing the possible relevance of this list for the interpretation of Mark 16:18b.

At the beginning of Contra Celsum 2.48, Origen addresses Celsum’s charge that “we [Christians] regarded him as Son of God, for this reason, because he healed the lame and the blind.” And [Celsum] goes on to say: ‘He raised the dead also, so you say.’” Origen does not disagree with Celsum’s complaint that Christians regard Jesus as Son of God because of the miracles Jesus performed. Instead, to defend the authenticity of Jesus’ miracles, Origen offers three points, the first of which concerns the fulfillment of Isa 35:5—6:

139 P. Mirecki, “Mark 16:9-20: Composition, Tradition and Redaction,” p. 81, emphases added. Mark 7:32 mentions one person afflicted with two maladies, namely deafness and a speech impediment whom Jesus healed (καὶ ἠφθανεν αὐτῷ κωποῦν καὶ μηταλλουσίαν καὶ τραυματολογίαν αὐτῷ ἐν ἑκάτεροι αὐτῷ τῇ χεριᾷ). Matt 15:30 offers a list of six miracles presumably performed on many people (γεννημένοις καὶ ἔχοντες καιροὶ ἐκάθεν καὶ ἐκατοντάκατον καὶ νεκροί ἐθλατησαν καὶ πυροῖς εὐγενελθησαν). Mirecki also compares Mark 7:37, which contains two miracles reported in indirect speech, and the parallel text in Matt 15:31, which reports that the crowd saw four miracles (listed, like Matt 11:15 and 10:28, in four parallel noun-verb combinations), and notes the expansion to the four-part list in Matthew (pp. 83—84).
That he healed the lame and the blind, for which reason we regard him as Christ and Son of God, is clear to us from what was also written in the prophesies: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall hear. Then shall the lame man leap as a deer."

Origen also counters that, whereas writers of fiction would have attributed to Jesus a vast number of miracles, those recorded in the NT "may easily be enumerated." His final argument is of interest to the discussion at hand:

And I might say that according to the promise of Jesus the disciples ‘have done even greater’ works than your physical miracles which Jesus did. For the eyes of the blind in soul (σωματικῶς οὐδεὶς τὴν ψυχήν) are always being opened, and the ears of those who were deaf in words of nature (σωματικῶς ἡ λακωνικὴ ἡ θεραπεία) eagerly hear about God and the blessed life with him; and many too who were lame in the feet of their inner person (χολαὶ τοῖς πρόσωποι τοῖς ἐπάνω άναδόμωσιν), as Scripture calls it, but have now been healed by the Logos, do not just leap, but leap as a deer (δόξ. Εὐαγγ., 6), an animal hostile to serpents and superior to all the poison of vipers. In fact, these lame people who have been healed receive from Jesus ‘power to walk on’ [their feet], where before they were lame, ‘over all the serpents and scorpions of evil, and in general over all the power of the enemy,’ and in their walk they do nothing wrong; for they have even become superior to all evil and the poison of demons. (Contra Celsum 2.48)

Three different, but related, lists of miracles are contained in this passage: Celus’ charge, the citation of Isaiah 35 and Origen’s allegorical presentation of wonders performed by Jesus’ disciples. In the first, the part of Celus’ charge reproduced by Origen lists three miracles: healing the lame, restoring sight to the blind and raising the dead. In his initial response, Origen refers to the first two of these before selectively citing only those parts of Isaiah 35 which correspond to the miracles of Jesus: “the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall hear. Then shall the lame man leap as a deer.”

Perhaps more significantly, while Origen defends a literal interpretation of Jesus’ miracles, he attributes a different type of wonders to the disciples, who open “the eyes of the blind in soul” and “the ears of those who were deaf to any talk of virtue,” as well as heal many who had been “lame in the feet of their inner person.” For Origen, then, miracles are being performed in his own time, but these are different from the wonders worked by Jesus himself.

Also at issue to this comparative literary analysis of the LE is the emphasis Origen places upon serpents in his allusions to Luke 10:19,20 for the differences between Origen’s and the LE’s miracle lists are noteworthy. Origen, for example, follows the wording of the Lukan verse, in which serpents are trampled rather than picked up. Likewise, although believers receive power to become immune to the “poison of demons,” Origen never suggests that believers should willingly imbibe the venom of demonic serpents. Moreover, whereas the LE portrays the believers themselves as picking up snakes and surviving poison, Origen writes that those whom the disciples heal from the lameness “in the feet of their inner person” receive this power.

Perhaps the greatest reason for not interpreting the LE’s third and fourth signs in light of Contra Celsum 2.48 is that there is no indication in Mark 16:17–18 that this author intends to convey an allegorical meaning like the one Origen favors over a century after the LE was written. Given that performing exorcisms, speaking in new languages and healing sick people all suggest actual miracles, there is no reason to interpret the LE’s third and fourth signs in light of Origen’s list of the disciples’ miracles. This excursus confirms that, in comparison with other early Christian miracle lists, the LE’s signs involving snakes and poison are anomalous and therefore require the studies of chapters 6 and 7, which will focus on a variety of Greco-Roman and Jewish writings involving snakes and poison in an effort to place these signs in their history-of-religions contexts.

