

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

UMI[®]

Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

**THE MORE SPIRITUAL GOSPEL: MARKAN LITERARY TECHNIQUES
IN THE LONGER GOSPEL OF MARK**

by

Scott G. Brown

**A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of the Centre for the Study of Religion
University of Toronto**

© Copyright by Scott G. Brown (1999)



**National Library
of Canada**

**Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services**

**395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada**

**Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada**

**Acquisitions et
services bibliographiques**

**395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada**

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-41114-1

ABSTRACT

**“The More Spiritual Gospel: Markan Literary
Techniques in the Longer Gospel of Mark”
Ph.D. Dissertation, 1999
Scott G. Brown
Centre for the Study of Religion
University of Toronto**

Although a quarter of a century has passed since Morton Smith published his discovery of a letter of Clement of Alexandria containing a fifteen sentence excerpt from a longer version of the gospel of Mark, there is still no general agreement about the origin and nature of this longer gospel. Most investigators continue to adopt one (or more) of five, essentially mutually exclusive paradigms that were identified and discussed by Smith: forgery; pointless, apocryphal pastiche; secret and elitist gnostic gospel; catechetical supplements for neophyte baptism; and pre-canonical version of Mark. Apart from the first two conceptions, which tend to preempt historical reflection, these alternatives are the products of a predominantly form-critical approach to gospel pericopae. The longer text’s story about the resurrection and private instruction of a young man is usually assumed to depict and validate a rite of initiation practiced within the particular Christian community in which this gospel was produced.

It is the contention of this dissertation that a more literary paradigm should be adopted. Contrary to the predominant opinion, Clement’s *Letter to Theodore* describes this longer version of Mark neither as a “secret” gospel nor as a lection for a ceremony, but as a “mystical” and “more spiritual” gospel that proved to be especially apt at leading its readers to an appreciation of the philosophical truths of orthodox Alexandrian Christianity, what Clement referred to as “the great mysteries.” This text

was therefore eventually read and expounded anagogically to Christians advancing in gnosis.

When considered in relation to their Markan context, the extant verses of the longer gospel function to elaborate and elucidate Markan themes and symbolism pertaining to discipleship and christology by employing distinctly Markan literary techniques, most notably informational “gaps,” intercalation, paired framing stories, and verbal echoes. Thus, through the use of intercalation, the naked flight of the young man in Gethsemane (Mark 14:51–52) comes to symbolize the failure of Jesus’ disciples to be “baptized” with his metaphorical “baptism” of death in Jerusalem (10:38–39).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A number of people contributed in important ways to the production of this thesis. Above all, I want to express my gratitude to my family for all the encouragement and support they have given me. Over the last three and a half years, my parents, Judy and Doug Sparling and Eric and Claire Brown, offered me lodging in their homes, as did my brother, Craig, and his wife, Theresa. My supervisor, Professor Leif Vaage, always looked out for my interests and read through the manuscript at least three times, offering insightful feedback on practically every page; his thoroughness and high standards have made my dissertation a much better work. My friend, Professor Michel Desjardins, read the manuscript twice and corrected more scribal errors than I care to admit. He has been an important part of my education at the University of Toronto from the very first evening I entered an undergraduate classroom to the afternoon of my Ph.D. oral exam. Two other professors who I highly regard also deserve special mention. Professors Schuyler Brown and John Kloppenborg took turns supervising me during the period before my general exams. I want to thank the former for directing me to a form of biblical scholarship that is theoretically intelligible; the latter, for directing me away from thesis topics that would never have been as interesting as this one.

Other scholars who have studied the longer gospel of Mark took the time to answer my inquiries and send me materials. Quentin Quesnell amiably and generously assisted my investigation by clarifying issues pertaining to his article on Longer Mark. Shawn Eyer provided me with copies of some materials I could not otherwise locate. And

Andrew Criddle offered me detailed information about the methodology he employed in his article.

I wish also to thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for providing me with funding during the initial phase of research.

CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abbreviations	xiv
Clement's <i>Letter to Theodore</i>	xvii
Transcription	xvii
English Translation	xx
Clement's Citations from the Longer Gospel of Mark	xxiv
Transcription	xxiv
English Translation	xxiv

PART ONE

CHAPTER 1: TOWARDS A LITERARY PERSPECTIVE ON THE LONGER GOSPEL OF MARK	2
I. Introduction	2
I.1. Scholarly Assessments of the Longer Gospel	5
I.2. The Present Predicament	9

I.3. A Literary Thesis	10
I.3.1. The Outline of this Dissertation	12
I.3.2. Comments on Method	15
II. The History of Interpretation	16
II.1. Early Tradition	16
II.2. The Pastiche Explanation	21
II.2.1. The Idiosyncrasy of Pastiche Composition	26
II.3. The School of Longer Markan Priority	29
II.3.1. Helmut Koester's Three-Stage Theory of the Development of Canonical Mark	29
II.3.2. Adaptations of Koester's Theory	32
II.3.2.1. Schenke's Theory of the Priority of the Carpocratian Longer Gospel	32
II.3.2.2. Crossan's Theory of the Production of Canonical Mark through the Dispersion of LGM 1 and 2	33
II.3.2.2.1. Revisions of Crossan's Theory	34
II.4. The Slow Rise of Redaction-Critical Interest	36
II.4.1. Koester	36
II.4.2. Crossan	39
II.4.3. Peabody	39
II.4.4. Sellew	41
II.4.5. Munro	42
II.5. The Beginnings of a Literary Perspective	44
II.5.1. Kermode	44
II.5.2. Schenke	47
II.5.3. Meyer	48
II.6. The History of Interpretation: Conclusions	51

III. Expansion or Abbreviation?	53
III.1. Evidence of Expansion	58
CHAPTER 2: THE QUESTION OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF CLEMENT'S <i>LETTER TO THEODORE</i>	63
I. The Possibility of an Ancient Forgery	65
I.1. Mark and Alexandria	65
I.2. The Letter and Clement's Undisputed Writings	68
I.2.1. Clarifying the Issue of Secrecy	69
I.2.2. Clement's Thoughts on Writing and the Unwritten Gnostic Tradition	72
I.2.3. The Esoteric Side of Clement's Philosophy and the <i>Letter to Theodore</i>	79
I.2.4. Clement's Philosophy and the <i>Stromateis</i>	82
I.2.5. Recent Objections Concerning Clement's Acceptance of a Gospel Withheld from the Public	85
I.3. An Ancient Forgery: Conclusions	91
II. The Possibility of a Modern Forgery	92
II.1. The Arguments of Charles Murgia	92
II.2. The Controversy Sparked by Quentin Quesnell	99
II.2.1. A Forgery to Validate Prior Beliefs?	106

II.2.2. Smith's Beliefs about Jesus and Mark prior to 1958	115
II.3. After Quesnell: the Issue of Smith's Integrity	117
II.4. Criddle's Statistical Study	123
II.5. Could Smith Have Created the Document?	127
II.6. A Modern Forgery: Conclusions	134
III. Synthesis	135
CHAPTER 3: THE NATURE OF THE LONGER GOSPEL	143
I. Clement's Conception of the Genre of the Longer Gospel	145
I.1. Is Τὸ Μυστικὸν Εὐαγγέλιον a Title?	146
I.2. The Use of the Terms Μυστικάί, Λόγια, and Πράξεις in the Letter	151
1.2.1. Αἱ Μυστικάί	151
1.2.2. Λόγια and Πράξεις	153
I.3. How Should We Translate Μυστικός?	157
I.3.1. Μυστήριον in Clement's Writings	157
1.3.1.1. The Great Mysteries	159
1.3.1.2. The Mysteries in the <i>Letter to Theodore</i>	162
I.3.2. Clement's use of Μυστικός	165
I.3.3. Related Meanings of Μυστικός	170
I.3.4. A Cultic Connection?	171
I.3.5. Μυστικός in the <i>Letter to Theodore</i>	172
I.4. Τὸ Μυστικὸν Εὐαγγέλιον and Πνευματικώτερον Εὐαγγέλιον	175
I.5. Clement's Generic Conception: Conclusions	176

II. The Reason for the Discretion Surrounding the Use of the Longer Gospel	178
II.1. Was this a “Securely Guarded” Text?	178
II.2. Carpocrates’s Magic	183
II.3. Clement’s Injunctions to Theodore	187
II.4. Clement’s Reticence about Mentioning the Longer Gospel	191
II.5. The Reason for Discretion: Conclusions	195
CHAPTER 4: THE ORIGINAL PURPOSE AND LATER USE OF THE LONGER GOSPEL	197
I. The “Internal” Evidence of the Story: Previous Discussions of an Original Community Function for LGM 1	200
I.1. Smith’s Arguments For A Baptismal Reading of LGM 1	202
I.1.1. An Evaluation of Smith’s Arguments	203
I.2. Was LGM 1 Originally Part of a Baptismal Lection?	210
I.3. Later Refinements of the Baptism Interpretation	216
I.3.1 Robin Scroggs and Kent I. Groff	217
I.3.2. Marvin Meyer	221
I.3.3. Could LGM 1:12 Represent Catechetical Teaching?	222
I.3.3.1. The Nature of the Instruction in Mark 4 and Early Catechetical Instruction	223
I.4. The “Internal” Evidence for an Original Community Function for LGM 1: Conclusions	226

II. The “External” Evidence of the Letter and Clement’s Writings: Previous Discussions of the Use of LGM 1 and 2 within the Alexandrian Church	227
II.1. A Gospel <i>not</i> for Catechumens	229
II.1.1. Talley’s Theory of the Reading of LGM 1 within a Liturgical Cycle	230
II.1.2. Smith’s Libertine Interpretation	234
II.1.3. Richardson’s Cultic Alternative to Baptism	238
II.2. The Cultic Interpretation and the Letter	242
II.3. A Too Literalistic Form Criticism?	243
II.3.1. The Problem of LGM 2	245
II.3.2. Narrative Gaps in LGM 1 and 2	248
II.3.3. An Intratextual Approach	254
III. New Theses Concerning the Original Purpose and Later Use of LGM 1 AND 2	256
III.1. The Intentions of the Author of Longer Mark	256
III.2. The Use of LGM 1 and 2 in the Alexandrian Church of Clement’s Day	261
IV. The Purpose and Use of the Longer Gospel: General Conclusions	263

PART TWO

CHAPTER 5: LGM 1 AND 2 AS A MARKAN-STYLE INTERCALATION	266
I. The Formal Characteristics of Intercalation	267
II. The Hermeneutical Significance of Intercalation	281
III. Intercalation and the Conveyance of Markan Theology	289

III.1. Donahue’s Suggestion	289
III.2. Is Hermeneutic Precedence Given to the Inner Story?	294
IV. Intercalations and Dramatized Irony	295
V. Conclusions	297
VI. Excursus on the Relevance of Intercalation to the Dating of the <i>Letter to Theodore</i>	298
 CHAPTER 6: THE LONGER-GOSPEL RESURRECTION STORIES AS A MARKAN-STYLE PAIRED FRAME	306
 I. What Constitutes an <i>Inclusio</i>?	309
 II. Do 10:32 and 16:7–8 Create an <i>Inclusio</i>?	311
 III. Mark 10:32	314
III.1. 10:32 within 8:22–10:52	314
III.2. The Discipleship Passages of the Central Section	316
 IV. Mark 16:7–8	321
IV.1. “He Goes Before You to Galilee”	321
IV.2. “To His Disciples and Peter”	323
IV.3. The <i>Νεανίσκος</i> in Canonical Mark	325
IV.4. The Customary Readings of Mark 16:7	327
IV.4.1. Problems with the Traditional Perspectives	329
IV.5. “There You Will See Him”	334
IV.6. Seeing and Understanding	336
IV.7. Reading 16:7	339
IV.8. Mark 16:8	340

V. LGM 1 and 2 and Mark 16:1-8 as a Frame for the Passion	342
CHAPTER 7: VERBAL REPETITIONS	347
I. Reminiscences of the Story of the Rich Man	348
II. “And After Six Days”	353
III. The “Great Cry” from the Tomb	357
IV. “The Mystery of the Kingdom of God”	362
IV.1. LGM 1:12 as an Elaboration of Themes Introduced in Mark 4:11-12	365
IV.2. The Mystery of the Kingdom of God and the Markan Gospel’s Imperative of “Spiritual” Understanding	369
IV.3. Deeper Understanding as a Literary Agenda Shared by the Longer and Shorter Gospels	376
V. Conclusions	376
CHAPTER 8: SUMMATION	378
I. General Historical Conclusions	378
I.1. Clement’s Use of the Longer Text	378
I.2. The Original Purpose of the Longer Text	379
II. Matters for Further Research	382
II.1. Longer Mark and the Gospel of John	382
II.2. Who Wrote the Longer Gospel?	385
II.3. When Was the Longer Gospel Written?	386
BIBLIOGRAPHY	388

List of Abbreviations

AARSR	American Academy of Religion Studies in Religion
AHR	<i>American Historical Review</i>
ALBO	Analecta lovaniensia biblica et orientalia
ANCL	Ante-Nicene Christian Library
ANQ	<i>Andover Newton Quarterly</i>
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
ASTI	<i>Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute</i>
ATR	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BJRL	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester</i>
BK	<i>Bibel und Kirche</i>
BR	<i>Biblical Research</i>
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
CA	Morton Smith, <i>Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark</i> (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973)
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CHR	<i>Catholic Historical Review</i>
CSR	<i>Christian Scholar's Review</i>
CT	<i>Christianity Today</i>
CTSR	<i>Chicago Theological Seminary Register</i>
ETL	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
EvQ	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
EvT	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
ExpTim	<i>Expository Times</i>
FC	Fathers of the Church
Forum	<i>Foundations & Facets Forum</i>
HR	<i>History of Religions</i>
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
Int	<i>Interpretation</i>
JAAR	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>

<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JBLMS	Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
<i>JBR</i>	<i>Journal of Bible and Religion</i>
JEB	Jerusalem Bible
<i>JECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
<i>JFSR</i>	<i>Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament—Supplement Series
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>JTSA</i>	<i>Journal of Theology for Southern Africa</i>
L	Special Luke
LGM 1	“Secret” gospel of Mark 1 (= Clement’s <i>Letter to Theodore</i> II.23–III.11)
LGM 2	“Secret” gospel of Mark 2 (= Clement’s <i>Letter to Theodore</i> III.14–16)
<i>LQ</i>	<i>The Lutheran Quarterly</i>
<i>LM</i>	<i>Longer Mark: Forgery, Interpolation, or Old Tradition?</i> Protocol of the Eighteenth Colloquy: 7 December 1975, ed. by Wilhelm H. Wuellner (Berkeley: Center for Hermeneutical Studies in Hellenistic and Modern Culture, 1976)
M	Special Matthew
NAB	New American Bible
NEB	New English Bible
<i>NedTTs</i>	<i>Nederlands theologisch tijdschrift</i>
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>PSTJ</i>	<i>Perkins School of Theology Journal</i>
Q	<i>Quelle</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
<i>RHPR</i>	<i>Revue d’histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i>
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SFSHJ	South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism

<i>SG</i>	<i>The Secret Gospel: The Discovery and Interpretation of the Secret Gospel according to Mark</i> (New York: Harper and Row, 1973)
SGM	Secret Gospel of Mark
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
<i>ST</i>	<i>Studia theologica</i>
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> , eds. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76)
<i>ThR</i>	<i>Theologische Rundschau</i>
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i>
<i>TToday</i>	<i>Theology Today</i>
TWAS	Twayne's World Authors Series
<i>USQR</i>	<i>Union Seminary Quarterly Review</i>
<i>VC</i>	<i>Vigiliae christianae</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
<i>ZKT</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

Clement's Letter to Theodore

Transcription

- I.1 + ἐκ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου Κλήμεντος τοῦ στρωματέως· Θεοδώρω. †
I.2 καλῶς ἐποίησας ἐπιστομίσας τὰς ἀρρήτους διδασκαλίας τῶν Καρποκρατιανῶν.
I.3 οὔτοι γὰρ οἱ προφητευθέντες “ἀστέρες πλανῆται,” οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς στενῆς τῶν ἐντολῶν
I.4 ὁδοῦ εἰς ἀπέρατον ἄβυσσον πλανώμενοι τῶν σαρκικῶν καὶ ἐνσωμάτων ἀμαρτιῶν.
I.5 πεφυσιωμένοι γὰρ εἰς γνῶσιν, ὡς λέγουσιν, “τῶν βαθέων τοῦ Σατανᾶ,” λανθάνουσιν εἰς
I.6 “τὸν ζόφον τοῦ σκότους,” τοῦ ψεύδους ἑαυτοὺς ἀπορρίπτοντες· καὶ καυχώμενοι
I.7 ἐλευθέρους εἶναι, δοῦλοι γεγονάσιν ἀνδραποδώδων ἐπιθυμιῶν. τούτοις οὖν
I.8 ἀντιστατέον πάντη τε καὶ πάντως, εἰ γὰρ καὶ τι ἀληθὲς λέγοιεν οὐδ' οὕτω
I.9 συμφωνοίη ἂν αὐτοῖς ὁ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐραστής. οὐδὲ γὰρ πάντα τὰ ληθῆ ἀλήθεια. οὐδὲ
I.10 τὴν κατὰ τὰς ἀνθρωπίνας δόξας φαινομένην ἀλήθειαν προκριτέον τῆς
I.11 ἀληθοῦς ἀληθείας τῆς κατὰ τὴν πίστιν. τῶν τοίνυν θρυλουμένων περὶ τοῦ θεοπνεύστου
I.12 κατὰ Μᾶρκον εὐαγγελίου, τὰ μὲν ψεύδεται παντελῶς, τὰ δέ, εἰ καὶ ἀληθῆ τινα
I.13 περιέχει, οὐδ' οὕτως ἀληθῶς παραδίδονται, συγκεκριμένα γὰρ τὰ ληθῆ
I.14 τοῖς πλάσμασι παραχαράσσεται ὥστε—τοῦτο δὴ τὸ λεγόμενον—“καὶ τὸ
I.15 ἄλας μωρανθῆναι.” ὁ γοῦν Μᾶρκος, κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Πέτρου ἐν Ῥώμῃ διατριβῆν,
I.16 ἀνέγραψε τὰς πράξεις τοῦ Κυρίου, οὐ μέντοι πάσας ἐξαγγέλλων, οὐδὲ μὴν τὰς
I.17 μυστικὰς ὑποσημαίνων ἀλλ' ἐκλεγόμενος ἅς χρησιμωτάτας ἐνόμισε πρὸς
I.18 αὔξησιν τῆς τῶν κατηχουμένων πίστεως. τοῦ δὲ Πέτρου μαρτυρήσαντος, παρῆλθεν

†. This text is from Morton Smith's book *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark*, 448–52 (hereafter *CA*), but follows the corrections made in his commentary. The Roman numerals refer to the page of the manuscript. Numeral “I” refers to folio 1 recto, “II” to folio 1 verso, and “III” to folio 2 recto. The numbers following these Roman numerals refer to the line number; the line divisions given are not exactly those of the manuscript, for the decision was made to avoid dividing words at the ends of lines. Further references to Clement's writings use Roman numerals in the conventional way, to refer to book divisions within a larger book. For example, *Stromateis* I.11.50.1 refers to Book One, chapter 11, paragraph 50 (counted from the beginning of a book, not from the beginning of that chapter), section (“verse”) 1. *Protrepticus* 12.120.1–2 refers to chapter 12 (it is in one book), paragraph 120 (from the very beginning), sections 1 to 2. And *Quis dives salvetur?* 5.1 refers to paragraph 5 section 1. (In Stählin's text, the paragraph and section numbers are given on the right side of the page. The line numbers on the left side are for his index volume, where he refers to the volume, page, and line of his books.)