7) Summary of the Discussion of Mark 16:17–18

The preceding inquiries have dismissed as untenable Paul Mirecki’s history-of-traditions analysis of these verses’ compositional and oral history. It is preferable to consider Mark 16:17–18 as the work of a single author who, as with the rest of the LE, drew on a number of diverse traditions. An examination of Isa 35:5–7, Matt 15:31, Sibylline Oracles 6.13–16 and Acts of Andrew and Matthias 10 highlighted both the unity and diversity of features often present in lists of miracles. In general, there is a prodigality for maintaining brevity and grammatical parallelism in miracle lists, but these features are not always followed rigidly, particularly in Christian writings of the second and later centuries. Consequently, the combination of some parallelism (for example, δαιμόνια ἐκβαλομένα, γλώσσας χαλαροῦσιν)


201 Celus’ list may have been longer, for it is possible that Origen cited selectively from this list in order to answer this charge with three of the miracles listed in Isaiah 35.

202 Cf. the discussion of Isa 35:5–7 above in this chapter. Of the three miracles mentioned in Isaiah, the first and the third match Celus’ charge. The healing of the deaf, however, does not correspond to the charge that “Christ raised the dead also, so you say.”

203 The line of interpretation followed by Origen has a precedent in Irenaeus, who argues that Christ, unlike the Aeon, “underwent a valid, and not a merely accidental passion” (Adv. Haer. ii.20.3). Irenaeus writes that Christ “conferred on those who believe in him the power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and on all the power of the enemy,” that is, of the leader of apostasy.” This last statement by Irenaeus does not contain a miracle list but like Origen’s, occurs in the context of a response to the polemics of an outsider (cf. Justin, Dial. 76.60). Origen may have adapted a tradition similar to, if not the same as, the passage in Irenaeus and incorporated it into his list of miracles performed by Jesus’ disciples.
with the distinctive fourth sign (καὶ θανατωμένη τι πάλιν κτλ.) is by no means a compositional anomaly. The compression of narrative accounts into epitomes, as observed in Acts of Andrew and Matthias 10, Acts of Peter and Paul 41 and Epistula Apostolorum 4—5, suggests that the LE’s third and fourth signs may also be the result of condensing longer oral or written traditions involving snakes and poison. The analysis of Origen’s Contra Celsum 2.48 confirmed that wonders involving snakes or poison are without genuine parallels in early Christian miracle lists.

With regard to the question who is portrayed as performing miracles, Jesus, not surprisingly, is the subject in the majority of Christian lists. Passages offering the closest parallel to the expectation of Mark 16:17a—that “those who believe” will perform miraculous signs—are Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. II.3.1—2, 22.4 and Pistis Sophia iii.110. Moreover, the transition from highlighting the past miracles of Jesus or a certain apostle to emphasizing present or future miracles in the LE, Irenaeus’ treatise and the Pistis Sophia reflects a later development in Christian miracle lists which is analogous to First and Second Isaias (29:18—19, 35:5—7, 61:1—3a). At present it remains to consider the formal features of the LE’s final two verses.

4) The Ascension—Session: Epitomizing Report of Mark 16:19

Mark 16:19 resumes the narrative left off with the appearance of Jesus to the eleven (Mark 16:14). The transition from the direct speech of vv. 15—18 in v. 19a (διὰ τοῦ γεγονότος τὸ λαμβάνει αὐτὸν) is nearly as long as the depiction of the ascension and session (ἀναλογίας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἐκδόθην εἰς δεξιὰν τοῦ θεοῦ, v. 19b). Paul Mirecki characterizes this verse as follows:

Mark 16:19 exhibits the formal features of a composite text. The text is comprised of two fragmentary liturgical traditions which have been juxtaposed through the use of the editorial text-connective. They are subsumed as a couplet under an editorial introductory formula.204

One helpful aspect of Mirecki’s designation of v. 19 as a “liturgical couplet as descriptive report” is that it calls attention to the fact that no early Christian writer before the LE combined the elements of the ascension (v. 19b) and the session (v. 19c) in a single passage, let alone a single sentence.205


205 Cf. the discussion in chapter 2. NT Passages which resemble either v. 19b or v. 19c never overlap. This was also the observation of E. Helze, who was perhaps the first scholar to observe that allusions to ascension and enthronement had been brought together (“anatemandergetkli”) in v. 19b ("Der Schluss des Markusevangeliums [BG 16, 9-20]," p. 87). Cf. Acts 2:33—35, which mentions the resurrection, but not the ascension, in connection with the session.

Observing the distinct characteristics of Mark 16:19, Gerhard Lohfink, who affirms the literary dependence of Mark 16:9—20 on the end of Luke, notes the difficulty of ascertaining whether the LE’s author made use of a source in addition to Luke 24 for this depiction of the ascension and session:

Denominations are used even now given that, der Kompassaler hier nicht einfach Lukas auf seine Weise interpretiert, sondern einer eigenen Himmelfahrtstraßigkeit folgt. Aber aber durch die Verwittlichung. Es gibt dafür kein Zitat.206

Nonetheless, the numerous passages which refer to either the ascension or the session suggest that Mirecki is correct in maintaining that the author of Mark 16:19 was responsible for combining the traditions of the ascension and the session in a novel way.

Problems arise, however, with two fine points of Mirecki’s designation of the passage as a “liturgical couplet as descriptive report.”207 For example, Mirecki does not define what he means by “liturgical.” His basis for using this designation is “the high degree of dissimilarity among those texts which are considered allusions” to Psalm 110:1. He applies the designation of liturgical couplet to Mark 16:19 because certain other early Christian allusions to Jesus’ enthronement are thought to stem from “testimonia collections as well as confessions and hymns.”208 Although he touches upon an otherwise interesting field of study, Mirecki does not demonstrate why verse 19 should be defined as liturgical. Elsewhere in the LE there is no indication that a liturgical designation is apt.

Second, it is also questionable to characterize Mark 16:19bc as a “descriptive report” because none of the ten words ‘describes’ the way in which Jesus returns to heaven and session at the right hand of God took place. Since, as argued in chapter 3, this author seems to have summarized a narrative like, or the same as, Luke 24/Acts 1, Mark 16:19 should be considered a “summary epitome,” or, to use Lohfink’s designation, “eine knappe Epitome.”209


209 G. Lohfink wrote with reference to the LE as a whole (Die Himmelfahrt Jesu, p. 119).
The function of Mark 16:19 also merits comparison with Paul’s summary of what took place between the death and appearances of Jesus (1 Cor 15:2–8). Paul presents this information in a series of epitomizing reports upon which he is about to build an argument concerning the future resurrection of all human beings (1 Cor 15:12–58). In the Longer Ending, the purpose in referring to the ascension and session is similar. The LE’s author does not wish to elaborate upon either the ascension or the session but mentions them in passing as a transition to the conclusion of the passage. Simply stated, the return of Jesus to heaven is the necessary presupposition for the disciples’ departure on the mission and the exalted Lord’s continued assistance in the granting of signs in Mark 16:20.

Such theological reflection on the enfranchisement of Jesus is also evident in Paul’s brief allusion to the session in Rom 8:34, where Jesus’ enthronement at the right hand of God (ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ) supports the inference that Christ continues to “intercede for us.”210 The author of Acts refers to the ascension with similar brevity, explaining only that Christ’s present position at the right hand of God accounts for the phenomenon of Pentecost (Acts 2:32–33). Likewise, the author of Barnabas offers an analogous argument why Christians gather on Sunday: διὸ καὶ ἀγομένη τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ἄγιον ἑλεορροφήνην, ἐν ὑμεῖς ἡ ἡμέρα ἀνέστη εἰς νεκρών καὶ φανερώσεις ἐνέβη εἰς υἱοπάθων.211

To summarize, Mark 16:19 offers a transition from the commissioning (vv. 15–18) to the departure on the mission (v. 20). Over half of this verse is concerned with the shift from direct speech (v. 19a). It would be difficult for any writer to mention the ascension and the session in fewer than the ten words used by the author of the LE (ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ ἐκδόθης ἐκ εὐφρένου τοῦ θεοῦ, v. 19b). As P. Mirecki rightly notes, this author is apparently the first Christian writer to mention the ascension and session in the same passage. The author of the LE did so briefly in this “epitomizing report” before building on these ideas in the portrayal of the risen Lord’s continuing activity among the missions in Mark 16:20. In this respect, the epitomizing accounts of the ascension and session are similar to the brief references to Jesus’ appearances in vv. 9–10, 12 and 14.

e) The Departure on the Mission (Mark 16:20)

1) Analogous Departures in the NT

As argued in chapter 3, the opening verses of Mark 16:20 are a synthesis of Mark 6:12a (καὶ ἐξῆλθον ἐκδόθην ἵνα κτλ.) and Luke 9:6

211 Barnabas 1:53: “For this reason we also celebrate with gladness the eighth day, in which Jesus rose from the dead, was made manifest and ascended into heaven” (Greek text and ET: Kirpoff, Luke, LCL).

212 Indeed, this evangelist describes the activity of Jesus καὶ ἐνεργεῖα ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς ἐξέδρασεν ὁ Ιησοῦς διάκονον τῆς δόξης καὶ γενεθλίων τοῖς ἁγίοις τῶν ἄνθρωπων (Matt 11:1). The Fourth Gospel uses the word ἐνεργεία as a synonym for the miraculous (usually σημεία). On this point see Harold Rams, “Miracle (SNT),” ASD, 4.486.
Although there are obvious conceptual parallels to Mark 16:20 — that Jesus will help believers to perform the kinds of “works” he himself did — there are also formal differences, for John 14:12—14 neither implies a commissioning to preach (cf. Mark 16:15) nor denotes a missionary setting. Like the NT Gospels, the NT book of Acts also does not portray an organized departure of the apostles on the post-Easter mission. Instead, the spread of the apostolic mission is said to be the result of persecution in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1—25). The author of Acts does record the call and commissioning of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:1—3), but the formal similarities to the LE are negligible.

2) The Sophia of Jesus Christ

This discussion now considers the depictions of a departure on a mission in The Sophia of Jesus Christ, the Apology of Marcianus Aristides, Justin Martyr’s First Apology and The Letter of Peter to Philip. Although none of these extra-canonical texts parallels the wording of Mark 16:20 more strikingly than Mark 6:12—13 and Luke 9:6 do, a comparison of literary forms helps to place the LE within the milieu of the second century, when the mission of the apostles receives mention more often than in the surviving Christian literature of the first century.

One Nag Hammadi text, The Sophia of Jesus Christ, reflects the commissioning-departure pattern of Mark 16:15—20. After having given various revelations of himself to the disciples, Jesus says to them,

Therefore tread upon their graves, humble their malicious intent and break their yoke and arouse my own, I have given you authority over all things as Sons of Light. But you might tread upon their power with [your] feet.214

After this Jesus vanishes, and they go out preaching.

These are the things [the] blessed Savior said, [and be disappeared] from them. Then [all the disciples] were in [great, ineffable joy] in [the spirit from] that day on. [And his disciples] began to preach [the] Gospel of God.215 [The] eternal, imperishable [Spirit].