- 1.19 εις Ἀλεξάνδρειαν ὁ Μάρκος, κομίζων καὶ τὰ [τ] αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ τοῦ Πέτρου
- 1.20 ὑπομνήματα ἐξ ὧν μεταφέρων εἰς τὸ πρῶτον αὐτοῦ βιβλίον τὰ τοῖς προκόπτουσι
- 1.21 περὶ τὴν γινῶσιν κατάλληλα συντάξε πνευματικώτερον
- 1.22 εὐαγγελιον εἰς τὴν τῶν τελειουμένων χρησίμην οὐδέπω ὅμως αὐτὰ τὰ ἀπόρρητα
- 1.23 ἐξωρηήσατο, οὐδὲ κατέγραψε τὴν ἱεροφαντικὴν διδασκαλίαν τοῦ
- 1.24 Κυρίου, ἀλλὰ ταῖς προγεγραμμέναις πράξεσιν ἐπιθεῖς καὶ ἄλλας, ἔτι
- 1.25 προσεπήγαγε λόγια τινα ὧν ἠπίστατο τὴν ἐξήγησιν μυσταγωγῆσαι τοὺς ἀκροατὰς
- 1.26 εἰς τὸ ἄδυντον τῆς ἐπτάκις κεκαλυμμένης ἀληθείας. οὕτως οὖν
- 1.27 προπαρεσκεύασεν, οὐ φθονερῶς οὐδ' ἀπροφυλάκτως, ὡς ἐγὼ οἶμαι. καὶ
- 1.28 ἀποθηήσκων κατέλιπε τὸ αὐτοῦ σύγγραμμα τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τῇ
- 11.1 ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ ὅπου εἰσέτι νῦν ἀσφαλῶς εὐ μάλα τηρεῖται, ἀναγινωσκόμενον
- 11.2 πρὸς αὐτοὺς μόνους τοὺς μυουμένους τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια. τῶν δὲ
- 11.3 μαρῶν δαιμόνων ὀδύθηρον τῷ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένει πάντοτε μηχανώντων, ὁ
- 11.4 Καρποκράτης ὑπ' αὐτῶν διδαχθεὶς καὶ ἀπατηλοῖς τέχναις χρησάμενος,
- 11.5 οὕτω πρεσβύτερόν τινα τῆς ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ ἐκκλησίας κατεδούλωσεν
- 11.6 ὥστε παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐκόμισεν ἀπόγραφον τοῦ μυστικοῦ εὐαγγελίου, ὃ καὶ
- 11.7 ἐξηγήσατο κατὰ τὴν βλασφημίαν καὶ σαρκικὴν αὐτοῦ δόξαν. ἔτι
- 11.8 δὲ καὶ ἐμίανε, ταῖς ἀχράντοις καὶ ἀγίαις λέξεσιν ἀναμιγρῦς ἀναιδέστατα
- 11.9 ψεύσματα. τοῦ δὲ κράματος τοῦτου ἐξαντλεῖται τὸ τῶν Καρποκρατιανῶν
- 11.10 δόγμα. τούτοις οὖν, καθὼς καὶ προσείρηκα, οὐδέποτε εἰκτέον,
- 11.11 οὐδὲ προτεινουσιν αὐτοῖς τὰ κατεψευσμένα συγχωρητέον τοῦ Μάρκου
- 11.12 εἶναι τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον, ἀλλὰ καὶ μεθ' ὄρακου ἀρνητέον. "οὐ γὰρ ἄπασι πάντα
- 11.13 ἀληθῆ λεκτέον." διὰ τοῦτο ἡ σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ διὰ Σολομῶντος
- 11.14 παραγγέλλει, "ἀποκρίνου τῷ μωρῷ ἐκ τῆς ἰας αὐτοῦ." πρὸς τοὺς τυφλοὺς τῶν
- 11.15 νῦν τὸ φῶς τῆς ἀληθείας δεῖν ἐπικρυπτεσθαι διδάσκουσα, αὐτίκα
- 11.16 φησί, "τοῦ δὲ μὴ ἔχοντος ἀρθήσεται," καὶ "ὁ μωρὸς ἐν σκότει πορευέσθω." ἡμεῖς
- 11.17 δὲ "υἱοὶ φωτός" ἐσμεν, πεφωτισμένοι τῇ ἐξ ὕψους ἀνατολῇ τοῦ πνεύματος

Π.18 τοῦ Κυρίου. “οὐ δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ Κυρίου,” φησὶν, “ἐκεῖ ἐλευθερία,” “πάντα” γὰρ
Π.19 “καθαρὰ τοῖς καθαροῖς.” σοὶ τοίνυν οὐκ ὀκνήσω τὰ ἠρωτημένα ἀποκρίνασθαι,
Π.20 δι’ αὐτῶν < τῶν > τοῦ εὐαγγελίου λέξεων τὰ κατεψευσμένα ἐλέγχων.
Π.21 ἀμέλει μετὰ τὸ, “ἦσαν δὲ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἀναβαίνοντες εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα,” καὶ τὰ
Π.22 ἐξῆς ἕως, “μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἀναστήσεται,” ὧδε ἐπιφέρει κατὰ λέξιν,
Π.23 καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς Βηθανίαν, καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖ μία γυνὴ ἧς ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτῆς
Π.24 ἀπέθανεν· καὶ ἐλθοῦσα προσεκύνησε τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ. υἱὲ
Π.25 Δαβὶδ ἐλέησόν με. οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ ἐπετίμησαν αὐτῇ· καὶ ὀργισθεὶς ὁ
Π.26 Ἰησοῦς ἀπήλθεν μετ’ αὐτῆς εἰς τὸν κῆπον ὅπου ἦν τὸ μνημεῖον. καὶ
Π.1 εὐθύς ἠκούσθη ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου φωνὴ μεγάλη. καὶ προσελθὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς
Π.2 ἀπεκύλισε τὸν λίθον ἀπὸ τῆς θύρας τοῦ μνημείου. καὶ εἰσελθὼν εὐθύς ὅπου
Π.3 ἦν ὁ νεανίσκος ἐξέτεινεν τὴν χεῖρα καὶ ἤγειρεν αὐτόν, κρατήσας
Π.4 τῆς χειρός. ὁ δὲ νεανίσκος ἐμβλέψας αὐτῷ ἠγάπησεν αὐτόν καὶ
Π.5 ἤρξατο παρακαλεῖν αὐτόν ἵνα μετ’ αὐτοῦ ᾗ. καὶ ἐξελθόντες ἐκ
Π.6 τοῦ μνημείου ἦλθον εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ νεανίσκου· ἦν γὰρ πλούσιος. καὶ μεθ’
Π.7 ἡμέρας ἕξ ἐπέταξεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· καὶ ὀψίας γενομένης ἔρχεται ὁ
Π.8 νεανίσκος πρὸς αὐτόν περιβεβλημένος σινδόνα ἐπὶ γυμνοῦ καὶ
Π.9 ἔμεινε σὺν αὐτῷ τὴν νύκτα ἐκείνην. ἐδίδασκε γὰρ αὐτόν ὁ
Π.10 Ἰησοῦς τὸ μυστήριον τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ. ἐκεῖθεν δὲ ἀναστὰς
Π.11 ἐπέστρεψεν εἰς τὸ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου. ἐπὶ μὲν τούτοις ἔπεται τὸ, “καὶ
Π.12 προσπορεύονται αὐτῷ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης,” καὶ πᾶσα ἡ
Π.13 περικοπὴ. τὸ δὲ “γυμνὸς γυμνῷ” καὶ τᾶλλα περὶ ὧν ἔγραψας οὐχ
Π.14 εὑρίσκεται, μετὰ δὲ τό, “καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς Ἱεριχώ,” ἐπάγει μόνον, καὶ
Π.15 ἦσαν ἐκεῖ ἡ ἀδελφὴ τοῦ νεανίσκου ὃν ἠγάπα αὐτόν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ
Π.16 ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ Σαλώμη, καὶ οὐκ ἀπεδέξατο αὐτὰς ὁ Ἰησοῦς.
Π.17 τὰ δὲ ἄλλα τὰ πολλὰ ἃ ἔγραψας ψεύσματα καὶ φαίνεται καὶ ἔστιν.
Π.18 ἡ μὲν οὖν ἀληθὴς καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἀληθῆ φιλοσοφίαν ἐξήγησις

English Translation

- I.1 From the letters of the most holy Clement, the author of the *Stromateis*. To Theodore.[‡]
- I.2 You did well in silencing the unspeakable teachings of the Carpocratians.
- I.3 For these are the “wandering stars” referred to in the prophecy, who wander from the
- I.4 narrow road of the commandments into a boundless abyss of the carnal and bodily sins.
- I.5 For, priding themselves in knowledge, as they say, “of the deep things of Satan,”
- I.6 they do not know that they are casting themselves away into
- I.7 “the nether world of the darkness” of falsity, and, boasting
- I.8 that they are free, they have become slaves of servile desires. Such men
- I.9 are to be opposed in all ways and altogether. For, even if they should say something true, one who
- I.10 loves the truth should not, even so, agree with them. For, not all true things are the truth, nor
- I.11 should that truth which merely seems true according to human opinions be preferred to the
- I.12 true truth, that according to the faith. Now of the things they keep saying about the divinely inspired
- I.13 Gospel according to Mark, some are altogether falsifications, and others, even if they of contain some true
- I.14 elements, nevertheless are not reported truly. For the true things being mixed
- I.15 with inventions, are falsified, so that, as the saying goes, even the
- I.16 salt loses its savor. As for Mark, then, during Peter’s stay in Rome
- I.17 he wrote an account of the Lord’s doings, not, however, declaring all of them, nor yet hinting at the [mystic]¹ ones, but selecting what he thought most useful for increasing the

‡. Due to differences between the Greek word order and that of the English translation, line divisions are sometimes approximate. The translation is by Morton Smith, from CA, 446–47, with revisions in brackets where I dispute the sense and consider the difference to be important. The gospel citations are my literal translations, intended to preserve the idiosyncrasies of their Markan phraseology. Biblical quotations in this dissertation are based on the RSV translation, which I occasionally revise in order to give a more literal rendering. Unless otherwise indicated, quotations from Clement’s undisputed writings are from Wilson’s translation in ANCL 4, 12, 22, and 24, except for quotations from Books One to Three of the *Stromateis*, which are from the recent translation by John Ferguson.

1. Smith: “secret.”

I.18 faith of those who were being instructed. But when Peter died a martyr, Mark came
 I.19 over to Alexandria, bringing both his own notes and those of Peter,
 I.20 from which he transferred to his former book the things suitable to [those studies which make for]² progress
 I.21 toward knowledge. Thus he composed a more spiritual
 I.22 Gospel for the use of those who were being perfected. Nevertheless, he yet
 did not divulge the things not to be uttered,
 I.23 nor did he write down the hierophantic teaching of
 I.24 the Lord, but to the stories already written he added yet others and, moreover,
 I.25 brought in certain [traditions]³ of which he knew the interpretation
 would, as a mystagogue, lead the hearers into the
 I.26 innermost sanctuary of the truth hidden by seven veils. Thus, in sum,
 I.27 he prepared matters, neither grudgingly nor incautiously, in my opinion, and,
 I.28 dying, he left his composition to the church
 II.1 in Alexandria, where it even yet is [very securely kept],⁴ being read
 II.2 only to those who are being initiated into the great mysteries. But since the
 II.3 foul demons are always devising destruction for the race of men,
 II.4 Carpocrates, instructed by them and using deceitful arts, so enslaved
 II.5 a certain presbyter of the church in Alexandria
 II.6 that he got from him a copy of the [mystical]⁵ Gospel, which he
 II.7 both interpreted according to his blasphemous and carnal doctrine and,
 II.8 moreover, polluted, mixing with the spotless and holy words utterly shameless
 II.9 lies. From this mixture is drawn off the teaching of the Carpocratians.
 II.10 To them, therefore, as I said above, one must never give way;
 II.11 nor, when they put forward their falsifications, should one concede that [it is Mark's

2. Smith's translation has "to whatever makes for progress toward knowledge." I have replaced that phrase with the rendition Smith gives in *CA*, 91.

3. Smith: "sayings."

4. Or "most perfectly honoured," or perhaps "unerringly appropriated." Smith: "most carefully guarded."

5. Smith: "secret."

- II.12 mystical gospel],⁶ but should even deny it on oath. For, "Not all true things are to be said to all men." For this reason the Wisdom of God, through Solomon,
- II.13 advises, "Answer the fool from his folly," teaching that
- II.15 the light of the truth should be hidden from those who are mentally blind. Again
- II.16 it says, "From him who has not shall be taken away," and, "Let the fool walk in darkness." But we
- II.17 are "children of light," having been illuminated by "the dayspring" of the spirit
- II.18 of the Lord "from on high," and "Where the Spirit of the Lord is," it says, "there is liberty," for "All
- II.19 things are pure to the pure." To you, therefore, I shall not hesitate to answer the questions you have asked,
- II.20 refuting the falsifications by the very words of the Gospel.
- II.21 For example, after "And they were in the road going up to Jerusalem," and what
- II.22 follows, until "After three days he shall arise," the [text]⁷ brings the following material word for word:
- II.23 ["And they come to Bethany. And there was there a certain woman whose brother of hers
- II.24 had died. And coming, she prostrated before Jesus and says to him, 'Son
- II.25 of David have mercy on me.' But the disciples rebuked her. And having become angry
- II.26 Jesus went away with her into the garden where the tomb was. And
- III.1 immediately was heard from the tomb a great cry. And approaching, Jesus
- III.2 rolled the stone from the door of the tomb, and going in immediately where
- III.3 the young man was, he stretched out the hand and raised him, having grasped
- III.4 the hand. But the young man, having looked upon him, loved him and
- III.5 began to entreat him that he might be with him. And going out from
- III.6 the tomb they went into the house of the young man: for he was rich. And after
- III.7 six days Jesus gave charge to him; and when it was evening the
- III.8 young man comes to him donning a linen cloth upon his naked body, and
- III.9 he remained with him that night; for Jesus was teaching him
- III.10 the mystery of the kingdom of God. Now rising,

6. Smith: "...that the secret Gospel is by Mark...." Adapting C. Mondésert's translation (CA, 52: "...c'est là l' 'Evangile mystique' de Marc").

7. Smith: "secret Gospel."

III.11 he returned from there to the other side of the Jordan.”] After these words follows the text, “And
III.12 James and John come to him,” and all that
III.13 section. But “naked man with naked man,” and the other things about which you wrote, are not
III.14 found. And after the words, “And he comes into Jericho,” the [text]⁸ adds only, [And
III.15 there were there the sister of the young man whom Jesus loved him and
III.16 his mother and Salome, and Jesus did not receive them.]
III.17 But the many other things about which you wrote both seem to be and are falsifications.
III.18 Now the true explanation and that which accords with the true philosophy...

8. Smith: “secret Gospel.”

Clement's Citations from the Longer Gospel of Mark

Transcription

[LGM 1a[§]] ¹ καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς Βηθανίαν καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖ μία γυνὴ ἧς ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτῆς ἀπέθανεν· ² καὶ ἐλθοῦσα προσεκύνησε τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· υἱὲ Δαβὶδ ἐλέησόν με· ³ οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ ἐπετίμησαν αὐτῇ· ⁴ καὶ ὀργισθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀπῆλθεν μετ' αὐτῆς εἰς τὸν κῆπον ὅπου ἦν τὸ μνημεῖον· ⁵ καὶ εὐθὺς ἠκούσθη ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου φωνὴ μεγάλη· ⁶ καὶ προσελθὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀπεκύλισε τὸν λίθον ἀπὸ τῆς θύρας τοῦ μνημείου· ⁷ καὶ εἰσελθὼν εὐθὺς ὅπου ἦν ὁ νεανίσκος ἐξέτεινεν τὴν χεῖρα καὶ ἤγειρεν αὐτὸν· κρατήσας τῆς χειρός· ⁸ ὁ δὲ νεανίσκος ἐμβλέψας αὐτῷ ἠγάπησεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἤρξατο παρακαλεῖν αὐτὸν ἵνα μετ' αὐτοῦ ᾗ· ⁹ καὶ ἐξελθόντες ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου ἦλθον εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ νεανίσκου· ἦν γὰρ πλούσιος· ¹⁰ [LGM 1b] καὶ μεθ' ἡμέρας ἕξ ἐπέταξεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ¹¹ καὶ ὀψίας γενομένης ἔρχεται ὁ νεανίσκος πρὸς αὐτὸν· περιβεβλημένος σινδὼνα ἐπὶ γυμνοῦ· ¹² καὶ ἔμεινε σὺν αὐτῷ τὴν νύκτα ἐκείνην· ἐδίδασκε γὰρ αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸ μυστήριον τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ· ¹³ ἐκεῖθεν δὲ ἀναστὰς ἐπέστρεψεν εἰς τὸ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου·

[LGM 2] ¹ καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς Ἰεριχὼν καὶ ἦσαν ἐκεῖ ἡ ἀδελφὴ τοῦ νεανίσκου ὃν ἠγάπα αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς· καὶ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ Σαλώμη· ² καὶ οὐκ ἀπεδέξατο αὐτὰς ὁ Ἰησοῦς·

English Translation

[LGM 1a: after Mark 10:32-34] ¹ And they come to Bethany. And there was there a certain woman whose brother of hers [*sic*] had died. ² And coming, she prostrated before Jesus and says to him, "Son of David have mercy on me." ³ But the disciples rebuked her. ⁴ And having become angry Jesus went away with her into the garden where the tomb was. ⁵ And immediately was heard from the tomb a great cry. ⁶ And approaching, Jesus rolled the stone from the door of the tomb, ⁷ and going in immediately where the young man was, he stretched out the hand and raised him, having grasped the hand. ⁸ But the young man, having looked upon him, loved him and began to entreat him that he might be with him. ⁹ And going out from the tomb they went into the house of the young man; for he was rich. ¹⁰ [LGM 1b] And after six days Jesus gave charge to him; ¹¹ and when it was evening the young man comes to him donning a linen cloth upon his naked body, ¹² and he remained with him that night; for Jesus was teaching him the mystery of the kingdom of God. ¹³ Now rising, he returned from there to the other side of the Jordan. [then Mark 10:35-45]

[LGM 2: expansion of Mark 10:46] ¹ (And he comes to Jericho.) And there were there the sister of the young man whom Jesus loved him [*sic*] and his mother and Salome, ² and Jesus did not receive them. (And as he was leaving Jericho, with his disciples and a great multitude, the son of Timaeus, Bartimaeus....)

§. LGM 1 and LGM 2 = longer gospel of Mark 1 + 2. The versification is that of the Scholars Version (*The Complete Gospels: Annotated Scholars Version*, edited by Robert J. Miller, 405). The division of LGM 1 into "LGM 1a" and "1b" is my own. The partition is intended to be approximate (LGM 1:9 is transitional, so really belongs to both parts), and is used for convenience, so that the resurrection story may be referred to simply as "LGM 1a" and the "initiation" story as "LGM 1b."

PART ONE

RETHINKING THE DOMINANT PARADIGMS

TOWARDS A LITERARY PERSPECTIVE ON THE LONGER GOSPEL OF MARK

I. Introduction

Forty years ago the late Columbia University Professor Morton Smith discovered an 18th century copy of a manuscript sporting the title “From the letters of the most holy Clement, the author of the *Stromateis*. To Theodore.”¹ This previously unknown letter of the church father Clement of Alexandria (active circa 180–200) relates a story about the apostle Mark’s production of an amplified version of his gospel in the church at Alexandria.² Clement tells Theodore that Mark’s first gospel was produced in Rome for catechumens. But when he ventured to Alexandria following Peter’s death, Mark brought with him “his own and Peter’s notes,” and from these transferred into his former writing “things suitable to those studies which make for progress toward knowledge” (*Letter to Theodore* I.20–21).³ These additional passages presumably con-

1. The manuscript was written on end pages of a copy of the 1646 edition of Isaac Voss’s *Epistolae genuinae S. Ignatii Martyris*. For Smith’s account of the discovery, see his *The Secret Gospel* (hereafter, *SG*).