εν ουσία και τοῦν εύσεσχον τον ἕλλην τον ἀναχαιτέτα τον ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τῆς κυρίας τῆς σωτηρίας.

214 Soph. Jec. Chr. 119, 1—8. A translation of The Sophia of Jesus Christ (64 and BG 850,2,1) by Douglas M. Porrett appears on the right hand columns of NKL, pp. 222—243; an ET of a related writing, Eugnostos the Blessed, appears on the left hand columns of pp. 222—239. There is no parallel for this commissioning-and-departure in Eugnostos the Blessed, which the author of Sophia has incorporated into his work. This indicates that the Christian Gnostic author of Sophia is responsible for having added this ending, including the departure.

215 Reference to “the gospel of God” bears a certain affinity to Mark 1:14; κατὰ δὲ τὸ παραδόθην τῶν ἐν τῇ γῆ ᾗ ἡ ὑπηρεσία τῆς τοῦ φυλακήν τῆς κυρίας τῆς σωτηρίας τῆς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τῆς κυρίας τῆς σωτηρίας. There is also a resemblance to Mark’s shorter ending τοῦ τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τῆς κυρίας τῆς σωτηρίας καθαρύνουσας μετὰ δὲ τῶν τοις καὶ τὰ παραθέτει. In the Greek text, the endings are καθαρύνουσας τοῦ κόσμου τῆς κυρίας τῆς σωτηρίας καθαρύνουσας μετὰ δὲ τῶν καὶ τὰ παραθέτει.
This Jesus, then, was born of the tribe of the Hebrews; and he had twelve disciples, in order that a certain dispensation of his might be fulfilled. He was pierced by the Jews; and he died and was buried; and they say that after three days he rose and ascended to heaven; and then these twelve disciples went forth into the known parts of the world, and taught concerning his greatness with all humility and sobriety; and on this account those who also today believe in this preaching are called Christians, who are well known. 218

Charles Taylor argues that the similarity of Aristides' Apology to Mark 16:20 points to some knowledge of the LE. 219 Although possible, the evidence is not compelling in the case of neither the Greek version, which Taylor does mention, nor the Syriac, which he does not.

Nonetheless, knowledge of Mark 16:20 seems likely in the case of a fragmentary Armenian translation of the Greek, which, in turn, is preserved only in Latin translation:

It is he who chose twelve apostles from among his disciples, in order that he might rule the whole world by the provision of his illuminating truth. He was crucified by the Hebrews, rose from the dead and ascended to heaven. He sent his disciples into the whole world in order to teach all nations wisdom by his divine and wondrous light, with signs following (constitutus prodigios). Their proclamation up to this day spreads out and bears fruit, calling the whole world to the Light. 222

Unlike the Greek and Syriac versions of the Apology, the ablative absolute in the Latin (constitutus prodigios) bears a certain resemblance to Mark 16:20bc (τοῦ κυρίου συνεργοῦντος καὶ τὸν λόγον  δαιμονίου διά τοῦ ἐπικολουθοῦντος συμμείαν). It is doubtful, however, that this tradition preserves an original part of Aristides' work. The possibility that Mark 16:20 influenced this apostle when he wrote about the apostles' mission after the resurrection probably cannot be answered definitively but seems unlikely. In the case of the Armenian fragment, it is more probable that either the Armenian translator of Aristides' Greek or the Latin translator of the Armenian recognized the similarity of Aristides' writing to the LE's final verse and embellished the apologist's writing in light of Mark 16:20bc. 224

Moreover, each of the above versions of Marcianus Aristides' Apology parallels Mark 16:19–20 in that the apostles are depicted as embarking upon a world-wide mission after the ascension of Jesus. The (shorter) Greek version makes explicit the connection between the ascension of Jesus, the beginning of the apostolic mission and the contemporary situation of second-century Christians. Aristides also explains that the conversion of believers in his province stemmed originally from "one" of these original apostles (οὗτος καὶ εὐαγγελιστής).

By contrast, Aristides' consistent references to "twelve" apostles (cf. 1 Cor 15:5) are clearly not modeled after Mark 16:14 or other passages like Matt 28:18 and Luke 24:9, which speak of only eleven disciples. Another important difference is the lack of any reference to a commissioning by Jesus in the Greek and Syriac traditions. Indeed, the possible inference that the first apostles went out of their own accord may well have prompted a correction by the Armenian translator. 225 In addition, with an emphasis on preaching (Greek) or teaching (Syriac, Armenian), the portrayal of the apostles' missionary activity is closer to that of Matt 28:18–20 than to the LE's expectation of miracles.

4) Justin Martyr's First Apology

If Edgar J. Goodspeed was correct that Marcianus Aristides wrote "vielleicht nicht nach dem Jahre 147," then Justin Martyr wrote within a decade or two of Marcianus Aristides. 226 Like his predecessor, Justin also portrays the first apostles as teachers and not as miracle-workers. For example, he writes that the mission occurred subsequent to the resurrection and ascension as follows:

Afterward, when Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to them (ἐν αὐτῷ ἐνθαῦματος καὶ ὕπατον ἀναγνωρίσοντος) and taught them to read the prophesies in which all the above happenings were predicted as about to take place; and after they had seen him ascending into heaven (ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ), they taught these things (τὰ τούτα ἔλεγαν), and they were called apostles. 228

Although mention of the disciples' receiving power from Christ could be interpreted as a reference to their ability to perform miracles, for Justin the

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218 The translation of the Syriac is by J. R. Harris and appears in The Apology of Aristides, p. 36, lines 36–38 and p. 37, lines 1–6.
220 The Latin participial mittens ("sending") explicitly connects the mission of the apostles with the sequence of the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension.
221 Lat. qui . . . docent: a relative clause followed by the subjunctive indicating purpose.
222 Lat. text: R. Harris, The Apology of Aristides, p. 29; the ET is my own.
223 R. Harris, The Apology of Aristides, p. 27.
224 With R. Harris, who notes that constitutus prodigios seems to be oec of a number of "added glosses" to the Armenian version (The Apology of Aristides, p. 27).
225 The Armenian version of Aristides' Apology both clarifies that Jesus "sent" out his disciples and portrays the departure on the mission as co-constituent with the ascension: ascendi . . . discipulos sus mittens, qui . . . docent.
226 See the above note on this point in E. J. Goodspeed, Die ältesten Apologien, p. 2.
227 That is, "from heaven." The adverb ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ refers back to θεοῦ.
228 Justin, Apol. 1.56.12. I have modified the ET by Thomas F. Fallis (Saint Justin Martyr [PC; New York: Christian Heritage, 1948] 87) to conform more accurately to the Greek.
only expression of this power lies in the apostles’ teaching (τα ἀγαθα-καλά διὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ). Similar to the portrayal of Marcianus Aristides but different from the LE, moreover, is the absence of any reference to the sending out of the disciples. Although a commissioning may be implied in the granting of power from heaven, no missionary instruction precedes the departure to teach every nation.

5) The Letter of Peter to Philip

The conclusion to another Nag Hammadi text, The Letter of Peter to Philip (late second/early third c. CE), offers the closest literary parallel to the LE’s expectation of miracles in conjunction with a departure on a mission. After an appearance, during which Jesus promises “joy, ... grace and power” to those about to depart, the apostles separate to the four corners of the earth to preach (Ep. Pet. Phil. 140, 15—23).

Following a lacuna (139, 30) toward the end of this writing, the apostle Peter’s prayer mentions in turn the following: that “each one” performed healings; an appearance and commissioning by Jesus; and the departure “into the four winds to preach.” In his prayer the apostle states explicitly his expectation of miracles in response to his supplication:

[...Then] Peter [gathered together the others also] saying, “[O, Lord Jesus Christ, author of our rest, give us a spirit of understanding in order that we also may perform wonders.” (Ep. Pet. Phil. 140, 1—7)

Afterward the author summarizes their mission, which included miraculous healings:

Then Peter and the other apostles saw [him] and they were filled with a holy spirit. And each one performed healings. And they parted in order to preach the Lord Jesus. And they came together and greeted each other, saying, ‘Amen.’ (Ep. Pet. Phil. 140, 7—15)

One possible difficulty posed by F. Wisse’s translation is the supplying of the referent of what the disciples saw (“[him]”). H.G. Bethe translates differently: “Then Peter and the others saw and were filled with Holy Spirit.” It is not certain whether the author means that the apostles saw Jesus (so Wisse) or something else (so Bethe). The remainder of this writing (Ep. Pet. Phil. 140, 16—27) reveals that, if 140, 8 does point to an appearance of Jesus, then the end of The Letter of Peter to Philip would record two different departures on the mission, with the first preceding an appearance, and the second following one.

Later in the narrative Jesus again appears to the apostles after they have reassembled:

Then Jesus appeared saying to them, “Peace to you [all] and everyone who believes in my name. And when you depart, joy be to you and grace and power. And be not afraid; behold, I am with you forever.” Then the apostles parted from each other into four winds in order to preach. And they went by a power of Jesus, in peace. (Ep. Pet. Phil. 140, 15—27)

The wording of the promise that Jesus is “with you forever” (140, 22—23) parallels Matt 28:20, but the way in which Jesus is “with” the apostles is much closer to Mark 16:20. The twofold allusion to “power” in this final statement may be understood in connection with the prayer of Peter, who had asked for the ability to perform miracles (cf. 140, 1—7). The final impression this author wishes to leave is that the apostles depart with the expectation of power from Jesus to work miracles, a concept strikingly similar to the end of the LE.

f) Summary of Observations Concerning the LE’s Literary Micro-genres

This section of chapter 4 has discussed the literary features of the individual parts of Mark 16:9—20. After mentioning the resurrection and following the chronological indicators of Mark 16:2 (v. 9a), the author of the LE records in rapid succession three appearances of the risen Jesus (vv. 9b, 12, 14b). The first two of these have been characterized as allusions to appearances in that they simply mention apparitions to Mary and the two disciples before moving on to the reporting of the appearance and the subsequent disbelief. Only the last of these, 16:14—18, can be characterized as an “appearance narrative.”

In Mark 16:15 the risen Lord offers a mission charge, which finds its closest analogy in Matt 28:18—20a. Following P. Miroschi, 16:16 is best characterized as an “anthropic prophetic saying.” It was also argued that the brevity of v. 16, as well as the connection of baptism with salvation, are distinctive features that mark a turning point from the past mission (v. 15) to the present activity of “those who believe” (vv. 17—18). The LE’s miracle list (vv. 17b—18) reflects an interest in parallelism, which occurs to some degree in most ancient miracle lists. Certain Christian lists of the second and

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228 Frederick Wisse’s translation of this Nag Hammadi text (viii 132, 10 — 140, 27) appears in NREL, pp. 434—437. Hans-Gebhard Bethe’s translation appears in NTApp, 1,348—353. Unless otherwise noted, Wisse’s translation is cited here.