2. Throughout this dissertation I will use a number of synonyms for this gospel. In addition to “the longer gospel,” “longer Mark,” and “the longer text,” I will occasionally use the phrases “the mystic gospel” or “mystical Mark,” “the amplified gospel,” “the more spiritual gospel,” etc. These phrases are used to avoid the unfortunate epithet “the Secret Gospel of Mark,” which I consider to be a mistranslation of the phrase τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον (*Letter to Theodore* II.6, 12). This point will be argued in chapter 3. When relating the positions of scholars who think of it as a secret gospel, I will sometimes put *secret* in quotation marks in order to indicate my rejection of this characterization. Further, I will use the term “the Markan gospel” as a way of referring to the contents that canonical Mark and longer Mark have in common, that is, to the literary context in which the distinctive longer text materials existed. When referring to particular gospels, it is my convention not to capitalize the word *gospel* or to put the title in italics.

3. Subsequent references to the letter will omit the title; see the first note in the transcription for an explanation of the conventions I have adopted when referring to Clement’s works.

sisted of mystical materials (*αἱ μυστικάι*; I.17) as well as other, ordinary stories like those in the first version (I.24–26). He thus created “a more spiritual gospel for the use of those who were being perfected” (I.21–22). Upon his death, this gospel became the possession of the church in Alexandria, where even in Clement’s day it was still “very securely kept” and was “being read only to those persons who were being initiated into the great mysteries” (II.1–2).

Clement’s descriptions of the nature of the gospel and of the manner of its composition are quite detailed. Since an unpreserved written inquiry from Theodore constitutes the basis for his responses, his reasons for disclosing this information must be deduced by reading between the lines. The sequence of events leading up to Clement’s letter is not easy to trace, but it appears that Theodore was involved in theological debates with some followers of Carpocrates, a heterodox teacher of the early second-century, and that these opponents attempted to substantiate their theological claims with reference to this gospel.⁴ Since Theodore was not acquainted with the text yet knew where to ask about it, we can suppose that they also either directed him to inquire to Alexandria for proof of the text’s legitimacy or at least mentioned that it originated there. Thus Theodore wrote to Clement, reporting what he had heard about this gospel’s contents.

Clement opened his response by assuring Theodore that he was right to censure their teachings, explaining that the things they had told him were at best half truths (I.2–15).⁵ Mark really did write another gospel, but it contained nothing that should not be set out in writing (i.e. nothing ineffable, like *τὰς ἀρρήτους διδασκαλίας τῶν Καρποκρατιανῶν*, and nothing unseemly, like their interpolations; I.2, 15–27). What

4. For the dating of Carpocrates during the reign of Hadrian (117–38), see Smith, *CA*, 90, 267–68; idem, “Merkel,” 133–35.

5. The fact that Theodore can censure teachings probably implies that he had some authority within his church and that his theological opponents had either joined this congregation or were evangelizing there.

happened was that Carpocrates used magic to procure a copy of this text, then both interpreted and interpolated it “according to his blasphemous and carnal doctrine”; he based his teachings on this combination of holy words and interpolated lies (I.28–II.9). Because the Carpocratian version is a distortion of the truth, Theodore should respond to them in kind and assure them with an oath (i.e. that this is what he learned from the church in Alexandria) that they do not possess Mark’s mystical gospel (II.10–16).

In order to set the matter straight and to prove that none of the indecent aspects about which Theodore was concerned are to be found in the true *μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον*, Clement quoted “word for word” two of the passages Theodore had asked him about, stating where they appear relative to the text of Mark that he knew (II.17–III.17). Following these citations, Clement ventured to offer “the true explanation and that which accords with the true philosophy....” Here the letter fragment ends, and we do not learn Clement’s understanding of the theological meanings conveyed by these stories.

The first passage Clement cited (II.23–III.11) is another version of the raising of Lazarus, which is inserted immediately before the request for positions of honour by James and John (i.e. after 10:34).⁶ This thirteen sentence story contains none of the

6. I refer to these 13 sentences as LGM 1 (longer gospel of Mark 1). On this convention, see note § in the transcription. One might get the impression from a few writers that the *Letter to Theodore* is imprecise about where LGM 1 is to be placed. Frank Kermode, for instance, wrote “He [Clement] then quotes a passage from the authentic Alexandrian version. It must have come somewhere in the present tenth chapter of the gospel, and it tells of a visit to Bethany” (*Genesis*, 58). Philip Sellew (“History,” 244, 253) says the resurrection episode is found after 10:32. C. S. Mann (*Mark*, 424) writes “The ‘secret gospel’ apparently inserted a story between 10:32 and 10:34....” Petr Pokorný (“Das Markusevangelium,” 2000) states: “Es handelt sich um Geschichte über die Totenerweckung, die zwischen Mark. 10,31 und 32 gestanden haben sollte.” Frend (Review, 34) said that it replaced the passion prediction of 10:33–34. And Karl Hanhart sometimes refers to LGM 1 as being inserted between Mark 10:34 and 35 (e.g. *Open Tomb*, 750 n. 119) but at other times as inserted between 10:32a and 10:32b (e.g. pp. 369, 569, 572). Hanhart does not explain why he speaks of two different locations, and I assume he did not notice the contradiction. The letter, however, is not ambiguous about where the additions come with respect to the shorter text. In II.21–22 LGM 1 is said to come after (*μετὰ τό*) “‘And they were in the road going up to Jerusalem,’ and what follows, until [*καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς ἔως*] ‘After three days he shall arise.’” This brings us to the end of Mark 10:34. This location is reconfirmed after the quotation of LGM 1, in III.11–12, where Clement finishes quoting LGM 1:13 then says “After these words follows the text, ‘And James and John come to him,’ and all that section.”

theological discourse found in the Johannine story (or any direct speech from Jesus for that matter), and is written in Markan style. The content is also different from the Johannine version in some obvious respects:

In Clement's passage there are not two sisters, but one. She is left unnamed, as is her brother. She herself seeks Jesus out. The youth cries out while still in the tomb. Jesus himself rolls the stone away. He enters the tomb. He lifts the youth up. Then the house, the youth's wealth, the linen cloth, the night spent together, [the instruction of the young man in] the mystery of the Kingdom [of God]—all this is without Johannine counterpart.⁷

The second quotation (III.14–16) is of two sentences inserted between Mark 10:46a and 10:46b.⁸ In context, the passage reads, “And he comes into Jericho. And there were there the sister of the young man whom Jesus loved him [*sic*] and his mother and Salome, and Jesus did not receive them. And as he was leaving Jericho....”

1.1. *Scholarly Assessments of the Longer Gospel*

The publication in 1973 of the letter together with Smith's commentary and analysis generated a sensation among New Testament scholars. This was due in large part to Smith's assessment of the historical relevance of his finding. He interpreted the linen cloth worn by the resurrected young man as preparation for baptism⁹ and the private instruction as evidence that Jesus initiated his closest disciples in a mystery rite involving union with his spirit and a mystical (hypnotically-induced) ascent to the heavens; through this mystery the initiate would enter God's kingdom and be freed from the laws that apply to the lower world. Smith speculated that after Jesus' death the mystery was offered to all converts and became a rite of initiation into the church,

7. Parker, “Smith's Find,” 54.

8. I call this addition LGM 2. It is said to come “after the words [*μετὰ δὲ τὸ*], ‘And he comes into Jericho.’”

9. *CA*, 167–68. In a letter to Smith dated January 13th, 1961, Cyril C. Richardson suggested the baptismal connection together with the thesis that LGM 1b was featured within a baptismal lection that spanned Mark 10:13–45. Part of the letter is reproduced in *SG*, 64–65.

but as the number of followers increased, time constraints and the complexity of the procedure led to the elimination of the libertine and magical aspects, and the ceremony became a simple baptism that bestowed the gift of the spirit. The unorthodox elements continued only in libertine sects, including the following of Carpocrates, and in the orthodox Alexandrian church of Clement's day (though in a truncated form). In Smith's view, the great mysteries spoken about in Clement's letter refer to a second baptism of advanced Christians into an elite, esoteric clique in that church; on the night of the Paschal vigil, the additions of the secret gospel were read secretly to Christians entering this inner circle.¹⁰

The more outlandish reactions to Smith's thesis have been summarized by Shawn Eyer in an eminently readable account.¹¹ As Smith himself noted, none of the reviewers who commented on his thesis about Jesus' mystery rite was convinced by the scenario, and the vast majority considered it to be fantastic and wholly unsupported—even by the evidence in LGM 1b.¹² But despite the outrage caused by Smith's historical conclusions, many reviewers praised his analysis of the letter and gospel fragments, and some at least reflected on the matter of the nature of the longer gospel of Mark and its place in early Christian history. In the articles and books that have appeared in the years following the discovery, at least five conceptual frameworks can be distinguished. These frameworks normally appear in combinations.

More than a dozen scholars decided that the letter of Clement containing the gospel passages could be a forgery. Those who suspect a modern hoax do not, of course,

10. *SG*, 65–66, 113–14, 119–20, 131; *CA*, 251, 253–54, 263, 283, 284.

11. See Eyer, "Strange Case," 109–10. Typical of what many religiously committed scholars appear to have been thinking is Skehan's comment (*Review*, 452), "The whole morbid concatenation of fancies does credit to Smith's ability to enter into the spirit of the Carpocratians...." Many of these scholars, disturbed by a couple of references to possible homoeroticism, "project[ed] onto Smith's entire interpretive work an imaginary emphasis on Jesus being a homosexual" ("Strange Case," 109).

12. "Score," 455.

attempt to fit the gospel within Christian history.¹³ But those who view the letter as a possible ancient forgery also show little interest in the nature of the gospel excerpts it contains, despite the fact that an ancient forgery of a letter of Clement avowing the apostolic origins of a longer gospel of Mark would probably have been devised to validate an existing, amplified version of that gospel.¹⁴

Many other scholars have decided that the longer text is a second-century pastiche of phrases from all four canonical gospels. These authors, though often acutely interested in the mechanics of its composition, normally show little interest in knowing why such a text was composed or how it was used, and believe that little is to be gained from further study. The few who have scrutinized the gospel excerpts and written articles on the subject have done so to convince their peers in the area of New Testament scholarship that this gospel had no bearing on the history of first-century Christianity but, rather, has its place as a footnote in the field of patristics.¹⁵

Among the scholars who accept the authenticity of the letter and who have viewed the gospel text as something more than the sum of its intertextual parallels, two standard views have been offered. Quite frequently it is characterized as a secret writing whose existence was known only to an elitist clique within the Alexandrian church; the text was kept confidential because it contained the secret gnostic teachings of this clique. This characterization of the gospel is most commonly encountered outside of academic literature, but is also sometimes offered by scholars who make incidental

13. Those who suspect a modern forgery include Musurillo ("Smith's Secret Gospel," 330-31), Quesnell ("Evidence," 53-58), Murgia ("Secret Mark: Real or Fake?" 35-40), Marrow (*Longer Mark*, edited by Wilhelm H. Wuellner, 59; hereafter this book will be cited as *LM*), Neusner ("Disgraced by Fraud," 174-76; *Refutation*, 28-30), and Criddle ("On the Mar Saba Letter," 219).

14. These scholars include Munck, Völker, Nock (cited by Smith in *SG*, 29), Kümmel ("Jahrzehnt," 302-303, who also cites a written statement by H. von Campenhausen), Musurillo ("Smith's Secret Gospel," 330), and Osborn ("1958-1982," 223-25).

15. Cf. the comment by Furnish in "Mark, Secret Gospel of," 573, who selectively references proponents of this view (Grant, Merkel, and R. E. Brown) in his short bibliography.

reference to the text, for instance as an example of esoteric or gnostic Christianity.¹⁶ Those who show evidence of having carefully consulted both the letter and Smith's commentary are more apt to conjecture that Mark's gospel was expanded in order to legitimize and store liturgical passages used in the context of baptism.¹⁷ These writers tend to favor the original suggestion that Cyril C. Richardson made to Smith concerning its use in catechetical baptism over Smith's elaboration of this thesis into a scenario of second baptism for elite Christians.¹⁸ Typically these scholars do not dispute that the text was a secret gospel and use the phrase "the *Secret Gospel*" as its title; but they also do not explain why a baptismal text directed at neophytes would need to be kept secret.

The fifth perspective views the longer gospel as a redactional revision of Mark. This position would seem to be a natural extension of Clement's tradition about how this text was created, which resembles the standard source-critical vision of Matthew and Luke redactionally expanding Mark with materials from other sources (i.e. Q, M, L) in order to convey their own distinctive theologies. In Clement's tradition, Mark himself expanded his story with *πράξεις* and *λόγια* selected from two written sources for the purpose of making his gospel serviceable for a different audience ("those being perfected" in gnosis). True, these sources are called personal notes (though cf. M, L) rather than published documents (e.g. Mark, Q), and the author is said only to have added materials—not to have also rewritten or omitted sentences, abbreviated materials, or rearranged the order. But the basic scenario is certainly familiar. So it is somewhat

16. E.g. Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*, 56–57; Allegro, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 139; Lockhart, *Heretic*, 230. Cf. Funk, *Honest*, 73. This is the impression one gets from reading Smith's *SG*.

17. Not all scholars who view these passages as part of a baptismal lection assume a simple process of expansion. Crossan (e.g. *Four Other Gospels*, 91–121) believes that LGM 1 and 2 existed as part of a tiny gospel before the existence of the gospel of Mark and that the author of the canonical gospel scattered the dismembered debris of these passages throughout his gospel. Koester (e.g. "History and Development") argues that a Proto-Gospel of Mark was expanded with these and other passages in the early second-century but that the sentences Clement quoted were removed around the middle of that century.

18. See chapter 4 n. 33. Usually Smith's theory about the use of this text in Clement's church is not mentioned and catechetical baptism is simply presupposed, though some (e.g. Sellw, "History," 256; Hanhart, *Open Tomb*, 96, 348) explicitly call the initiates "catechumen."

or rearranged the order. But the basic scenario is certainly familiar. So it is somewhat surprising that the studies which treat LGM 1 and 2 within the conceptual framework of “redaction” (e.g. those by Koester, Peabody, Crossan, Meyer, Sellew, and Munro) did not appear until the 1980s and have shown very little interest in how these pericopae affect Mark’s *story*.¹⁹ It is no less curious that these studies reject the letter’s explanation of a single expansion in favour of a more complicated development whereby the canonical gospel is produced through the *elimination* of the “secret” material.²⁰

I.2. *The Present Predicament*

It is clear from the inconsistency of assumptions involved in these five basic perspectives that there is no standard or generally-accepted paradigm for conceptualizing this gospel. The hypotheses that have been pursued subsequent to Smith’s investigations are on the whole mutually exclusive: forgery; pointless, apocryphal pastiche; secret and elitist gnostic gospel; catechetical supplements for neophyte baptism; pre-canonical version of Mark. This plurality of fundamental assumptions has impeded the advance of research into this text. Though many interesting studies have been made of the gospel, there is not much of interest upon which most studies have agreed. Consequently, though Smith’s discovery may have relevance to a number of areas in the study of early Christianity, scholars have been reluctant to make use of it.²¹

The present predicament owes much to the fact that scholars have always preferred to engage Smith’s characterizations of the issues rather than independently examine the

19. Meyer’s essay “Youth” is an exception; though he discusses the longer gospel as redaction (e.g. 138), I have chosen to discuss his essay as an example of literary interest.

20. Peabody’s essay in response to Koester is an exception.

21. The text may have relevance for source-critical studies of Mark, the synoptic problem, the relationship between John and the synoptics; tradition-critical studies of the Lazarus story; patristic studies of Clement of Alexandria or of the Alexandrian church in the second century; and studies of the historical Jesus.

evidence. In the twenty-five years that have followed the publication of Smith's work, no new, comprehensive study of the letter and its gospel quotations has been produced. The options that are presently being considered were all identified and addressed by Smith in the early 1960s, and their continued viability is in large part the consequence of certain questionable assumptions in his research that most investigators have accepted without comment. For example, those scholars who suspect forgery are often reacting against Smith's suppositions that Clement approved of a secret writing and that this writing legitimized an unseemly rite. That these notions are substantiated by the letter is never questioned. Likewise, many of the scholars who accept the letter as authentic also accept Smith's view that the gospel additions were used as catechetical or lectionary readings for a rite. And most scholars have accepted Smith's assumption that the quoted pericopae are Markan only in terms of form and style; with Smith, they attribute this appearance to an imitator's efforts to authenticate certain materials by making them appear to have been written by Mark. The author of the longer gospel is typically imagined to be either "Markanizing" traditional cultic materials for storage in an established gospel, or just foolishly rewriting Johannine stories using Markan language.

I.3. *A Literary Thesis*

The nature and purpose of the longer gospel appears quite different, however, when the issue of the Markan characteristics of these excerpts is considered at a level exceeding sentence construction. It can be shown that the author of LGM 1 and 2 not only wrote with Markan syntax and vocabulary but also used distinctively Markan literary techniques. Of these, the most noteworthy involve juxtaposition (intercalation and cross-referencing through verbal repetitions) and framing (paired stories that "bracket" a section of narrative). The use of these devices implies that the extant pas-

sages are better conceptualized as aspects of a literary production, that is, as episodes in a text that was meant to be appreciated *as a story* and therefore read or heard in its entirety.²² The validity of this literary paradigm for the study of the longer gospel is what I endeavour to establish through this dissertation.

More specifically, the following study develops the thesis that the longer or mystical gospel of Mark functioned to lead readers of the shorter version to a more profound appreciation of the essential message of the Markan narrative (in Alexandrian terms, to “initiate” them into the deeper or concealed “truths” of the Christian philosophy) by elaborating and elucidating important themes and symbolism pertaining to discipleship and christology, including elements which are quite deliberately ambiguous or obscure in the shorter version (e.g. the mystery of the kingdom of God and the appearance and flight of the young man in Gethsemane). Though the reasons behind the production of the longer gospel must necessarily remain a matter of conjecture, this text apparently proved useful to Christians who viewed their faith as a philosophy and therefore sought its deeper truths (the esoteric teachings of its system) anagogically within sacred writings. This tendency would have been particularly pronounced in Alexandria, though not confined to that locale.

It needs to be emphasized that this study focuses principally on the literary functioning of LGM 1 and 2 in the context of the Markan gospel and is only minimally concerned with the inherently more speculative historical matters of who produced the longer gospel, when it was written, and whether it is an expansion of the canonical

22. Because the term *reader* is more apropos of narrative criticism and the phrase “reader or hearer” is cumbersome, I tend to use the word *reader* by itself. However, the word *hearer* should also be understood whenever I refer to the reader. I.25–26 and II.1–2 appear to indicate that the practice in Alexandria in Clement’s day was for someone to read this gospel aloud to others. The reader would presumably explain the hidden meanings, thereby making its mysteries accessible to those whose education did not enable them to read. It is probably the case, though, that the longer gospel was oriented to literate persons more so than the canonical version, and that persons like Clement would read it privately if they wished. The popular view that all reading in antiquity was vocalized and public is an exaggeration (see Gilliard, “More Silent Reading”).

gospel or an earlier version.