229 This lacuna occurs in the middle of a speech by Peter about the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus (139,9—30). Prior to this point in the narrative, the apostles are portrayed ministering in the Jerusalem temple: “And they came up to the temple and gave instruction in salvation and in the name of [the] Lord Jesus Christ. And they healed [a] multitude” (139, 5—9).

231 NTApp, 1,351.

232 Viewed from this perspective, it is possible that they recognized that they were filled with Holy Spirit.
later centuries depart from the earlier interest in brevity and offer somewhat more extensive epitomes of miracle narratives. The LE's first, second and fifth signs reflect a similar compositional technique, in which passages from Mark and probably from Acts are reworked. Although wonders involving snakes and poison are without parallel in the known miracle lists of the ancient world, one or more literary sources could also lie behind these signs.

Moreover, the brief allusions to Jesus' ascension and session should be characterized as a epitomizing report (v. 19). Although the LE's author is apparently the first Christian writer to mention both the ascension and the session in the same passage, he simply states these points before building on them in the following verse. The disciples' departure on a mission (v. 20a) reflects a combination of Mark 6:12a and Luke 9:6b. In reworking this material, the author of the LE took the description of what the disciples did during the life of Jesus and applied this to the post-ascentiion period.

Rather distinctive in the LE is the final genitive absolute construction of 16:20bc (τοῦ κυρίου συνεργόντος καὶ τῶν λόγων βεβαιούντος διὰ τῶν ἔπασχοντων στήματος), according to which the risen Lord actively supports the Christian mission through the granting of signs to confirm the kerygma. This assistance through στήματα (v. 20c) recalls the promise of signs in v. 17a. Such a culmination to a narrative contrasts with passages in The Sophia of Jesus Christ, the Apology of Marcianus Aristides and Justin Martyr's First Apology, but is strikingly similar to the Letter to Peter to Philip.

E. Literary Analogies to Mark 16:9—20 as a Whole: The Longer Ending as a Continuation of Mark's Story

Having discussed the literary features of the individual parts of Mark 16:9—20, it remains to consider parallels to the passage as a whole. This comparison will focus on four prominent literary components of Mark 16:9—20 as compared with analogous features in other early Christian writings:

1) one or more appearances of the risen Jesus; 2) the motif of disbelief; 3) the commission to preach the gospel; and 4) the expectation that the missionary effort will include miraculous signs.

Joseph Hug and Veronica Krauss rightly acknowledge that no individual part of the LE can offer genre for the entire passage. Attempting to improve on previous attempts, Hug offers the designation "instruction missionarium." This solution is also not satisfactory because Hug simply focuses on yet another motif in the LE (vv. 15—18, 20), but does not address the passage as a whole.

Although no surviving early Christian writing combines all four of these features in the way that the author of the LE did, this comparative analysis will offer a number of insights about how this author addressed a problem that was shared by certain other evangelists, namely how to continue the narrative that ended with Mark 16:8.

Accounts of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances, words and dialogues with the disciples assumed a wide variety of forms in Christian literature of the first, second and third centuries. This discussion will focus only on writings which bear some similarity to the structure of the LE and will not dwell on others like The Apocryphon of James, a writing that claims to be a secret letter by James, the Lord's brother, and discusses an appearance of Jesus 550 days after the resurrection. Such dialogues bear a certain affinity to John 20—21 and Acts 1, but stand in contrast to Matthew 28, Luke 24 and the LE, which do not relate discourse between Jesus and his disciples.

In what follows it will be argued that, in terms of its length and the way in which the text ends, Matt 28:8—20 provides closest analogy to what the author of the LE sought to accomplish in providing a transitional narrative from Mark 16:8 to Jesus' personal exhortation to engage in a worldwide mission. In addition, the depiction of Jesus' ascension before the mission anticipated in Mark 16:19—20 is likely to have been borrowed from Luke—

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234 J. Hug, La finale de l'évangile de Marc, pp. 174—175. So also E. Poulo, Das Markusevangelium, 2.548. Likewise, Martin Hengel discusses the LE as a predecessor of Tatian's "Gospel harmony (Evangelienharmonien)" that may have been used as "for catechetical purposes." (Die johannesevangelische Frage, p. 58).

235 Although it is possible that the LE functioned as missionary instruction, this suggestion is not of primary importance to the question of literary genre, because teaching Christian missionaries could have encompassed a variety of literary forms.


237 In the Apocryphon of James, Jesus teaches the disciples before he is taken up into heaven. With regard to its genre, the Apocryphon of James starts as a letter with an epistolary introduction, and then offers a series of dialogues between Jesus and the disciples. After Jesus' "last words" (14:31), he departs but gives no commissioning (15.5—6). An ET of the Apocryphon of James by E. E. Williams appears in NHL, pp. 30—37. Of the comment of M. Koeber and E. Pagels (NHL, p. 244) that gnostic dialogues like The Dialogue of the Savior merit comparison only with the Gospel of John in that they are "elaborations and interpretations of traditional sayings," rather than "secondarily arranged theological discourses (such as The Sophia of Jesus Christ and Piers Sophia). . . ."
Acts and was inserted into the largely Matthean framework that was adapted by the author of the Lk.\textsuperscript{238}