I.3.1. *The Outline of this Dissertation*

The following analysis is divided into two parts. Part One, consisting of chapters 1 through 4, addresses the main paradigms for understanding the longer gospel that have been offered in the secondary literature. These chapters will deconstruct the prevailing conceptions of “artificial literary mosaic,” forgery, secret gospel, and ritual text, for each of these notions is inimical to the literary paradigm proffered in this dissertation and developed in Part Two.²³

The remainder of chapter 1 will trace the slow rise of redactional and (ever so slight) literary interest in this gospel through a review of the main schools of thought concerning the origins of LGM 1 and 2: early community tradition (e.g. Smith, Fuller), late apocryphal harmonizing (e.g. Bruce, Merkel, and R. E. Brown), and pre-canonical segments of Mark (e.g. Koester, Schenke, Crossan). Here it will be important to dispute two prominent though conflicting views: 1) that the composite appearance of this gospel precludes the possibility that it was created with the same conscientiousness of purpose that scholars attribute to canonical redaction; and 2) that the longer gospel was produced by abbreviation of the text that has become the canonical gospel.

Chapter 2 will examine the arguments that have been put forward for viewing the letter as a forgery. There it shall be shown that the letter is consistent with the undisputed writings of Clement and unlikely to have been forged by Morton Smith.

Chapter 3 will explore the nature or genre of this gospel *as Clement understood it*. Contrary to the pervasive notion that longer Mark was a *secret* writing, it will be

23. The quoted phrase is one used by Schmidt in *LM*, 41. The view that this was a “secret gospel” does not in itself discourage a literary perspective; however, this incorrect translation of τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον obscures the connection between this descriptive phrase and πνευματικώτερον εὐαγγέλιον: both terms imply that the work was thought to have deeper or concealed meanings.

argued that the phrase τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον (II.6, 12) is better translated as “the mystical gospel” and understood not as a title but as a synonym for the description πνευματικώτερον εὐαγγέλιον (“a more spiritual gospel”; I.21). A study of μυστικός in Clement’s undisputed writings reveals that when he used this word in connection with a text, he was referring to deeper or concealed meanings; similarly, “spiritual gospel” is the phrase he used to distinguish John’s gospel from the “bodily accounts” given in the synoptics. Thus Clement perceived the longer gospel of Mark to be a work that got at the deeper significance of the overt “facts” of Jesus’ ministry, as these were conveyed in the shorter version. Though mystery-religion language of initiation pervades his description of this gospel, these images are used figuratively for the progressive disclosure of philosophical truths through directed *scriptural exegesis* (I.25–26). This figurative use of mystery-religion language is standard in the writings of Clement and other Alexandrian Jewish and Christian authors of this period (e.g. Philo and Origin).

Chapter 4 will call into question the prevalent form-critical presupposition that LGM 1 and 2 were read liturgically and mainly in isolation from the literary context of the Markan gospel. The episode in LGM 1b involving Jesus teaching the young man the mystery of the kingdom of God does use baptism imagery. But when this imagery is considered in the context of the whole gospel, it becomes very difficult to suppose that this young man was actually undergoing baptism or pre-baptismal, catechetical instruction. Instead, the baptism imagery is related to Jesus’ discipleship teaching about the need to follow him in his “baptism” of death in Jerusalem (10:38–39), which appears in the pericope that is now intercalated within LGM 1 and 2 (10:35–45). That is, the baptism imagery is symbolic of discipleship as the way of the cross. Moreover, because the initiation language in the letter is likewise figurative and the longer gospel is said to have been prepared for Christians advancing *in gnosis*, it is problematic to

suppose that this writing was used in Alexandria for the catechetical instruction of neophytes.²⁴ Rather, when Clement referred to “the great mysteries” in his undisputed writings, he was referring to theological instruction directed to Christians advancing in gnosis. Consequently, the text is unlikely to have been read annually or in conjunction with a special festival (i.e. the Pascha).

Part Two of the dissertation will substantiate the conclusions pertaining to the letter through a study of how the extant passages effect Mark’s story. Here it will be shown that the passages quoted in the letter develop and elucidate aspects of Markan theology, including features of the story that readers of the shorter version have often found perplexing. Chapters 5 through 7 each demonstrate the effective use of a distinctively Markan literary technique by the author of LGM 1 and 2. Chapter 5 will justify the claim made in chapter 4 that LGM 1 and 2 create an intercalation around Mark 10:35–45 that relates the ritualistic initiation imagery of LGM 1b to Jesus’ “baptism” of death in Jerusalem. Chapter 6 will argue that the resurrection of the young man at his tomb in LGM 1a and the resurrection announced by this same young man at Jesus’ tomb in Mark 16:1–8 function as a pair of framing stories around the passion narrative, and that this structure is built upon an existing *inclusio* involving the imagery of Jesus leading his disciples in the way to life through death (10:32 and 16:7–8). Chapter 7 will interpret some of the more pronounced verbal repetitions in LGM 1 and 2 as “cross-references” intended to draw the reader’s attention to similarities between LGM 1 and 2 and other stories in the gospel.

24. Throughout this dissertation, when I refer to gnosis in reference to Clement’s Alexandrian theology, I am referring to something other than speculative theories about the origins of the universe and dualistic myths of descent into matter. For Clement, gnosis determines one’s spiritual progression toward God, but not in the sense of the return of a divine being to the realm from which it had fallen. Though his gnosis implied a more positive valuation of spirit than matter, his belief was that education, ascetic practices, and instruction in secret traditions concerning the meanings hidden in the scriptures will ultimately result in perfect contemplation of the divine; this progressive self-deification is completed after death.

I.3.2. *Comments on Method*

The Markan literary techniques examined in this dissertation were recognized by redaction critics and elaborated theoretically by narrative critics. Because my interest is in elucidating the nature of this gospel by demonstrating the use of these techniques and describing their effects, the method of my analysis is not “purely” literary-critical but rather a hybrid of composition criticism and narrative criticism, or a theoretically informed use of composition criticism—one that pays more attention to the reading process. For this reason it is unnecessary for me to begin (as most literary-critical studies still do!) with a theoretical discussion of the narrative-critical paradigm.²⁵

Certain caveats need to be stated concerning the viability of a literary-critical study of a work whose text type and precise contents are not known.²⁶ Obviously, this analysis cannot concentrate on the whole story. What is possible is a study of how the known LGM passages interact with the known materials of their context, that is, with the canonical gospel. A concentration on literary devices rather than on the entire reading experience should permit conclusions that would not be falsified by knowledge of the other passages unique to the longer gospel, though such knowledge would necessitate some refinement of these conclusions.

25. For this, one may consult such works as Aichele, *Jesus Framed*; Bassler, “Parable of the Loaves”; Camery-Hoggatt, *Irony in Mark's Gospel*; Fowler, *Reader*; Glyndle, *Irony and the Kingdom*; Marshall, *Faith*; Rhoads and Michie, *Mark as Story*; and the essays by Malbon and Fowler in the book *Mark and Method*, edited by Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore.

26. Cf. Meyer, “Youth,” 138. The text shows closest affinities to the D text (Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis). Smith (e.g. *Clement*, 122) was the first (along with R. Schippers) to draw attention to the stronger parallelism between the longer text and this Western text. The D text of Mark 8:22 likewise has *καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς Βηθανίαν* (= LGM 1:1) instead of *Βηθσαιῶν*, as well as *καὶ ὀργισθεῖς* (= LGM 1:4) at Mark 1:41 rather than *καὶ σπλαγχνισθεῖς*, and adds *ἐξέτεινεν τὴν χεῖρα* (= LGM 1:7); on this subject, see also Schmidt, *LM*, 41, 42; and Hobbs, *LM*, 21. D as we know it would not have existed in the second century or earlier, so it cannot be assumed that longer Mark in general was a representative of this text type.

II. The History of Interpretation

II.1. Early Tradition

Before publishing the *Letter to Theodore*, Smith took the prerogative of producing the first and only commentary on the letter and gospel passages. His meticulous analysis demonstrated that the letter and Markan fragments are written in the respective styles of Clement and Mark, and these conclusion have been accepted with few demurs.²⁷ However, his theory of the origin of the Markan fragments in pre-Markan church tradition met much resistance.

Smith's theory of the formation of the longer gospel attempts to account for the broader phenomenon of parallels in order between Mark and John, which the resurrection story in LGM 1 augments.²⁸ Smith supposed that the resurrection narrative in LGM 1a represents another version of a story contained in a hypothesized Aramaic Proto-Gospel that was shared, in different Greek translations, by the authors of the gospels of Mark and John. Though Mark knew and used this source, he chose not to include the resurrection and initiation stories in his gospel, despite the fact that they were part of a section that had been formulated as a baptismal lection (now in Mark 10:13-45). At a later time the author of the longer gospel placed these and other unused passages in their appropriate places, and in the process reworked them into Markan style. Eventually, in the course of its reproduction, the longer gospel was subject to a small amount of corruption. Scribal harmonization led to the replacement of

27. Quesnell ("Reply," 201) casually questioned the Clementine style of the letter. Parker (Review, 5; cf. idem, "Smith's Find," 53-54) objected to the Markan character of LGM 1 by referring to aspects that may be unique to this incident but have nothing to do with whether the story-telling is Markan: "In Mark (and Matthew too) nobody but blind men ever address Jesus as *huie David* (son of David, vocative). Nobody in Mark ever 'abides' with anybody else. Nobody ever rolls away a stone or any other object. Mark never mentions a garden, never makes "loud voice" the subject of a sentence." Since there is something unique to every Markan pericope, Parker's logic would imply that Mark did not write anything in his gospel. Nevertheless, these comments are repeated (with no mention of Parker) by Mann in *Mark*, 428.

28. See *CA*, 158-63; *SG*, 56-62; "Mark 6:32-15:47 and John 6:1-19:42."

the Markan phrase ἦν γὰρ ἔχων κτήματα πολλά (10:22) in LGM 1:9 with Luke's more familiar ἦν γὰρ πλούσιος (18:23), a recollection that was possibly triggered by the cross-reference to this pericope achieved by the phrase "looking upon him loved him" (LGM 1:8 = Mark 10:21).²⁹ Harmonization may also account for the phrase καὶ προσελθὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀπεκύλισε τὸν λίθον [ἀπὸ τῆς θύρας τοῦ μνημείου] in LGM 1:6, which is paralleled without ὁ Ἰησοῦς and the prepositional phrase, in Matthew 28:2.³⁰ LGM 2:2, however, uses a Lukan verb and is probably a gloss made by a redactor who omitted a dialogue between Jesus and Salome.³¹

Smith recognized that the Markan quality of the excerpts could be explained as evidence either of Mark's authorship or of imitation of Mark by another author. Smith noted three features that suggest imitation: the text contains more occurrences of exact Markan phrases than is typical of stories in the canonical gospel; some of these parallels are rather lengthy and include "main narrative elements" in addition to the usual parallels to stereotyped phrases at the beginnings and endings of stories; and LGM 1 and 2 have "less of the peculiar details that individualize...canonical [Mark's]

29. "Merkel," 143. Smith noted that longer Mark, like the canonical gospel, produces cross-references through repetition of exact phrases, so the original text of longer Mark is likely to have had the phrasing of Mark 10:22 at LGM 1:9.

30. For Smith's summary of his position, see "Merkel," 135–36. On the Lukan parallel, see *CA*, 114, 124, 135; *SG*, 43; "Merkel," 138. On the Matthean, see *CA*, 107, 135; "Merkel," 141. Smith also suggested that the Matthean parallel could be coincidental (the words are commonplace and "fixed by content") or evidence that Matthew knew longer Mark—a possibility that few scholars would accept. In my view, any appeal to Matthew here obscures the fact that a lengthier parallel occurs in Mark 16:3: Τίς ἀποκυλίσει ἡμῖν τὸν λίθον ἐκ τῆς θύρας τοῦ μνημείου;

31. *CA*, 114, 135. He explains that ἀποδέχομαι is only used by Luke in the New Testament and the sense is not typical "in Christian literature before the second century" (*SG*, 42–43; *CA*, 121–22). Smith's judgment was influenced by his view that this sentence could not be a proper ending for a story and that some sort of dialogue between Jesus and Salome must have appeared at this point. But this reasoning is not particularly persuasive. As Munro commented, "...Mark uses the very common New Testament word of the same root, *dechomai*, three times, with the same sense of 'receive' or 'welcome' that *apodechomai* has in Luke-Acts" ("Women Disciples," 58; cf. Meyer, "Youth," 144; Levin, "Early History," 4287). And Gundry has noted that "...Jesus' non-reception of the women requires nothing more to understand the statement. We may want to know why he does not receive them, but in and of itself the statement carries a complete meaning" ("Excursus," 614).

stories.”³² In a 1979 review of E. J. Pryke’s *Redactional Style in the Marcan Gospel*, Ernest Best substantiated the first two of these conclusions through a comparison of LGM 1 and 2 with Pryke’s lists of Marcan characteristics.³³

Though Smith perceived these signs of imitation, the text did not seem to him to be a pastiche or cento, or to rely on gospels other than Mark. In his view, “the text is too well constructed and economical to be a cento: there are no irrelevant details, every word comes naturally in its place, [and] the narration moves without delays or jumps.”³⁴ And though knowledge of the gospel of Mark is patent (not least because it is a longer version of that gospel), the almost complete lack of Johannine characteristics speaks strongly against knowledge of John. Likewise, had the author relied upon Matthew and Luke, there should be more points of contact with them.³⁵ For these reasons, Smith viewed the text as a free imitation of Mark based upon traditions independent of the other canonical gospels.

Smith appealed to conventional views about secondary tendencies and Johannine traits in order to demonstrate that the resurrection story in longer Mark has a more primitive form than the canonical version and is missing most elements in John 11 that scholars would label as Johannine or tradition-critically secondary. In general, he noted that “varied narrative with contrast and conversation, psychological and moral and theological interests [are] all unknown to the simple, primitive miracle story.”³⁶ A liberal estimate of these features would include much of John’s story: the proofs that Lazarus was truly dead (11:17, 39, 44); all direct speech of Jesus, including the christological discussions between Jesus and his disciples (11:7–16) and Jesus and the women (11:4, 21–27, 32b–34, 39–40), Jesus’ directives in the course of the miracle

32. CA, 139.

33. “Uncanonical Mark,” 200, 204.

34. CA, 143. He gives an excellent argument against this theory on pp. 142–44.

35. Smith, “Merkel,” 143.

36. SG, 53.

(11:43, 44b), and his prayer before performing the miracle (11:41–42);³⁷ the proper names of the participants mentioned by John;³⁸ the many references to an audience of witnesses, including six references to the actions and attitudes of “the Jews” (11:8, 18, 31, 33, 36–37, 42, 45, 46); the narration connecting these possibly secondary elements together (11:1–3, 5–6, 18, 20, 28–30, 32a, 38b); and, finally, the Jerusalem leaders’ plot to destroy Jesus and Jesus’ response (11:47–57), which would not be intrinsic to the miracle form.³⁹

Smith felt that his form-critical study had proved that LGM 1 is based on pre-Markan tradition, and this conclusion allowed him to use the text in his reconstruction of a mystery rite offered by the historical Jesus.⁴⁰ But he overlooked something. Though he had conducted a comparative tradition-critical study of LGM 1a and John 11 that demonstrated the relative antiquity of the former, he did not do a form-critical study of LGM 1 in order to determine what *it* might have looked like before reaching the form it has in the longer gospel. This problem was pointed out by R. H. Fuller, who noted that “pure” examples of the miracle story form conclude with a proof of the

37. Bultmann (*History*, 312–13) viewed the transposition of narrative material into direct speech as a tendency of later development. Apart from the plea of the bereaved sister, LGM 1 and 2 contain no direct discourse.

38. Except, of course, Jesus. Cf. Bultmann, *History*, 309–10. Besides Jesus, the only named character in LGM 1 and 2 is Salome, who is not a participant in John’s version.

39. This is my own list and is not intended to be definitive. It is meant only to illustrate how much of John’s story that *may be* either form-critically secondary or redactional is absent from LGM 1 and 2.

40. E.g. “Score,” 455. Other scholars who perceive signs of pre-Markan tradition include Beardslee (Review, 235), Donfried (Review, 759), Frend (Review, 34), M. D. Johnson (Review, 426), Kee (Review, 328, 329), Koester (Review, 620; “Apocryphal and Canonical Gospels,” 112 n. 24; *Introduction*, 2: 168; “Seminar Dialogue with Helmut Koester,” 60; “Text of the Synoptic Gospels,” 34 n. 49; *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 296), Fuller (*LM*, 5–8), Wink (“Jesus as Magician,” 4–6), Meeks (“Untamed Skeptic,” 168 n. 22), Cameron (*Other Gospels*, 67–68), Schenke (“Mystery,” 75–76; “Function and Background,” 120), Crossan, (*Four Other Gospels*, 104–106; *Historical Jesus*, 332, 412), Koester and Patterson (“The Secret Gospel of Mark,” 403), Meyer (“Youth,” 148–49; “Beloved Disciple,” 98; “To Theodore,” 232; “Mark, Secret Gospel of,” 559), Munro (“Women Disciples,” 52), Hanhart (*Open Tomb*, 371, 748 n. 108) and Kaestli (“Version longue,” 95–96). Witherington estimated somewhat conservatively when he commented, “In short, the number of scholars who think it likely that *Secret Mark* provides an earlier version of the story we find in John 11 can be numbered on one or two hands” (*Jesus Quest*, 81).

cure. Since LGM 1 carries on beyond that point, it is not a pure example of the form. A pure form would have no need for the comment “looking at him loved him,” which exactly repeats words in Mark 10:21, or for the comment that the young man “began to entreat [Jesus] that he might be with him,” which is paralleled exactly in Mark 5:18 (D text). The function of LGM 1:8 is to effect a transition to a scene locating both characters in the young man’s house, so from a form-critical perspective the verse is a modification of whatever ending was used when the story was transmitted orally. Moreover, LGM 1b itself has no identifiable form, and consists of “highly individual phrases” found elsewhere in Mark’s story.⁴¹ Since LGM 1b has no substantial parallels with the story in John, it is difficult to argue that the initiation episode had a history of oral transmission, at least in the form in which we have it.⁴² It would make more sense, in fact, to argue that the initiation story is mostly a new composition that depends upon the textual context (story-world) of this gospel not only for most of its components but also for their significance.⁴³

41. *LM*, 8. This conclusion is accepted by Koester in *LM*, 31; and by Schenke in “Mystery,” 77, who offers a different reconstruction of the original ending. Fuller’s comment about the lack of an identifiable form for LGM 1b is not particularly forceful, for a number of stories in Mark have no clear form (e.g. Dibelius’s so-called mythical stories: the baptism, temptation, and transfiguration). Moreover, the very notion of an original form is problematic because, as Kelber has shown (*The Oral and the Written Gospel*), storytelling is regularly influenced by the dynamics of the speaking situation, and few people can remember and repeat stories word for word as they heard them. Rather, people typically retain information pertaining to the *type* of story and the elements of content that are essential to a story’s successful reproduction; the remainder is creatively supplied by the teller within the unique situation of speaking. Nevertheless, since people do not retain the unessential elements, orally transmitted stories tend to be minimalist and formally stereotypical; the elaboration found in written stories should be attributed to the stage of writing. Thus LGM 1b and most of John 11 appear to belong to that latter stage.

42. There is a certain parallel with John here, inasmuch as Jesus returns to Bethany (probably to Lazarus’s house) “six days before the Passover” and shares a meal with the resurrected man and his sisters.

43. Cf. Munro (“Women Disciples,” 54), who thinks LGM 1b can be accounted for “in terms of Marcan tendencies and themes.”

II.2. *The Pastiche Explanation*

Smith's demonstration that the resurrection story in LGM 1a is more primitive in form than the story in John 11 has not been directly challenged, for the opposite position is not easy to argue in view of the many secondary and Johannine features in the story of the raising of Lazarus. Indirectly, however, the implication that LGM 1 includes "authentic," independent tradition has been countered with arguments that the author of longer Mark clumsily abbreviated John 11. In 1974 this opinion was asserted without argument by F. F. Bruce in his study of the genre of this gospel: "The raising of the young man of Bethany is too evidently based—and clumsily based at that—on the Johannine story of the raising of Lazarus for us to regard it as in any sense an independent Markan counterpart to the Johannine story (not to speak of our regarding it as a *source* of the Johannine story)." Bruce explained the Lukan and Matthean contacts in LGM 1 as the author's own unwitting recollections of synoptic parallels to Markan phrases.⁴⁴ The same year Helmut Merkel and Raymond E. Brown developed arguments for complete canonical dependency.⁴⁵ Following them, Robert M. Grant, Edward C. Hobbs, Daryl Schmidt, and Frans Neiryck offered their own, distinct hypothetical scenarios to account for how the author of LGM could have produced his story by reworking John and the synoptics.⁴⁶

44. Bruce, *The "Secret" Gospel*, 20 (cf. p. 12), 10–11. His evidence for the latter proposition, strangely, is that Clement himself did this sort of thing when citing scripture, which is evidence Smith used to argue for later harmonization (CA, 98, 135, 353–56, 368–69). Clement's quotation of Mark 10:17–31 in his *Quis dives salvetur?* has 12 positive agreements with the versions in Matthew or Luke and 15 agreements of omission.

45. Merkel, "Auf den Spuren des Urmarkus?" Brown, "Relation."

46. Grant, *Review*, 60–61; Hobbs, *LM*, 20–21; Schmidt, *LM*, 41–45; Neiryck, "Apocryphal Gospels," 760–62 (cf. *idem*, "Fuite," 223; and *Jean et les Synoptiques*, 207 n. 493). Cf. Gundry, "Excursus," 622.

The theory that longer Mark is a second-century pastiche dependent on all four canonical gospels is now one of the most frequently-voiced opinions on the subject.⁴⁷ Usually no rationale is offered for why a person might compose a gospel in such an artificial manner, though occasionally one encounters the assumption that the author of longer Mark sought to deduce information omitted in the canonical gospels by exploring thematic and verbal associations within those writings; investigations of the scriptures provided all the details, which were then combined into narratives. Scholars inclined to this opinion suppose that the known LGM additions are a byproduct of someone's interest in knowing, for example, who the beloved disciple was by relating him to Lazarus and the anonymous rich man, two other characters Jesus is said to have loved.⁴⁸

When pastiche composition is proposed, the Markan quality of the story is normally assumed to be the inadvertent result of wholesale borrowing of Markan

47. E.g. Musurillo, "Smith's Secret Gospel," 329; Scroggs, Review, 59; Schmidt, *LM*, 41, 43; Hobbs, *LM*, 21, 66; Hanson, Review, 517; Mitton, Review, 132; Richardson, Review, 573, 575; Skehan, Review, 452, 453; Mullins, "Papias and Clement," 191; Kümmel, "Jahrzehnt," 302; Best, "Uncanonical Mark," 205; Pokorný, "Das Markusevangelium," 2001; Grelot, *L'origine*, 87; Mann, *Mark*, 428; Marchadour, *Lazare*, 59–60; Gundry, "Excursus," 612, 621; Charlesworth and Evans, "Jesus in the Agrapha and Apocryphal Gospels," 530; Stanton, *Gospel Truth?* 95; Baltz, *Lazarus*, 104; Jackson, "Cloak," 273. Many scholars appeal to this theory when justifying their decisions not to use longer Mark as evidence bearing on some other topic. Usually Merkel and Brown are cited in a footnote, and sometimes Smith's stinging rebuttal of Merkel is mentioned, but the merits of his critique are never discussed (his reply to Brown in "Score," 454 n. 13 has been almost completely ignored). Brown knew that his argument could prove nothing more than that knowledge of John was "*not impossible*." He even conceded "I do not think that the evidence *clearly* points to the opposite conclusion, namely, dependence of SGM upon John" and readily admitted the lack of "probative" value to an argument that a particular historical reconstruction is "*not impossible*" ("Relation," 474; italics original). Nevertheless, Brown is frequently cited as having demonstrated what he himself claimed to be unable to show.

48. In my opinion, Robert Grant offers the most plausible scenario to this effect; see his Review, 60–61. The assumption that the author was harmonizing information does not fit well with the fact that LGM 1 and 2 contradict John's story in a number of obvious ways (e.g. Jesus' lack of a previous relationship with the brother and sister, the location of Bethany, the source of the voice, the rolling away of the stone by Jesus himself, and the use of touch in the raising). If the author of longer Mark was attempting either to produce a harmony of the gospels or to make historical inferences, he probably would have treated John's details with more reverence and thus avoided unnecessary contradictions.

phrases,⁴⁹ and any phrase, combination of words, or concept in LGM 1 and 2 for which a parallel can be found anywhere in the canonical gospels is assumed to have been taken from that (or those) place(s), often through random associations.⁵⁰ The lack of secondary and/or Johannine features is explained as a more or less chance result of the author's use of Markan phraseology in his retelling of John's story.⁵¹ And disagreements between LGM 1 and the raising of Lazarus are explained in terms of longer Mark's confusion of the canonical details rather than as evidence of divergent oral traditions or creative reworking of sources.⁵² In other words, it is assumed "that anything similar to the canonical Gospels is derivative, and anything not similar, secondary."⁵³ These assumptions only permit one conclusion: that longer Mark contains no early, independent witness to an oral tradition that competed with that

49. Cf. Bruce, *The "Secret" Gospel*, 11: "The pericope inserted between verses 34 and 35 of Mark 10 is Markan in diction, for the simple reason that it is largely a pastiche of phrases from Mark ('contaminated' by Matthaean parallels) coupled with some Johannine material."

50. Cf. Gundry, "Excursus," 622: "*SGM* borrows the youth of the rich man from Matt 19:16-22; and his youth reminds *SGM* of the young man in Mark 14:51-52, from where *SGM* now borrows the wearing of a linen cloth on a naked body." Likewise, R. E. Brown ("Relation," 482-83) explains the teaching of the mystery of the kingdom of God as a "rephrasing in Marcan language" of some "information from the Johannine Nicodemus scene," for instance the concept of teaching (because Nicodemus calls Jesus "teacher"), the kingdom of God, and the nocturnal setting. The author incidentally avoids the theologically charged Johannine word "night" by borrowing the phrase "and when it was evening" (LGM 1:11) from the introduction to Joseph of Arimathea in Matthew 27:57, a connection that occurred to him because both the young man and Joseph are "rich." The notion of "remaining with" Jesus is taken from John 1:39 because there it "is applied to the disciples" and in Mark 4:11 the mystery is given to "the disciples."

51. E.g. Merkel ("Appendix," 109 n. 17) wrote: "This [borrowing from all four gospels] rules out R. H. Fuller's attempt to discover an older form of the resurrection story in the first fragment with the help of considerations of tradition and redaction criticism. The features in the 'secret Gospel' which seem to him more original as compared with Jn. 11 are merely borrowings from the Synoptics." Cf. Grant, *Review*, 62-63; Scroggs, *Review*, 59. R. E. Brown ("Relation," 480) better appreciated the unlikelihood that all Johannine features could disappear in this way. He postulated an author with "a remarkable knowledge of individual Gospel style(s)" who "Markanized" John's story by suppressing Johannine traits: "this imitation [of Markan style]...caused him to rewrite the Johannine material by suppressing Johannine traits in favor of Marcan expressions." Brown needed to abandon this assumption when confronting the problem of the absence in LGM 1 of theologically neutral but form-critically secondary elements that appear in John's version. And so at other times Brown imagined a person who was relying on his faulty memory of John (e.g. he forgot that there were two sisters).

52. E.g. Bruce, *The "Secret" Gospel*, 11-13; R. E. Brown, "Relation," 475 n. 19, 476 n. 20; Beskow, *Strange Tales*, 100.

53. As Smith characterized this position in a letter to Nock in 1962, which he cited in *SG*, 67.

preserved in the canonical gospels—that is, nothing that could challenge the historical priority and relative accuracy of the gospel traditions contained in the New Testament.

This hypothesis explaining the origin of longer Mark appears to subvert the sort of logic scholars normally apply when studying the canonical gospels. A brief, economical, and form-critically more primitive version of the Lazarus story with almost no specifically Johannine qualities—that is, a story that scholars would usually attribute to independent, oral tradition—is argued to be the coincidental product of an arduously mechanical process of gathering mostly commonplace details and phrase fragments from four written works.⁵⁴ To accept such an argument would seem to require a great tolerance of coincidence, little confidence in the validity of form criticism (at least when it is applied to non-canonical texts), and a conviction that the simplest explanation is not normally the best one. Be that as it may, Brown and Merkel attempted to prove the necessity of this solution by appealing to the standard reasoning that traces of canonical redaction within an apocryphal text prove *direct and complete* dependence.

Brown pointed to the existence of the favorite Johannine verb μένω in a situation that is reminiscent of John 1:39.⁵⁵ Of more importance, Brown and Merkel observed that the phrase ὃν ἠγάπα αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς is very similar to the usual description of the beloved disciple.⁵⁶ This point is indeed important, for the description of a disciple as

54. The theory gratuitously supposes that a Greek speaker would “hunt out from diverse contexts details he could have had immediately from common Greek.” As Smith pointed out, some of the phrases Merkel would attribute to knowledge of gospels other than Mark also exist in Mark or find closer parallels there (“Merkel,” 137). These include καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖ (Mark 3:1), υἱὸς Δαβὶδ ἐλέησόν με (Mark 10:48), ὅπου ἦν (Mark 2:4, 5:40), καὶ προσελθῶν (Mark 1:31). Some appear in more than one context in the canonical gospels. Merkel presumed that if a phrase—no matter how ordinary—is more frequent in another canonical gospel, that other gospel influenced the longer text. Cf. Brown’s suggestion (“Relation,” 478–79) that “his mother” in LGM 2:1 is Johannine because John’s gospel is the only one in which Jesus’ mother is never named. The phrase is too commonplace to support this argument (cf. Matthew 12:46; Luke 1:60; 2:48, 51; 8:19); and these words probably refer to the young man’s mother in LGM 2. They do, though, evoke Mark’s introduction of Mary as “his mother” in 3:31 (she is first named in 6:3), which is also a scene in which Jesus refuses to meet relatives.

55. “Relation,” 479.

56. Merkel, “Auf den Spuren des Urmarkus?” 135–36; Brown, “Relation,” 478.

the one “whom Jesus loved” is Johannine terminology for the semi-legendary founder figure of *that* community.⁵⁷ Other scholars who do not accept the theory of dependence have felt obligated to note that harmonization cannot adequately account for the Lukan parallel to the story about the rich man, for only the Matthean version of that story refers to that character as a *νεανίσκος* (19:20, 22), which is the word used five times in the longer text to describe the resurrected man.⁵⁸ In other words, details from all three synoptic versions of the story of the rich man appear in LGM 1 (Mark 10:21; Luke 18:23; Matthew 19:20, 22).

That the author of longer Mark was *influenced* by one or more of the later canonical gospels is a reasonable possibility, though not the only reasonable conclusion. It certainly is not the case that “Anyone who reads the text impartially will...gain the impression that here the raising of Lazarus in Jn. 11 is adapted in an abridged form, with the admixture of numerous echoes of Synoptic pericopes.”⁵⁹ In fact, in view of the tenuous nature of these contacts, the standard theory of *direct literary* dependence must be deemed improbable, especially since there has never been any reason to rule out a scenario of indirect dependence. In recent years some scholars have begun to question whether the phenomenon of intertextuality should be imagined in terms of individuals copying phrases from one text to another, as if ancient reading was principally a visual experience that occurred in a social vacuum.⁶⁰ An interplay between textuality and orality would have occurred whenever a living, oral tradition existed

57. See Brown, *Community*, 31–33; Charlesworth, *Beloved Disciple*, xiv–xv, xviii, 13–14, 43–45. The identification of this disciple with characters in the tradition may at times be redactional, and some of those stories may be fictional. However, the apologetic rationalization of the untimely death of this disciple in John 21:20–23 is explicable only if a real person in John’s community was identified with this figure and was expected to live until Jesus’ return.

58. E.g. Koester, “History and Development,” 53; Crossan, *Four Other Gospels*, 115; idem, “Thoughts,” 166–67. Smith did not fully appreciate this problem. In *CA*, 172, he suggested that it is an indication of Matthean knowledge of longer Mark.

59. Merkel, “Appendix,” 107.

60. See Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel*, xxii–xxiii; Uro, “‘Secondary Orality.’”

alongside the public reading of gospels.⁶¹ Such conditions existed well into the second century⁶² and would better explain the more primitive form of the resurrection story and the small amount of clear parallelism with Matthean (*νεανίσκος*), Lukan (“for he was rich”), and Johannine (“whom Jesus loved”) redaction.⁶³

II.2.1. *The Idiosyncrasy of Pastiche Composition*

As so often is the case in source criticism, the issues surrounding longer Mark’s relationship with the canonical gospels may be too complicated and speculative to allow definitive conclusions. The theory that longer Mark is a pastiche has too many difficulties to commend it, but a formal refutation of this position is not a necessary preliminary to a literary-critical analysis. It is, however, important to question a tacit assumption of the theory of complete and direct canonical dependence—namely the inanity implied by such a procedure. When dependence on John and the synoptics is assumed, the longer text is envisioned to be the product of such a clumsy, uninspired, and artificial process that any question of literary merit or larger, representative significance seems absurd. The words chosen to describe the overall composition normally imply mechanical ineptitude and often bristle with contempt:

“possib[ly]...little more than a semi-Gnostic fabrication”; “a crude collage of phrases found elsewhere in the Gospel of Mark”; “artificial literary mosaic,” “...a new tale...rather mechanically constructed from individual constituents”; “a patch-work of

61. The influence that the hearing of gospels would have on the telling of otherwise independent tradition has come to be called “secondary orality.” The possibility of such influence has recently been considered in some studies of the relationship between the gospel of Thomas and the canonical gospels. Like longer Mark, Thomas has a small amount of contact with redactional elements from all four canonical gospels, but in its overlaps with the sayings of these gospels Thomas often presents more primitive versions (most notably the parables, but it is a general phenomenon). Here, too, theories of direct literary dependence on the canonical gospels are typical. Compare Meier’s efforts to argue that Thomas’s more primitive forms are the coincidental byproduct of its redactional and theological tendencies, e.g. a tendency to abbreviate and to be more obscure (*Marginal Jew*, 128–39).

62. See Smith, *CA*, 95–96; note Papias’s comments in Eusebius, *Church History* III.39.4.

63. I do not necessarily consider this to be the correct explanation—only a better way of formulating an argument for dependence.

phrases...quilted from pieces of our four Gospels," "what one would expect to be concocted by a person with all the stories in front of him," "[the author] is not one who freely composes. He has a pair of scissors to cut up manuscripts and glue them down, although the antecedents of pronouns may turn out to be different"; "such an obvious pastiche, with its internal contradiction and confusion, ...a thoroughly artificial composition, quite out of keeping with Mark's quality as a story teller"; "a parody of the raising of Lazarus as told in the canonical John," "the distorted Lazarus story..."; "it looks as if its author thumbed through Mark until he found the phrase he wanted..."; "on dirait presque que le recit a été composé à l'aide d'une concordance des évangiles"; "this strange splicing of bits and pieces from the Gospels of Mark and John..."; "largely a confused pastiche...," "expansions of the sort we find everywhere in apocryphal literature"; "[probably] an artificial and secondary blend of Marcan and Johannine elements"; "details and phrases from the Gospels have been cut-and-pasted into a basic story line."⁶⁴

These descriptions fall short of being impartial classifications. Beskow refers to previous discussions of the composite appearance of the story as evidence that "this is not at all an original gospel text but a later writing composed by joining material from Mark and John. ...Morton Smith seems quite alone in his view that the fragment is a piece of genuine Gospel tradition."⁶⁵ But what is meant by "an original gospel text" and a "genuine Gospel tradition"? What do Charlesworth and others mean when they offer the contrasting notions of "an artificial and secondary blend"? The language sounds scholarly and impartial, but these words are substitutes for the religious categories *inspired* and *phony*. As a corollary of the Two-Source Hypothesis, one *could* refer to Matthew's mission discourse or even his Sermon on the Mount as "an artificial and secondary blend of Marcan and [Q] elements," but New Testament scholars do not use such parlance because they expect a measure of creativity and purposefulness to canonical rearranging, for which they prefer the word *redaction* over *invention*. It is when the authors of uncanonical writings are being discussed that the

64. Musurillo, "Smith's Secret Gospel," 329; Scroggs, Review, 59; Schmidt, *LM*, 41, 43; Hobbs, *LM*, 21, 66; Bruce, *The "Secret" Gospel*, 12 (in reviewing this book, Wilson approvingly repeats "such an obvious pastiche"; Mitton also appeals to Bruce's opinion in his Review of Smith's books, 132); Skehan, Review, 452, 453; Best, "Uncanonical Mark," 205; Neiryneck, "Fuite," 223; Beskow, *Strange Tales*, 99; Gundry, "Excursus," 621, 612; Charlesworth and Evans, "Jesus in the Agrapha and Apocryphal Gospels," 530; Baltz, *Lazarus*, 104.

65. *Strange Tales*, 99. Smith was certainly not alone in his view.

language changes. The products of redactional rearranging become fabrications and counterfeit scriptures, and the authors are dismissed as second-century parasites. As Hans Dieter Betz has observed, this attitude is frequently projected onto any “apocryphal” writing:

Usually the apocryphal gospel material is treated as “inventions” or arbitrary changes and corruptions of the synoptic sources. Traditions, which originally were sound and sober, are taken to have grown wild. Religious fantasy has allegedly taken over. Crazy and immoral “heretics” have perverted the originally simple gospel accounts.⁶⁶

The *Letter to Theodore* itself gives ample reason to suppose that the author of the longer gospel composed with more intelligence and purpose than is supposed by those who argue for pastiche composition. Clement was of the opinion that the shorter gospel was intended for catechumens and ordinary Christians, whereas the longer gospel was reserved for Christians who were being perfected in gnosis; it included “whatever makes for progress toward knowledge” (I.20–22), and these additional passages could “lead the hearers into the innermost sanctuary of the truth hidden by seven veils” (I.25–26). Without distinction, both versions were referred to as “the divinely inspired Gospel according to Mark” (I.11–12). The letter, then, if authentic, supplies evidence that this text seemed to its readers and hearers in the Alexandrian church to be as intelligible, inspired, and Markan as the canonical text and to have been composed for a specific audience and function; it had proved itself serviceable in the instruction of advanced Christians (the persons Clement calls “true gnostics”). Orthodox Alexandrian Christians (not just Clement!) as well as Carpocrates and his following

66. *LM*, 17.

found the work to be profound and illuminating.⁶⁷ Thus the high value accorded this text and its specific utility in advanced instruction imply that it had theological and literary merits comparable to those of the canonical gospel.