1. The Gospel of Peter

The author of the Gospel of Peter is one of at least three evangelists — the others being Matthew, Luke and, possibly, John — who offers a continuation of Mark's story. Much like Mark 16:8, John 13 (57) reports that “the women fled affrighted” from the empty tomb.\textsuperscript{239} Afterward the disciples “wept and mourned” (ἐκλαυαν καὶ ἐλυποῦσθαν) and went home (14 [58—59]; cf. Mark 16:10). This writing, which ends suddenly in the middle of a sentence, seems to anticipate an appearance of Jesus like the one reported in John 21: “But I, Simon Peter, and my brother Andrew took our nets and went out to sea. And there was Levi, the son of Alphaeus, whom the Lord...”\textsuperscript{240} In two important respects, then, the Gospel of Peter and the Lk share structural features in common. Subsequently to visiting the empty tomb, the women remain silent and play no significant role in the narrative which follows (contrast Matt 28:8—10, 16—20 and Luke 24:9—11). In addition, the portrayal of the disciples who wept and mourned occurs before Jesus appears personally to them.\textsuperscript{241}

2. The Gospel of John

Like the author of Mark 16:1—8, the author of the Fourth Gospel offers a version of what took place at the empty tomb. There are, of course, numerous differences between John 20:1—10 and the Synoptic accounts.\textsuperscript{242} Like the Lk, however, John 20:11—29 reports a total of three appearances of Jesus: first to Mary (20:11—18), then to the disciples (20:19—23) and finally to Thomas (20:24—29). Instead of Matthew's commissioning (Matt 28:18—20) or Luke's promise of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Luke 24, Acts 1—2), John offers the concluding remark that he has written Γινώσκετε ὅπως ἦστε ἐκ πόνου καὶ πάθους, ἐκ πάσης ἁμαρτίας ἐκείνη ἐπεξεργάσθη ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ.\textsuperscript{243} The presence of three appearances in John 20 — and, in particular, the one to Mary Magdalene — is a feature shared by Mark 16:9—14. Moreover, the emphasis on belief in John 20 and throughout the Fourth Gospel is analogous to Mark 16:11, 13, 14, 16 and 17. The structure of John 20 as a whole, however, is quite different from the Lk in that John ends without emphasizing the universal mission (contrast Matt 28:18—20 and Mark 16:15—20).


Presumably independently of Matthew, the author of Luke extended the account of Mark differently from the authors of the Gospel of Peter, Matthew and the Lk. Luke's account corresponds to Matt 28:8—10 in that the women who visited the tomb report to the disciples that they had heard that Jesus had been raised (Luke 24:9; contrast Mark 16:8, Gospel of Peter 15 [57]). Only Luke 24:11 and Mark 16:10—13 maintain, in counterpoint to Matthew, that these reports of the resurrection were met with disbelief. Afterward Luke narrates two additional appearances of Jesus: one given to two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13—35), and a final appearance to all Jesus' followers (Luke 24:36—49). The latter concludes with the instruction to wait in Jerusalem until they “have been clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). Luke then reports that after the ascension the disciples followed Jesus' instructions and “returned to Jerusalem with great joy” (Luke 24:52; cf. 24:50—53). Acts 1:1—11 summarizes certain parts of Luke 24. After the selection of Matthias to replace Judas as a member of the twelve (Acts 1:12—26), the promise of Luke 24:49/Acts 1:8 is fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2).

As argued in the previous chapter, Luke 24:9—11 influenced the portrayal of disbelief in Mark 16:10—11 and 13, and Mark 16:12 summarizes the

\textsuperscript{238} If one were to extend the chronological limits of this literary comparison into the Byzantine era, the Greek Acts of Thaddaeus (Acts Thaddaeus), which dates to “the middle of the 6th century at least” (Anselm de Santis Otero, NTarga, 2:481), would also be pertinent to the discussion. The Acts of Thaddaeus 6 mentions appearances of Jesus to his mother and other women, to Peter and John and then to the twelve. Afterward the disciple says, “he sent us out in his name to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins to all the nations... and he gave us authority to pursue demons (ἐκλαυαν καὶ ἐλυποῦσθαν) and to heal every disease and affliction and to raise the dead.” R. Pesch (Das Markusevangelium, 2:549 n. 2) cites the Greek text, which also appears in C. von Tischendorf, R. A. Lipsius and M. Bonnet, Actes Apostolomur Apocryphas post Constantium Tischendorfem, 1.277, II §—17. The ET is my own. In this passage the author proceeds straight from the descent of Pentecost to the crucifixion, and then to the appearances...


\textsuperscript{240} Gospel of Peter 14 (60). With J. D. Crossan, The Cross that Spoke, pp. 291—293.

\textsuperscript{241} Cf. Mark 16:14. Since nothing else is known about how the narrative of the Gospel of Peter developed after legation 14 (60), the discussion of common literary features must end here.

\textsuperscript{242} The Fourth Gospel reports two visits to the tomb rather than one. In the first, it is only Mary Magdalene, rather than Mary and two other women, who visit the tomb. Later a second visit to the empty tomb by “Peter and the other disciple” is reported in John 20:3—9.