II.3. *The School of Longer Markan Priority*

Smith had indicated in *CA* that the relationship of longer Mark to the canonical gospel could be explained in terms of either expansion or abbreviation. He believed that most of the evidence supports the conclusion that longer Mark was an expansion of the shorter, canonical gospel, though some of the evidence seemed to him to point to abbreviation, particularly the fact that LGM 2 appears (partially) to fill a lacuna in Mark 10:46.⁶⁸

II.3.1. *Helmut Koester's Three-Stage Theory of the Development of Canonical Mark*

The position that canonical Mark was produced through the abbreviation of the longer gospel was first argued by Koester. His theory, presented at length in a 1980 paper entitled "History and Development of Mark's Gospel," is part of a wider ranging attempt to demonstrate that "the text of the Synoptic Gospels was very unstable during

67. Clement was presumably citing church tradition and practice for what he said about the composition and use of the longer gospel. Since the Alexandrian church revered this gospel (implicit in II.1-2), it makes little sense to point to Clement's gullibility concerning the apostolic authorship of "apocryphal" texts as a reason to dismiss this one (e.g. Bruce, *The "Secret" Gospel*, 13; Parker, *Review*, 5; Skehan, *Review*, 451, 452; Mann, *Mark*, 428; Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 121; Charlesworth and Evans, "Jesus in the Agrapha and Apocryphal Gospels," 527-28). Gullibility is not the issue. Christians attributed apostolic and/or eyewitness authorship to works which they felt accurately conveyed the teachings and theology which they themselves accepted as true. They became skeptical when a work conveyed ideas they themselves deemed unorthodox or unpalatable. Correct theology was the main criterion, and these ascriptions functioned to legitimize the ascriber's theology. Notice that in the letter Clement counters the "heretical" theology of the Carpocratians by enjoining Theodore to swear to them that their version of this gospel is *not* by an apostle. The individuality Clement showed in accepting certain apocryphal writings as apostolic was a reflection of his own fairly unorthodox theology, though his views about this text were not just his own.

68. *CA*, 188-94.

the first and second centuries.”⁶⁹ This argument, as it applies to Mark, is predicated on the opinion that “the oldest accessible text of the Gospel of Mark is preserved in most instances in which Matthew and Luke agree in their reproduction of their source—even if the extant Markan manuscript tradition presents a different text.”⁷⁰ A selection of minor agreements between Matthew and Luke against Mark are taken by Koester as proof that the text of Mark they knew was different from the first archetypes of this gospel that developed in the latter half of the second century.⁷¹

Koester does not deal with all agreements against Mark, and he does not explain them all the same way. The presumed insertions of, for example, Mark 2:27, 4:26–29, and 12:28–31 are not assigned to any particular redactor or redactional stage. Other textual uncertainties, such as the proposed redactional insertion of Mark 6:45–8:26 (absent from Luke) and the creations of the various endings of Mark, are treated as more purposeful and significant redactions. The ones relevant to our discussion, though, are those he attributes to a stage in the composition of Mark that produced the “secret” gospel.

Koester sees longer Mark as a redactional expansion of an earlier gospel, a “Proto-Mark” used by Matthew and Luke (in different recensions); this redaction is thought to have occurred *prior to* the creation of the canonical gospel, which text is viewed as an abridged version of the longer gospel “suitable for public reading.”⁷² “Secret” Mark

69. Helmut Koester, “History and Development,” 35–57. The 1983 book containing a revised version of this essay also includes a “Seminar Dialogue with Helmut Koester” in which he responded to the criticisms of his paper by David Peabody and answered questions from other scholars. The second quotation is from his second substantial discussion of the topic, where longer Mark is addressed within a discussion of the textual histories of other canonical gospels as well: “Text of the Synoptic Gospels,” 37. This and subsequent statements on the subject reproduce the same ideas in slightly modified form. Some of the basic ideas presented at length in “History and Development” were already evident in Koester’s response to R. H. Fuller’s form-critical study, offered for the 1975 Colloquy recorded in *LM* (see 29–32).

70. “Text of the Synoptic Gospels,” 21.

71. “Text of the Synoptic Gospels,” 19.

72. *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 302. He is vague about why a public gospel could not include these stories.

was produced “early in the 2nd century,” whereas the Mark we know was created around the middle of the second century by the removal of the two passages Clement cited in his *Letter to Theodore*.⁷³ Koester’s reasoning is as follows:

There is one stage of revision which can be more clearly identified: The *Secret Gospel of Mark*. The story of the raising of a youth from the dead and his subsequent initiation...is closely related to a number of other Markan features which were not present in the copies of Proto-Mark used by Matthew and Luke: a special understanding of Jesus’ teaching in terms of resurrection and initiation, the concept of “mystery” as the sum total of Jesus’ message to the disciples and probably a similar interpretation of the term *εὐαγγέλιον*, and the elevation of Jesus to a supernatural being endowed with magical powers and with a “new teaching.” ...A large number of features which distinguish *Canonical Mark* from Proto-Mark are so closely related to the special material of *Secret Mark* quoted by Clement of Alexandria that the conclusion is unavoidable: Canonical Mark is derived from Secret Mark.⁷⁴

The themes which Koester sees as characteristic of secret Mark yet absent in Matthean and Lukan parallels to related passages or words in canonical Mark are grouped under four main headings: *εὐαγγέλιον*, *διδάσκειν*, *μυστήριον*, and *βάπτισμα*. That these themes were not present in the copies of Mark known to Matthew and Luke has been disputed by David Peabody, Frans Neiryck, and Robert Gundry, and to a lesser extent by R. E. Williams and Philip Sellew. Practically every argument Koester has made has been assessed by one or more reviewers as problematic if not basically improbable.⁷⁵ These critiques have not had much impact on Koester or on the popularity of his theory, especially among North American scholars. Discussion has centred around nebulous probabilities. Koester argued that Matthew and Luke *did not read* certain things in their copies of Mark because they do not reproduce them, and his critics have normally responded that the minor agreements against Mark which Koester notes are not unexpected in light of existing redaction-critical studies of Matthean and

73. “History and Development,” 56; “Text of the Synoptic Gospels,” 34 n. 49.

74. “History and Development,” 55–56.

75. Peabody, “Late Secondary Redaction,” 87–132. Williams, “Helmut Koester on Mark.” Neiryck, “Minor Agreements,” 59–73. Gundry, “Excursus,” 603–23. Sellew, “History,” 242–57.

Lukan (or late Markan) editorial tendencies, so those evangelists *probably did read these things*. Both positions are somewhat illogical and by nature impossible to prove; different solutions to the synoptic problem have been pitted against each other, with predictably unconvincing results. Peabody faulted Koester for not treating his selection of minor agreements as part of a much larger problem that is not well explained by the Two-Source Hypothesis and thus for making a tendentious selection of relevant examples.⁷⁶ Neiryneck faulted Koester for not adequately exploring the possibility that Matthew and Luke would at times agree in how they revised Mark,⁷⁷ as did Gundry, who additionally appealed to the hypothesis of secondary dependence of Luke upon Matthew (i.e. when a minor agreement is explicable in terms of Matthean redaction but not consistent with Lukan redaction, Gundry suggests that Luke was “influenced” by Matthew).⁷⁸

II.3.2. *Adaptations of Koester’s Theory*

II.3.2.1. *Schenke’s Theory of the Priority of the Carpocratian Longer Gospel*

A few years after Koester’s initial presentation, two other scholars argued for secret-Markan priority. In an article published in 1984, Hans-Martin Schenke reargued Koester’s thesis with the modification that the Carpocratian version of longer Mark was the original expansion of Proto-Mark, and was twice abbreviated: the removal of the distinctively Carpocratian materials produced the Alexandrian version, and the removal of LGM 1 and 2 produced the canonical one.⁷⁹

76. “Late Secondary Redaction.”

77. “Minor Agreements.”

78. Gundry, “Excursus.” His position is elaborated in “Matthean Foreign Bodies.”

79. Schenke, “Mystery.”

II.3.2.2. Crossan's Theory of the Production of Canonical Mark through the Dispersion of LGM 1 and 2

A different argument for secret Markan priority was put forward by John Dominic Crossan in chapters 6 and 7 of his 1985 book *Four Other Gospels*, and revised versions have appeared in *The Cross that Spoke* (1988), "Thoughts on Two Extracanonial Gospels" (1990) and his *The Historical Jesus* (1991).⁸⁰ Crossan argued that the secret gospel was a baptismal lection perhaps no longer than the combined materials of (what is now) the last third of Mark 10 plus the two quoted passages of the longer text.⁸¹ With Koester and many others, Crossan assumed that the secret text was used in nude baptism within the Alexandrian church.⁸² But this use, he supposed, prompted an erotic interpretation, which allowed Carpocratians to justify sexual libertinism.⁸³ The consequence, he suggested, was that "Mark," in creating the (longer) canonical gospel, decided that the story contained in LGM 1 and 2 needed not only to be eliminated from the text but even discredited as authentic tradition.⁸⁴ The means of destruction, strange as it may seem, was to dismantle its components and scatter them throughout the

80. *Four Other Gospels*, 91–121. *Cross*, 283–84. "Thoughts," 155–68. *Historical Jesus*, 310–13, 328–32, 410–16, 429–30.

81. "...at least Mark 10:32–34 + [LGM 1] + 10:35–46a + [LGM 2] + some incident at Jericho"; *Four Other Gospels*, 119 (cf. 120). He also wrote: "It is no longer possible to know how much else it contained before and after those units. It is at least possible that it concluded with the post-baptismal encounter between Jesus and the resurrected youth [sic] at Jericho. In any case, I do not presume it contained a passion and resurrection conclusion."

82. *Four Other Gospels*, 119.

83. In *Four Other Gospels* he speaks of "past Carpocratian usage" and the need "to eliminate the Carpocratian scandal" (108, 120; cf. *Cross*, 283: "Carpocratian interpretation"). As Joel Marcus noted (*Mystery*, 86–87 n. 41), Carpocrates was active a half century later. Crossan tacitly acknowledges the error in *Historical Jesus*, 414 and made a comment in anticipation of this in "Thoughts," 165: "I presume, by the way, that the Carpocratians inherited rather than invented that interpretation. The erotic reading would have been there as soon as there was naked baptism and a libertine Christianity interested in it. By the middle of the first century?"

84. With Smith, he also supposes that LGM 2 previously contained a dialogue with Salome that was interesting enough to merit censorship. See *Four Other Gospels*, 109–10.

canonical version. The purpose of this procedure was to make the offending story in the original, secret gospel appear as if it were only an inauthentic “pastiche” composed of phrases from the canonical version.⁸⁵

Crossan supports this theory by arguing that the materials shared in parallels by canonical Mark and LGM 1 and 2 make more sense within the secret gospel context than they do in their various contexts in the canonical gospel; that is, the intrusive appearance of these phrases in canonical Mark is evidence that their original home was in the baptismal passages of the secret gospel text.⁸⁶ Whereas, for instance, Koester is impressed by the fact that the story of the young man dressed in a linen cloth in Mark 14:51–52 has no parallel in Matthew and Luke, Crossan considers the young man and his costume to make more sense in LGM 1. Thus he supposes that the brief narrative in Mark 14:51–52 was constructed from the reference to the young man’s costume in the initiation story when LGM 1 and 2 were dismembered.

One of the strengths of Crossan’s theory is that it offers an explanation for the close verbal parallelism between numerous phrases in LGM 1 and 2 and canonical Mark. The occurrence of exact intratextual parallels no longer seems unusual, for they never actually existed within one text; the canonical text never had the secret gospel passages in it, and the secret gospel text never had the canonical parallels created through the destruction of the offending passages.

II.3.2.2.1. *Revisions of Crossan’s Theory*

Crossan soon realized that his theory of dismantling had implications for his earlier argument that Mark created the empty tomb pericope himself, without relying on

85. See *Four Other Gospels*, 108–10, 119–20, 121. *Pastiche* is Crossan’s word; see, for example, “Thoughts,” 165; *Historical Jesus*, 329.

86. See *Four Other Gospels*, 108–10, 112–119. Two years earlier, Beskow (*Strange Tales*, 100) argued that “expressions which Mark and John use in a natural context, here [in longer Mark] appear in a way that seems illogical or just odd.”

“prior tradition.”⁸⁷ In *The Cross that Spoke*, he acknowledged that there was a traditional basis for the empty tomb narrative insofar as Mark found some building blocks for this story in “the literary debris from his destruction of the story of the resurrected youth in *Secret Mark*.”⁸⁸ But after writing “Thoughts,” Crossan came to realize that if the original version of Mark’s gospel did not initially have any of the later-to-be-redistributed parallels to LGM 1 and 2, then it was missing indispensable elements from the stories about the women watching the crucifixion from afar, the removal of the body and burial, and the discovery of an empty tomb, for the details of the women and the tomb (hence the burial and the visit to anoint the body) and the young man (hence the announcement of the resurrection) had all been attributed to the dismantling of LGM 1 and 2. Thus in *The Historical Jesus* he assumes that the first lengthy version of Mark (which he now calls *Secret Mark* and attributes to the same author) originally ended with the centurion’s confession in 15:39.⁸⁹ Now the *absence* of the empty tomb story, the creation of which he originally attributed to Mark “as the precise and complete redactional conclusion for his Gospel (16:1–8),”⁹⁰ is given a theological interpretation in keeping with Crossan’s original conception of why Mark’s theology *demand*ed it in the first place: “...it fits very well with a Markan theology in which faith and hope despite persecution and death is much more important than visions, apparitions, and even revelations.”⁹¹

In the process of modifying his historical inferences, Crossan seems to have forgotten that he was originally supposing that Mark’s gospel represented a Galilean polemic

87. “A Form for Absence,” 48; cf. *Cross*, 283. The argument is made in “Empty Tomb.”

88. *Cross*, 284.

89. *Historical Jesus*, 415. “Thoughts” contains confusing statements that make it hard to decide whether Crossan had already come to view “secret” Mark as the first full-length gospel; cf. the paragraph spanning 161–62 with the diagram on 166.

90. “Empty Tomb,” 135.

91. *Historical Jesus*, 416. That Mark would suggest that Christianity began without “even revelations” of the resurrection is hard to accept. Mark would be positing that there can be no experiential basis for faith in the resurrection, only trust in the passion predictions and in the centurion’s perception that Jesus’ death showed him to be the Son of God.

against “a Jerusalem/relatives of Jesus theology, a theology of the abiding presence of the Risen Lord” arising “from an influx of Jerusalem Christians into his Galilean community after the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E.”⁹² His current arguments presuppose that the earliest and latest versions of Mark were produced in Alexandria.

II.4. *The Slow Rise of Redaction-Critical Interest*

II.4.1. *Koester*

The idea that longer Mark was an earlier form of Mark than the canonical gospel helped foster the idea that its contents originally had an intrinsic relation to their broader textual setting. But in the studies by Koester and Crossan, this relationship was not explored. Koester’s analysis began as an attempt to account for his impression that LGM 1 exhibited qualities of canonical Mark that were absent from the Proto-Gospel of Mark that he hypothesizes was used by Matthew and Luke. Having come to conceive of LGM 1 and 2 as remnants of an expansion of Mark that was made subsequent to the writing of the synoptic gospels, it was natural for him to assume that the secret gospel additions would evince a theology markedly different from that of the original Proto-Gospel. And he was not disposed to take note of how LGM 1 and 2 interact with their literary context, for he accepted Smith’s lectionary hypothesis and applied a philologically questionable method of tradition criticism that calibrates developments in traditions by equating the meanings and *Sitz im Leben* of similar themes and expressions found in different texts. The meanings Koester ascribes to the various elements of the proposed secret gospel redaction (e.g. gospel, mystery, baptism, teaching) are imported from exegetical study of similar phrases *in other texts* and

92. “A Form for Absence,” 49, 41.

have no grounding in a contextualized analysis of the LGM excerpts themselves, for instance in exegesis or literary-critical exposition.

Koester's decontextualization of meaning may be illustrated by his determination of the content of the mystery taught to the young man, which he describes as a secret gospel of the resurrection "which can be turned into a rite of initiation."⁹³ The word *gospel* does not appear in LGM 1 or 2. Yet Koester believed that the *concept* of gospel is involved here because *εὐαγγέλιον* is sometimes absent in Matthew/Luke parallels to Mark and was therefore added by this redactor.⁹⁴ That is, the idea of gospel is assumed to have been in the redactor's mind even if it was not mentioned in this part of his story. Such an assumption is unwarranted and the logic involved is circular, for the text of LGM 1 and 2 gives him no basis for attributing the theme of gospel to *this* redactor rather than to someone else.⁹⁵ In any case, the content of this gospel is interpreted as the Pauline proclamation of Christ's death and resurrection because in Mark 1:15b, 8:35, and 10:29 "the term *εὐαγγέλιον* appears without a genitive designating its content" and "[t]his corresponds to Pauline use of *εὐαγγέλιον* as a technical term."⁹⁶ Occasionally, however, Koester calls it "the gospel of the resurrection"⁹⁷ or "of Christ's resurrection and death" (note the word order)⁹⁸ because he supposes that the

93. Koester, "History and Development," 31; "Seminar Dialogue with Helmut Koester," 75. He does not clarify what he means by this.

94. Luke does not use the word in his gospel. Matthew has it in two parallels to Mark, one of which, Mark 13:10, Koester explained as "a secondary intrusion from the text of Matthew" into Mark ("History and Development," 43). Mark 1:14-15 is not directly paralleled, but even Koester previously considered Matthew 4:23 and the similar "summary" statement in 9:35 to be based on Mark 1:14-15 ("Kerygma-Gospel," 369 n. 1, noted by Neiryneck in "Minor Agreements," 61).

95. I am not certain whether Koester still claims that *εὐαγγέλιον* comes from the author of longer Mark, for he omits this argument in his discussions of "secret" Mark in "Text of the Synoptic Gospels" and *Ancient Christian Gospels*. He does, however, still argue that *εὐαγγέλιον* was not original to Mark and has become more confident about this (e.g. *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 13).

96. "Kerygma-Gospel," 369.

97. "Seminar Dialogue with Helmut Koester," 74.

98. *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 14 and 286.

antecedent resurrection story attests to an interest in power and magic.⁹⁹ His justification for assuming that *εὐαγγέλιον* is to be associated with the subject matter described as the *μυστήριον* of the kingdom of God derives from a comparison with Ephesians, where *μυστήριον* is also used in the singular, is associated with the words “gospel” and “baptism” (1:9–13; 3:1–7; 6:19), and connotes the Pauline gospel.¹⁰⁰

Koester’s approach involves a basic confusion of *langue* and *parole*. Through a mechanical transference of meanings, ideas that have no evident semantic connection with LGM 1b are being read into the story without an attempt to show that these ideas are discernible in the text itself. If persons holding these ideas created or at least shaped the story of the initiation, that narrative should be no less open to exegetical analysis than the other texts upon which Koester relies to disclose these meanings. “Thought is revealed in the particular, contingent utterance of an individual (*parole*), not in the system of semantic signs that the individual uses to make it (*langue*).”¹⁰¹ By not examining the meaning of LGM 1:12 in its literary context, Koester lost sight of the fact that the mystery taught to the young man differs from the external parallels

99. E.g. *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 298–301. He also attributes to the author of “secret” Mark some occurrences in Mark of *ἐθαμβοῦντο*, and some occurrences of *ἀναστῆναι* where Matthew and Luke have *ἐγερθῆναι*—this despite the fact that LGM 1 uses *ἀναστῆναι* only of Jesus’ getting up to depart to the other side of the Jordan (1:13), uses *ἐγείρω* (*ἡγειρεν*) for the resurrection (1:7), and contains no reference to anyone’s response (let alone amazement) following the raising.

100. “History and Development,” 48–49; cf. “Kerygma-Gospel,” 366. If he no longer believes *εὐαγγέλιον* can be attributed to the author of longer Mark, this association with Ephesians has little basis. Concerning *μυστήριον*, he argues that in Christianity the plural, “mysteries,” is tradition-critically early and means “the interpretation of transmitted sayings and parables” (“Seminar Dialogue with Helmut Koester,” 75). The singular is a late development with a distinctive meaning; it refers to the Christian gospel as a whole. This argument makes nonsense of the fact that *μυστήριον* overwhelmingly occurs in the singular in the New Testament and is used in reference to the gospel of the cross as early as 1 Cor. 2:1, 7 (in “History and Development,” 48, and “Text of the Synoptic Gospels,” 22 n. 8 he does not acknowledge this verse; in *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 62 and n. 4 he treats it as non-Pauline and claims that its meaning “appears for the first time [*sic*] in the Pauline corpus in Eph 3:3–4, 9; 6:19”). In actuality, the plural *only* occurs in the Matthew/Luke parallel to Mark 4:11 and in three places in 1 Corinthians. These plurals do not, as he claims, refer to sayings of a particular type but to the mysterious eschatological realities to which these sayings point. The use of a singular in Mark 4:11 and LGM 1:12 reflects nothing more than the fact that only one particular (eschatological) mystery is in view.

101. Schuyler Brown, “Philology,” 130.

Koester offers by being modified by the words “of the kingdom of God”; these words necessarily draw their meaning in relation to the other references to God’s kingdom in the literary context of Mark’s story, where the kingdom of God is sometimes an eschatological subject (e.g. 1:15; 9:1; cf. 11:10) and sometimes closely associated with discipleship (e.g. 10:14–15, 23, 25). By virtue of the fact that LGM 1a was a part of the Markan gospel, its various elements have a relationship with this textual context.

II.4.2. *Crossan*

Crossan’s modifications of Koester’s theory led him to a different redactional emphasis, though again one that paid little attention to the literary context. Since Crossan originally envisioned a writing that was possibly no longer than Mark 10:32–46a plus LGM 1 and 2, there was no question of intratextual relationships; indeed, LGM 1 and 2 only found their way into a lengthy version of Mark in dismembered form. For Crossan, the presumed *destruction* of these passages was the important redaction-critical issue, and its solution required a hypothesis about an external controversy. He now appears to have decided that “secret” Mark was the first full-length version of Mark, but this development was not accompanied by any literary-critical reflection.

II.4.3. *Peabody*

The first redaction-critical study of longer Mark to consider Markan qualities at a level beyond that of vocabulary and style had appeared a few years earlier in David Peabody’s response to Koester’s theory, which was more than double Koester’s essay in length.¹⁰² His study has been largely neglected, possibly because his critique was framed as a defense of the still unpopular Griesbach hypothesis. In Peabody’s view,

102. “Late Secondary Redaction.” Originally it seems to have been three and a half times the length of Koester’s essay (66 pages); see “Seminar Dialogue with Helmut Koester,” 71.

the shared omissions to which Koester appealed in order to argue for a Proto-Gospel of Mark are more readily explained if one adopts the Griesbach hypothesis; Mark added those materials in the process of conflating Matthew and Luke.

Peabody disputed Koester's approach of assigning unparalleled materials to redactors other than Mark. For instance, the section 6:45–8:26, absent from Luke, is stylistically as Markan as the rest of the gospel, and elements in its story of the healing of the deaf man (7:32–37) are "rather extensively" related to Mark 5:41–43 (and 8:22–23) "at some level of redaction."¹⁰³ Concerning the terms Koester attributed to the redactor of longer Mark, Peabody questioned whether there is any difference in usage between paralleled and unparalleled occurrences of *τὸ εὐαγγέλιον* and *διδάσκειν/διδαχή*. He noted, further, that a number of phrases in canonical Mark that Koester attributes to "secret" Markan redaction display distinctive Markan redactional characteristics.

Though he focused on the words and themes which Koester associates with the redactor of the longer gospel and did not attempt to examine in the same way the actual contents of the passages quoted in the letter, it was apparent to him that longer Mark was produced by someone whose mode of redaction was consistent with that of the author of the shorter version:¹⁰⁴

The evidence is certainly strong enough to suggest common authorship of the Secret Gospel and much of the redactional material in Mark. If anything, the evidence is *too* strong. The high density of identifiable Markan redactional characteristics within the relatively brief text of the Secret Gospel preserved by Clement might be explained as the work of a conscious imitator of Markan style not unlike the author of Ephesians imitated Paul.¹⁰⁵

By occasionally broadening his focus to include considerations of how Mark composed

103. "Late Secondary Redaction," 106.

104. Peabody, "Late Secondary Redaction," 114.

105. "Late Secondary Redaction," 130. Cf. Best, "Uncanonical Mark," 200, 204.

and interrelated stories, Peabody at least showed the utility that a more comprehensive redaction criticism could have for investigation of the passages cited in the *Letter to Theodore*. His focus on Koester's theory did not require him to take that step himself.

II.4.4. *Sellew*

In their applications of redaction criticism, Smith, Peabody, and Best examined the issue of the longer gospel's Markan characteristics at the most basic level of style and made only occasional comments about compositional technique. Peabody attempted to show that the Markan terms and themes isolated by Koester on the basis of being unparalleled in Matthew and Luke are nevertheless as Markan in style as passages that are paralleled. To this, Koester responded with the claim that one cannot expect to distinguish redactional layers that were added later to Mark on the basis of whether they display a different vocabulary and style, for a later editor would attempt to imitate the qualities of the existing text.¹⁰⁶ Sellew, who is partial to Koester's theory, accepted this reasoning, and offered a different basis for questioning whether the unparalleled language originated at a later time.

In two instances he examined the integrity of the gospel as a narrative when the supposedly later redactional materials are taken out. Concerning Koester's suggestion that the Proto-Mark used by Luke did not contain Mark 6:45–8:26, Sellew pointed out that this section of narrative is vital to the development of the Markan theme of the disciples' misunderstanding; it is not just Markan—as Peabody amply demonstrated—but also integral to Mark's *plot*.¹⁰⁷ And he noted that the description of the young man in 14:51 as *νεανίσκος τις* implies that he had not earlier appeared in the story. This fact

106. "History and Development," 39, n. 15; "Seminar Dialogue with Helmut Koester," 75–76.

107. "History," 249–50.

makes it difficult to assume that LGM 1 and 2 were added at the same redactional stage as 14:51–52.¹⁰⁸ Without further elaboration Sellev advanced the view that any later stages in the rewriting of Mark's gospel should be viewed as continuous and not “disruptive of the basic interests and themes of the story viewed overall.” “*Secret Mark* should not be seen as unrepresentative of the originary [*sic*] impulses and interests that operated within the Markan tradition from the start. We must think in terms of lines of development (‘trajectories’) rather than disruptive external redaction or tampering.”¹⁰⁹ Such concepts as understanding, mysteriousness, and the association between Jesus’ powerful actions and his status as teacher may be emphasized in longer Mark, but they are entirely at home in Mark’s gospel.¹¹⁰

II.4.5. *Munro*

Sellev recognized that LGM 1 and 2 are Markan not only in style but also in theological outlook. His explanation for the incorporation of the longer gospel materials into Mark, however, was the usual premise that they were catechetical passages for baptizants, and he did not attempt to inquire into how these additions affect the gospel.¹¹¹ An effort along these lines was made five years earlier by Winsome Munro (1986) and published in the year following the publication Sellev’s paper (1992). Accepting Koester’s theory in part, she started with an independent investigation of the fragments (not presented in the article) that led her to conclude that “they appear linguistically, stylistically, and ideologically too compatible with canonical

108. “History,” 251–53. Sellev opts to believe that *νεανίσκος τις* represents a revision of 14:51 when LGM 1 and 2 were removed and that this was done to imply that the young man had not earlier appeared in the story. However, the supposition that 14:51–52 was *slightly* redacted only makes more pressing the question of why the whole incident with the naked fleeing youth was not just removed with LGM 1 and 2.

109. “History,” 253–54.

110. “History,” 255, 257.

111. “History,” 256.

Mark, to fit too well into their Marcan contexts, and to contribute too pertinently to Mark's redactional themes and literary character to be superimposed."¹¹² Her approach, however, was not literary but historical, and was based on the premise that "[m]irror reading,' or a reading backwards from an antagonistic text can possibly help recover the submerged history of assertive women."¹¹³ Like Smith, she treats the text as based on historically and chronologically accurate reminiscences that have been tendentiously reworked by the transmitters and editors of the tradition. Thus she makes tradition-critical observations about the nature of the pre-longer Markan/Johannine tradition and redaction-critical inferences about what Mark had done with it.

Her theory is that at LGM 1b the text of longer Mark originally contained an historically accurate account of the royal anointing of Jesus in Bethany by the young man's sister. This incident engendered Jesus' messianic consciousness; thus in the following story James and John seek to secure positions of honour when he comes into his glory. There was also some sort of prophetic rally of women at Jericho which led a crowd to follow him out of the city and proclaim him as the messiah when he rode up to Jerusalem.¹¹⁴ But due to the political overtones of these incidents and Mark's general "negativity toward the women disciples of Jesus," he relocated the anointing and suppressed the story of the messianic rally with the gloss "and Jesus did not receive them."¹¹⁵ In this way the memory that women had a significant impact on the formation of Jesus' messianic self-consciousness was lost.

Munro imagines an original, reliable narrative sequence that was progressively changed due to concerns that were extrinsic to the narrative. These presuppositions exclude literary considerations. As with Crossan, her redactional purview did not

112. "Women Disciples," 52.

113. "Women Disciples," 48.

114. "Women Disciples," 58-60.

115. "Women Disciples," 62, 63.

include the literary functioning of LGM 1 and 2 in their context but only what was supposedly done with these stories.

II.5. *The Beginnings of a Literary Perspective*

II.5.1. *Kermode*

In the third chapter of his 1979 book *The Genesis of Secrecy*, titled “The Man in the Macintosh, the Boy in the Shirt,” the acclaimed literary critic Frank Kermode took note of the story about the young man contained in the *Letter to Theodore*. This story was of interest to him because it deals with the *νεανίσκος* in Mark 14; Kermode saw in the enigmatic appearance of this figure an illustration for his theory that readers approach literature with an expectation of “narrative coherence.”¹¹⁶

His theory may be described this way. When we read narratives our implicit understanding of generic conventions provides us with expectations of what should normally happen in the type of story we are reading (53, 70). This preunderstanding allows us to comprehend the sequence of details and incidents as a meaningful plot. This expectation of coherency is so strong that “it require[s] a more strenuous effort to believe that a narrative lacks coherence than to believe that somehow, if we could only find out, it doesn’t” (53). “[W]e are programmed to prefer fulfillment to disappointment, the closed to the open” (64). So when some part of a narrative lacks coherence, we attempt to *make* some sense out of it by finding an interpretive framework (appropriate to the genre) that allows for a solution whereby the puzzling pieces fall into place:

an apparent lack of connection, the existence of narrative elements that cannot readily be seen to form part of a larger organization, must be explained in terms of that hidden plot, and not regarded as evidence of a fractured surface, or mere fortuities indicating that reality may be fortuitous. (64)

116. Kermode, *Genesis*, 53.

For instance, when reading a detective story, we tolerate unresolved clues and conflicting information because these are expected, but we also expect that everything will make sense at the end, where an “occult plot” emerges through the revelation of the perpetrator (55). Similarly, when we read a story deemed by the academy to be a work of literature, disjunctions that might be dismissed as confusions or muddles in an unacclaimed work become enigmas requiring resolution.¹¹⁷

The νεανίσκος in Gethsemane is one such enigma. He seems strangely out of place: “we have to deal with a young man who was out on a chilly spring night (fires were lit in the high priest’s courtyard) wearing nothing but an expensive, though not a warm, shirt” (56). Kermode likens Mark’s young man to the mysterious man in the macintosh in Joyce’s *Ulysses*. Both characters pop up unexpectedly, are described only in terms of their outfits and their actions, and their identities are withheld from the readers. Their brief and unanticipated appearances create especially abrupt disturbances in the surface of the narrative (52) and therefore stimulate the reader to assume that there is some important significance to these reports. How we interpret this significance, however, is determined by our preconceptions about the genre of the text and its modes of signification (e.g. intertextual, intratextual, extratextual, allegorical, literal, symbolic). If we view the gospel as literature and expect literature to comment on humanity’s condition, we might attempt to produce an allegorical connection with a situation in the real world or a symbolic significance within the world of the text. Like Joyce’s man in the macintosh, Mark’s gospel stalker has been identified with the author himself and with particular contemporary historical personalities in the author’s social world, such as the apostle Paul projected back into the story of Jesus’

117. This presumption of coherence with regard to Mark is attested by John C. Meagher’s book *Clumsy Construction*, which is an attempt to disabuse scholars of the conception, inherent to the discipline of redaction criticism, that Mark was master of his materials.

life.¹¹⁸ This figure has also been given intertextual meanings (based on Genesis 39:12 and Amos 2:16) and intratextual ones (not noted by Kermode, but one could mention Schenke's position, described below, that the man is a symbolic anticipation of Christ's escape from death). The detail can also be comprehended as a mere element of verisimilitude—an effort to make the narrative of the arrest seem especially vivid and real (56). If we assume that Mark was incapable of such sophistication, we might explain the young man as a confused remnant from a source (55). Few scholars are content to dismiss this incident as just an awkward moment in the text (56).

Because the *νεανίσκος* in LGM 1 is related to the enigmatic *νεανίσκος* in chapter 14 through the references to the linen cloth wrapped about a naked body, Kermode supposes that the resurrection and initiation stories were originally part of Mark's gospel: "it seems not unlikely that in...[Mark 14:51–52] the secret gospel is showing through, a radiance of some kind, merely glimpsed by the outsider. And we should not be unduly surprised that the gospel, like its parables, both reveals and conceals" (59). Thus in Kermode's view, the longer gospel conforms with the canonical gospel, inasmuch as the latter "witness[es] to the enigmatic and exclusive character of narrative, to its property of banishing interpreters from its secret places" (33).

At one point Kermode produces an interpretation of the two stories about the young man in longer Mark which combines Smith's notion that the *νεανίσκος* was a baptizant and Farrer's notion that he was a symbol of desertion. The narrative at this point involves three themes: "Betrayal, Flight, and Denial" (62). Judas is the embodiment of Betrayal, and Peter of Denial. The young man "is Desertion":

The secret passage enhances this reading; the typical deserter is one who by baptism or some other rite of initiation has been reborn and received into the Kingdom. Nevertheless he flees. Thus we may find in this sequence of betrayal, desertion, and denial, a

118. Hanhart interprets John's beloved disciple and the young man in LGM 1 and Mark 14 this way; see *Open Tomb*, chapter 8.

literary construction of considerable sophistication.... (63)

With these comments, Kermode offered the first literary assessment of how LGM 1 and 2 can be thought to function in Mark's gospel. Since his interest was in theory, he did not produce a thoroughgoing interpretation of LGM 1 but, rather, used it to exemplify his ideas about the nature of literature. Moreover, he may not have wished to find a meaning that would allow a greater measure of closure, for an especially satisfying interpretation would undercut his thesis that Mark's gospel epitomizes how works deemed to be literature banish their interpreters from their innermost regions. Had he noticed that LGM 1 and 2 form an intercalation around Mark 10:35–45 he doubtless would have had more to say, for he took a special interest in this device (127–34).

II.5.2. *Schenke*

At the end of his article "The Mystery of the Gospel of Mark," Schenke offered some thoughts on how the two (known) stories about the young man in longer Mark work to develop discipleship and christological themes. Starting with the form-critical observation that the initiation story in LGM 1b was not originally attached to the resurrection story, he perceived that their association has a redactional purpose. In his opinion, "the risen youth...appears as a prototype and a symbol of all those who are to be initiated into the higher discipleship of Jesus" and this symbolism "bestows a new dimension upon the resurrection story itself." This in turn implies that the flight of this young man ought to be read symbolically. Having concluded that the original story had gnostic elements, Schenke interpreted this ideal disciple as "virtually a double of Jesus," whose escape symbolizes the notion "that the genuine disciple, once he has become the equal of Jesus, cannot be taken prisoner and kept in custody by the powers of

the world. Whatever they are able to seize is only his corporeal cover.” The same is true of Jesus.¹¹⁹

One can question whether the flight of a paradigmatic disciple in the face of persecution should be viewed as a positive thing. Nevertheless, Schenke did see symbolism in the longer gospel’s depictions of the young man and related the incidents in chapters 10 and 14 together. He also perceived that the repetition of the phrase “and after six days” from 9:1 in LGM 1:10 “might be a meaningful correspondence.” “The phrase ‘after six days’ connects resurrection and metamorphosis in both cases.” In his view, both scenes are transfigurations, and the initiation of the young man prefigures Jesus’ deification.¹²⁰

II.5.3. Meyer

The next attempt to understand how LGM 1 and 2 interact with the gospel considered as a story appeared in the first essay by Marvin Meyer on the subject. Here he argued that various incidents pertaining to the *νεανίσκος* in Mark were part of a coherent sub-plot. A revised form of his 1983 paper “The *νεανίσκος* in Canonical and Secret Mark,” presented at the Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting, was published in 1990 as “The Youth in the *Secret Gospel of Mark*.” His aim was to “undertake a reading of the *Secret Gospel of Mark* that attempts to place the two fragments from Mar Saba within the broader context of the entire Secret Gospel.”¹²¹

In Meyer’s view, the story of the young man in longer Mark involves “five pericopae”: the story of the “rich young ruler,” the resurrection and initiation in LGM 1, the refusal of Jesus to meet the women in LGM 2, the flight of the *νεανίσκος* from

119. “Mystery,” 77–78.

120. “Mystery,” 79–80. He supposes that the transfiguration story in longer Mark might have been the conclusion of that gospel.

121. “Youth,” 138.

Gethsemane, and the appearance of the *νεανίσκος* in the empty tomb. The same character is involved in each scene, and his “career” “communicates Secret Mark’s vision of the life and challenge of discipleship.”¹²² At first he appears as a would-be disciple, but is discouraged by Jesus’ demand that he sell his many possessions. The verbal links between this story and LGM 1 suggest that this rich man is the same individual whom Jesus subsequently raises from the dead: “in turning from Jesus, it may then be implied, he has turned from life and embraced death” (141).¹²³ After being raised from the dead, he returns Jesus’ love (LGM 1:8; cf. Mark 10:21) and is taught the mystery of the kingdom of God. His ritual garment is that of baptism, but also the same material as Jesus’ burial shroud (15:46). Thus “the *νεανίσκος* participates in baptism as an experience of sharing in the suffering and death of Christ” (142). He is therefore, as Schenke suggested, a “paradigmatic disciple” (137, 146). When he reappears in Gethsemane wearing the same ritual garment, however, he is “scandalized by the suffering of Jesus no less than the other disciples, and even abandons his sacramental clothes symbolizing his participation in Jesus’ passion and death” (146). But after Jesus’ death and resurrection, “The *νεανίσκος* of Mark 16 has reaffirmed his baptismal loyalties” (146) and proclaims “the crucified and risen Christ” (147). The reaction of fear and flight by the women explains why Jesus rejected them in Jericho: “They...do not endure in the life of discipleship” (147). The man’s success, in contrast to the failure of the women and the disciples, stands as a challenge to the reader to “take up the costly life of discipleship” (148).

Meyer has made a number of interesting points concerning the symbolism pertaining to the *νεανίσκος*, especially his suggestions that this man’s baptism concerns sharing in Jesus’ suffering and death and that his appearance at the open tomb is a challenge

122. “Youth,” 139; *idem*, “*Neaniskos*,” 185.