\textsuperscript{243} John 20:31. In addition, John 21:1—25, which most scholars regard as a secondary addition to John, records another appearance of Jesus in Galilee, at which time the apostle Peter is reinstated.
appearance to the two disciples in Luke 24:13—35. Moreover, in Acts 1—2 Christ’s ascension to the right hand of God precedes the spread of the Christian message in a way that is apparently followed in Mark 16:19—20. These individual points of correspondence, however, do not nullify the larger structural and chronological differences between Luke-Acts and the LE concerning the beginning of the Christian mission.244

4. The Gospel of Matthew

Matthew 28 parallels most closely what the author of the LE aimed to accomplish in Mark 16:9—20. To appreciate fully the similarities between Matthew 28 and the LE, one must consider the points at which each author began and finished. Assuming that Matthew knew no more of the end of Mark’s Gospel than Mark 16:1—8,245 this evangelist, like the author of the LE, was faced with the question how to proceed after the departure of the fearful, silent women portrayed in Mark 16:8. Matt 28:8 reflects a thorough revision of Mark 16:8; although filled “with fear and great joy,” the women nonetheless deliver the message of the resurrection and the imminent appearance in Galilee.246 Soon afterward the final section of Matthew relates a single appearance of Jesus to the disciples (Matt 28:16—17; cf. Mark 16:14) and a commissioning. Having arrived in Galilee, the disciples see Jesus, who instructs them to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matt 28:18—20; cf. Mark 16:15—18). The promise to be “with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt 28:20b) broadly parallels the LE’s conclusion with the Lord’s continued activity in the mission (Mark 16:20bc).

5. Conclusion concerning the LE’s Macro-genre

The argument offered here for understanding the LE as a continuation of Mark 16:8, whose larger structure bears the closest analogy to Matthew’s embodiment of the Markan narrative (Matt 28:8—20), does not claim that all of Mark 16:9—20 can be understood in light of Matthew 28. Into the Markan framework the LE’s author imported from Luke 24 the motif of disbelieve and the appearance to the two disciples (24:13—35), as well as the appearance to Mary Magdalene and the emphasis upon belief in John 20. Those and other elements from Mark, Luke, and John have been integrated into the larger structure of Matthew 28, whose author modified the portrayal of the silent women in Mark 16:8 and concluded with the mission to the whole world. Also incorporated into the Markan schema is the emphasis on signs, which will follow “those who believe” and which the risen Lord himself will grant in confirmation of the kerygma (Mark 16:17—18, 20bc). The following chapter investigates the Longer Ending’s expectations concerning the miraculous in relation to those of other Christian writings of the first three centuries.

F. Summation

The theory that the Longer Ending represents a portion of another text, which was secondarily appended to the end of Mark (the “Fragment Theory”), is untenable. Instead, Mark 16:9—20 should be regarded as the work of one author, who wished to bring the ending of the Second Gospel into greater conformity with the conclusions of writings like Matthew, Luke, and John. The LE is cited by Irenaeus (ca. 180 CE), Tatian (ca. 172 CE) and Justin Martyr (ca. 155—161 CE). The argument of the previous chapter that the LE’s author wrote after the collection of the NT Gospels (probably not before ca. 110—120 CE) thus fixes this passage’s date of composition to ca. 120—150 CE. Moreover, in view of the possibility that Justin knew the existence of the Acts of Pilate, whose author cited Mark 16:15—18 and alluded to 16:19, a terminus ante quem somewhat earlier than Justin’s First Apology (ca. 140 CE) is plausible.

Much of this chapter has been devoted to a comparative literary study of analogous micro-forms of the individual parts of the LE. These findings are summarized above at the end of that section. In the final part of this chapter it was argued that, in terms of its length and missionary focus, Mark 28:8—20 provides the closest literary parallel to the LE as a whole in that both authors
modified the narrative ending with Mark 16:8 and chose to conclude with a missionary endeavor to all the world.

Chapter 5
Miracle and Mission:

The Expectation of Signs to Authenticate the Kerygma

Previous chapters have discussed the Longer Ending’s relation to the NT Gospels and other early Christian writings, as well as its origin, date, occasion and literary features. This chapter focuses on the portrayal of miracles in the second half of the passage, especially in vv. 17a and 20bc:

15 καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷς. Προευθυνεῖς εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἄκαντα κηρύξας τὸ εὐαγγέλιον οὕτως τῇ κόσμῳ. 16 ὅσπερ αὐτοῦς καὶ βαπτιζόμενος σώζεται, ὁ δὲ ἄπτομένας κατακρίνεται. 17 εἰς ὅσπερ αὐτοῖς ταῦτα παρακαλεῖς: ἵνα τὸ δόματι μου δεικνύσα βεβαιῶσιν, γενέσθαι λαλήσασιν καίνοι. 18 καὶ ἐν τῷ δορυφόρῳ δορυφόρου καὶ ἀυλούμενοι τὰ πέτων ὕπερ αὐτοῦ περιήλθεν. 19 ὅ μὲν δόματος Ἰησοῦς, ταῦτα ἀνελθέντες εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἐκδόθησαν ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ, 20 ἐκέκτεινε δὲ ἀυλοῦμεν ἐκθύναμεν πολλοῖς, τὸν χριστόν σωτῆρα τὸν κόσμου σωτῆρας καὶ τὸν ζῶντα δοκίμασεν διὰ τὸν ἐπικληθέντος σωμάτων.

At two different, but related, points the LE states that occurrences of miraculous signs constitute an important part of the church’s life and mission. First, Jesus’ commissioning to “preach the gospel to all creation” (16:15) culminates in the promise that “those who believe” (16:17a) will perform the miracles listed in vv. 17b—18. Second, when the disciples embark on a mission, miracles are also said to figure prominently. As they depart and preach everywhere (16:20a), the risen Lord works with them and confirms the word through the accompanying signs (16:20bc).

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