123. Cf. Smith, *SG*, 68; Koester, “Text of the Synoptic Gospels,” 34; Munro, “Women Disciples,” 54.

to the reader to accept the perils of discipleship. Certain aspects of this reading are less convincing from a reader-response point of view. To begin with, the notion that the young man in LGM 1 is actually the rich man from the previous story violates narrative logic. The parallels between the rich man and the young man highlight their shared dilemma of possessing wealth, but there is no indication that the dead man is someone who has already appeared in the story. When his sister is introduced she is not referred to as the sister of the man with many possessions but as a certain woman whose brother had died.¹²⁴ Meyer tries to imply shared identity by referring to “the rich youth in Mark 10:17–22” (p. 141), but that man is not called a youth in this gospel;¹²⁵ what is said, by the man himself, is that he kept the commandments *ἐκ νεότητος* (10:20)—words apt to give the impression that he is no longer “young.” Moreover, had the rich man suddenly died after meeting Jesus, the narrator would need to state this circumstance and make its surprising timing seem natural. Meyer proposes a symbolic connection between death and rejecting Jesus’ answer about how to inherit eternal life. But even if the man had *figuratively* “turned from life and embraced death” (the narrator only says that the man’s “countenance fell, and he went away sorrowful”), that does not explain why he is now supposed to be *literally* dead in the next scene. It is difficult to see how the author of longer Mark could have intended the two stories about rich men to involve the same individual.¹²⁶

Meyer’s suggestion that Jesus refused to meet the women in Jericho because they would later fail as disciples likewise violates narrative logic. Regardless of whether Jesus knew that they would fail him, it makes no sense that he would snub them at this

124. Crossan, “Thoughts,” 163.

125. Crossan, “Thoughts,” 162–63. Contrast Matthew 19:20, 22.

126. That is not to say that later commentators could not have made this connection. Le Boulluec (“*Quis dives salvetur?*”) has made an interesting argument that there are indications in *Quis dives salvetur?* that Clement equated these two figures.

moment in particular, especially since they have not yet failed. He certainly does not give up on his male disciples, whom he did know would later fail him (14:30–31, 72).

These problems notwithstanding, Meyer's contribution marks an important step toward an intratextual appreciation.

II.6. *The History of Interpretation: Conclusions*

The emergence of a literary perspective on the more spiritual gospel has been encumbered by a preponderance of interest in possible extratextual and intertextual referents for the details in LGM 1 and 2. Smith's views that LGM 1 and 2 were based entirely on early, pre-Markan tradition led him to focus on the historical Jesus. For him, the longer text's reference to instruction in the mystery of the kingdom of God was not a redactional elaboration of a theme that Mark added to a collection of parables (e.g. Mark 4:10–13), but a "Markanized" and slightly censored account of an actual mystery rite of the historical Jesus. Smith tended to explain the longer text's conspicuous parallels with phrases found in the Markan gospel as signs of stylistic imitation and not (also) as thematic resonances with images and motifs from the larger story. Rather, his form-critical theory about the use of LGM 1 as part of a lection for baptism prevented any consideration of LGM 1 and 2 as expansions intended to be read in their larger, textual context. Within this framework, the additions only appear to be part of a complete narrative due to the fact that they were conserved in one; in actuality, they were meant to be read liturgically, in isolation from the larger narrative. This assumption has become a widely-held conviction.

Whereas Smith focused too exclusively on extratextual identifications and their historical implications, the pastiche theory went too far in the other direction. By conceptualizing the amplified gospel as a collage of intertextual referents, it projects a manner of composition that is entirely derivative, idiosyncratic, and inane. This more

primitive-looking version of the raising of Lazarus is presumed to have been generated through almost random borrowings and contortions of canonical traditions, and consequently to have neither any representative significance nor any literary merit. These scholars therefore give little or no consideration to the question of why someone might *add* these particular stories to *Mark's* gospel; instead, various conjectures about preoccupations with personalities and details in the four gospels are proposed in order to account for the specific revisions that this author might have made to the canonical materials. Even when the passages are considered as part of a story, the imagined context is not the longer gospel itself but the intertextual backdrop of the canonical texts from which LGM 1 and 2 are thought to have been fashioned. Raymond Brown, for instance, explained “and after six days” as a reworking of John’s setting of the meal Jesus shared with Lazarus “Six days before the Passover” (12:1). With John’s context in mind, Brown concluded, “Clearly this is a secondary feature serving the purpose of having the baptismal or baptismal-like initiation take place on the paschal eve.” This view shows no awareness of the fact that LGM 1 and 2 are contextualized in Mark, not John.¹²⁷ Such an intertextual or “othertextual” frame of reference precludes any consideration of LGM 1 and 2 as redactional products with an affinity to synoptic composition and helps account for why these scholars tend to perceive the nearest analogies to be the *Diatessaron* and Papyrus Egerton 2 rather than canonical additions, like Mark 16:9–20 and John 21.¹²⁸

Koester’s attempt to define a specific *Sitz im Leben* for the longer gospel within the history of the development of the canonical gospel has generated much discussion of pos-

127. “Relation,” 482. In context, this indication of time merely adds another week to the story; it is situated before the procession to Jerusalem, and does not affect or somehow overlap with any of the references in later chapters to the proximity of events to the passover (e.g. 14:1, 12, 16, 17).

128. E.g. Brown, “Relation,” 477; van der Horst, “Het ‘Geheime Markusevangelie,’” 46–47; Beskow, *Strange Tales*, 99; Neiryck, “Apocryphal Gospels,” 762; idem, “Minor Agreements,” 73; Merkel, “Auf den Spuren des Urmarkus?” 137–39; idem, “Appendix,” 107. Note Merkel’s inscrutable reaction to Smith’s statement that this gospel “was unquestionably a variant form of Mark” (“Appendix,” 109, n. 12).

sible stages of redaction, but, again, not much focus on what the stories contribute to the Markan gospel as a whole. Koester himself thought that the “secret” gospel redaction involved the imposition of later theological views upon Mark’s text, and felt compelled to interpret the initiation story in terms of the meanings that its various phrases have in other works. Crossan’s alternative theory of abbreviation by dismemberment did not originally involve a complete narrative at all. Consequently Crossan was concerned only with what was done *to* the longer text passages, as was Munro, who treated them as distorted historical information. Nevertheless, in the critiques of Koester’s theory offered by Peabody and Sellev, steps were taken toward appreciating the congruency of these stories with Markan redactional interests and not just style.

To date, only Kermode, Schenke and Meyer have contributed substantial insights into how LGM 1 and 2 function within the larger narrative, and their efforts are very preliminary. Each viewed two or all three of the *νεανίσκος* passages in longer Mark as developments in a subplot involving the young man, but these studies do not show an appreciation of the Markan narrative techniques used in LGM 1 and 2 and how these passages affect a reader’s conception of the gospel as a whole.

III. Expansion or Abbreviation?

The longer gospel might have slipped silently into the nether world of the apocrypha were it not for the fact that two eminent scholars made thought-provoking arguments for the priority of this gospel to the canonical one. Thanks to Koester and Crossan, the longer gospel is still something of interest to New Testament scholars. But precisely because the theory of abbreviation was accepted in many of the studies of “secret” Mark that appeared in the decade following the publication of Koester’s essay (i.e. 1983–93), the validity of this theory requires further consideration.

When one attempts to imagine the implications of “secret” Markan priority, some important problems present themselves. Schenke noticed one, which is tacitly ack-

nowledged in this historical inference:

Our Second Gospel has shown up as a purified abbreviation of the Secret Gospel of Mark, which is attested to have been available and in use (only) in the church of Alexandria. This fact can, or even must, be understood as an indication that the church of Alexandria may have played a or the decisive role both in the final shaping of Mark and in its consideration for the growing (four-) gospel canon of the whole church. We may indeed be indebted to the church of Alexandria that Mark did not experience the fate of the "sayings Gospel"....¹²⁹

What Schenke noticed is that, according to Koester's theory, the hypothesized abridged text of "secret" Mark, or of a work presumed to be a middle second-century Alexandrian expanded version of a Proto-Mark, becomes the sole basis for the manuscript tradition of the canonical version. This is not a very probable scenario. The fact that the hypothesized original, unedited secret gospel itself made little if any impact on the manuscript tradition shows how unlikely it is that a recension of the same text could influence all subsequent manuscripts of Mark by establishing the archetype. Moreover, this theory cannot explain how the tradition associating the canonical gospel with Rome came about or, more importantly, how this tradition came to be accepted by Clement, not long after the archetype for this very gospel is supposed to have formed in Alexandria through the activities of his church. Why would the Alexandrian community only associate itself with the esoteric, uncensored version if it had had such a vital, creative, and controlling hand in the formation of the canonical gospel as well? This point only becomes more forceful if the longer gospel is thought to be a text that the orthodox Alexandrian church tried to discredit and suppress.

Another difficulty for this theory is posed by the difference in the lengths of the two versions of Mark. Abbreviation is easier to imagine if only a few offending passages are involved. Thus proponents of longer Markan priority are inclined to believe that the letter contains "nothing whatsoever" that might imply that longer Mark dif-

¹²⁹. "Mystery," 74.

ferred from canonical Mark in respects other than the quoted passages.¹³⁰ But there is no reason to think that Clement cited all the distinctive passages in the longer text, and much reason to believe that he did not.

To begin with, the passages Clement cited are the ones which Theodore specifically inquired about: “To you, therefore, I shall not hesitate to answer *the questions you have asked*, refuting the falsifications by the very words of the Gospel” (II.19–20). Clement reported the resurrection and initiation story to prove that the true version did not include “‘naked man with naked man,’ and the other things about which you wrote” (III.13–14). Similarly he related the bit about Jesus’ refusal to meet the women in Jericho in order to show Theodore that it did not include “the many other things about which you wrote” (III.17). Thus there is no reason to suppose that these quotations disclose all the differences between the two gospels.¹³¹

There are also positive indications that the longer gospel was quite a bit longer. According to the letter, Mark used *two* written sources: his own and Peter’s notes. From both sources (ἐξ ὧν—a plural) he transferred to the original *πράξεις* of the canonical gospel *καὶ ἄλλας* along with certain *λογία* whose interpretation could lead the hearer into the innermost sanctuary of the truth (I.20, 25–26). Since both terms are plural and denote, in Clement’s view, different kinds of materials, they most naturally suggest that the longer text had at least four more passages. But even four would not account for why the Alexandrian version is described as a mystical or more spiritual gospel in comparison with the one Theodore knew, particularly if the “other” *πράξεις*

130. Meyer, “Youth,” 138; idem, “Beloved Disciple,” 96. Sellew makes a few remarks on this tendency in “History,” 253 and n. 39. More recently the assertion has modulated into a confession of agnosticism about whether there were other differences between the two versions. See, e.g., Koester and Patterson, “The Secret Gospel of Mark,” 404–405. Though not belonging to the school of longer Markan priority, cf. Sherman E. Johnson, *LM*, 27; and the unnecessary reservations expressed by Bauckham in “Salome,” 268–69.

131. Cf. Bauckham, “Salome,” 268.

were similar to those found in the shorter gospel.¹³² The similar contrast Clement made between the “bodily” accounts of the synoptics and John’s “spiritual gospel” suggests that Mark’s “more spiritual gospel” was different in degree from the canonical gospel, and in a way that made it similar to John.¹³³ The addition of LGM 1 and 2 plus a few other passages would not appreciably affect the nature of Mark’s gospel, making the shorter version seem “bodily” by comparison. Nor would a few more passages make the text particularly useful for the instruction of gnostics (I.20–22). The longer gospel must have contained a great deal of “spiritual” material suited to gnostic instruction, and the fate of these other materials is not readily imagined on the basis of Koester’s theory of excision or, especially, Crossan’s theory of dismantling and redistributing.

Clement’s descriptions of the materials that Mark was thought to have added to the original gospel do not suggest any possible motive for their removal. Though much of the λόγια would have been πνευματικώτερον in nature, “more spiritual” is not synonymous with “more in need of suppression”: Clement considered John to be a spiritual gospel. For Clement, “spiritual” meant more overtly symbolic or less overtly concerned with the “bodily” facts than with their inner significance. The “other” stories for which Mark was credited (καὶ ἄλλας) seem to be passages of a similar, non-mystical nature (cf. LGM 2). What happened to those other *ordinary* stories? What reasons could there be for *their* elimination?

The still unknown passages of the longer gospel were probably considerable and variegated, and the explanations Koester and Crossan have given for the removal of LGM 1 and 2 cannot be extended to explain their removal. Indeed, these specific

132. Smith, *CA*, 39: “Others of the same kind.” It is the λόγια that are distinguished as special. Cf. Smith’s opinion (p. 92) that the (orthodox, Alexandrian) longer text “differed considerably from the short one.” See also R. E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah*, 1:296, n. 2.

133. Clement’s opinion is cited in Eusebius, *Church History* VI.14.7.

explanations would not adequately account for the removal of LGM 1 and 2. Koester's supposition that these fifteen sentences were removed because they were not appropriate for a public version conflicts with the general point Clement was making that Mark was careful only to include materials suitable for public consumption (I.22–27).¹³⁴ Crossan's theory that the persons who gave the text "an erotic interpretation" were in Mark's own community fails to explain why the baptism story needed to be written down before the supposed erotic interpretation became an issue.¹³⁵ He offers no textual evidence for a Markan polemic against libertinism that could support his contention about the predicament that led to the production of the canonical gospel. One might expect that a redactor who took the unusual measure of dismantling a story that had come to be interpreted erotically would also have taken the positive step of including materials explicitly denouncing sexual immorality and lawlessness. As the gospel stands, there is no evidence that Mark was concerned with a libertine problem.¹³⁶

The problem that the longer gospel must have been considerably longer than the one Theodore knew raises a special problem for Crossan's theory, which presupposes a "secret" gospel that is actually shorter than the canonical one.¹³⁷ Crossan seems to

134. Koester questioned this explanation himself when reviewing Smith's book, pointing out that "the words of institution" of the eucharist appear in canonical Mark; Review, 620.

135. *Historical Jesus*, 329, 414.

136. Even Smith, who saw evidence for libertinism everywhere in the New Testament, could point only to Mark 9:42 as a passage "in which polemic against libertinism is fairly clear" (CA, 258): "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung round his neck and he were thrown into the sea." Mark displays no special interest in sin or with the legal issues arising in the controversy stories, where the matter of the validity of the law is subordinated to the christological emphasis on Jesus' authority (contrast Matthew's reworking of Mark here, as discussed by Held in G. Bornkamm et al., *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, 62–75).

137. It is described in *Four Other Gospels*, 119–20; "Thoughts," 166. Even though Crossan now seems to assume that "secret" Mark was the first full-length version of Mark, his suppositions still presuppose a gospel shorter than the canonical version. True, it would have the fifteen verses of LGM 1 and 2; but it would be deprived of that many verses by not having Mark 15:40–47 and 16:1–8. Canonical Mark, on the other hand, would by Crossan's reckoning be longer than "secret" Mark insofar as it would include the supposedly dismantled remnants of "secret" Mark not accounted for by 15:40–16:8; a number of these would have been redistributed more than once (because they occur more than once, as Crossan acknowledged) and would have required additional connective material.

believe that Clement's statements about the history of transmission are irrelevant and possibly misleading: "Whether Clement actually knew that *Public/canonical* Mark came second rather than first may be left politely moot."¹³⁸ But regardless of how reliable Clement's statements actually are, they must necessarily account for the differences between these gospels. They therefore illuminate the nature of these differences and are relevant to any source-critical theory. So even if the details Clement supplied about the longer gospel's composition were nothing more than inferences based on his own knowledge of the differences between the two versions, the explanation he gives for these differences implies that the longer gospel text he knew differed by possessing *more* material (both spiritual and ordinary) and *only* in that respect.¹³⁹ Clement's statements that the more spiritual gospel contained the same stories plus additional materials leave no room for the conclusion that "secret" Mark was a shorter gospel. This discrepancy between the letter and Crossan's theory would appear to disprove Crossan's premise of dismantling and redistribution all on its own.¹⁴⁰

III.1. *Evidence of Expansion*

There are, then, significant general problems with the basic idea that the "secret" gospel was composed earlier than the canonical gospel. But is there any evidence that the longer gospel is an expansion of the canonical gospel? I believe that at least two considerations point in this direction. The theories of Crossan and Koester have brought into focus the fact that the *νεανίσκος* in 14:51–52 appears to be a curious, secondary insertion into the story of the arrest in Gethsemane and flight of the dis-

138. *Four Other Gospels*, 108.

139. Cf. Smith, *CA*, 91.

140. Another formidable problem for Crossan is the fact that he must explain Mark 10:1 as a rewriting of the dismantled verse LGM 1:13. LGM 1:13, which says that Jesus "returned" to the other side of the Jordan, is necessarily dependent upon Mark 10:1, which is the verse that puts Jesus on the other side of the Jordan in the first place. Without 10:1, a return (to Judea) would make no sense.

ciples. Matthew and Luke do not have this detail, and the flow of the narrative is improved if these sentences are removed. It is quite conceivable that the detail is in some sense secondary to its context. But there is reason to question the notion that it was inserted into the Markan text at the same time as the story of the resurrection of the young man in LGM 1. As Sellew noted, the words *νεανίσκος τις* (a certain young man) in 14:51 introduce the young man as if he had not appeared previously in the story.¹⁴¹ Since that is the case in the canonical gospel, these words are appropriate. But in longer Mark this young man did appear earlier in the story. Though anonymous, he is a true character: he has a mother and sister, wealth and mortality, and a house in Bethany. He is not some unknown young man but “the young man whom Jesus loved” and raised from the dead. A similar difficulty pertains to Mark 16:5, where the women see “a” young man, not “that” or “the” young man. Again, the presumption that he is not already known to them makes sense in the canonical gospel, where the two brief but similar references to a *νεανίσκος* appearing suddenly in clothes that seem incongruous with the situation do not so much establish a single, recognizable character as two thought-provoking figures who have an intangible symbolic connection. It is possible to view them as one person, but not necessary, and scholars continue to disagree over this matter.¹⁴² Thus, it is in the longer gospel that the words “a certain young man” and “a young man” become peculiar. It would appear more likely, then, that two enigmatic figures have been imperfectly elaborated into a character than that a previously-mentioned character was originally described in

141. Sellew, “History,” 251–52 (cf. Gundry, “Excursus,” 620). Sellew points out that “Mark and the other Gospel writers consistently employ the normal Greek narrative practice of using either this construction with *τις* or, more commonly, an anarthrous noun or proper name, when introducing a *previously unmentioned character*.”

142. Those who assume that the young man in the tomb is an angel and therefore not human assume that the young man in Gethsemane is someone different. Those who assume that the man in Gethsemane is Mark likewise usually view the one in the tomb as an angel or some other individual, for the historical Mark would not at that point know the theological truths about Jesus.

he had not already appeared in the story.

This objection applies specifically to Koester's theory. Crossan believes that 14:51–52 was constructed out of LGM 1 and therefore that both stories did not appear in the same text. Yet Crossan's explanation strangely implies that this semi-naked young man who follows Jesus then flees completely nude was written into the garden scene as a means of *discouraging* libertinism. Crossan, Koester, Schenke, and Sellev all have difficulty explaining why these two verses appear at all in the canonical gospel, if the point of the censorship of LGM 1 and 2 was to obliterate an embarrassing story, especially considering that, apart from the Carpocratian longer gospel, it is only here that this character ever becomes completely nude.¹⁴³

The fact that the phrase “a certain young man” in Mark 14:51–52 is best suited to introduce a previously-unmentioned character may be taken as positive evidence that LGM 1 and 2 were added after Mark 14:51–52. But a more important and fundamental reason can be adduced concerning the structure of the Markan text when the extant “secret” gospel verses are set in place. They disrupt the last sequence in an elaborate threefold cycle. As redaction critics have long noticed, Mark's two stories of the healing of blind men enclose a central, journey section of the narrative that includes a thrice-repeated development whereby Jesus foretells his coming passion (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34), the disciples demonstrate their misunderstanding (8:32; 9:32–34; 10:35–41), and Jesus responds with a teaching on discipleship (8:34–9:1; 9:35–37; 10:42–45).¹⁴⁴ This structure is actually quite elaborate. The passion predictions are localized with reference to where Jesus was passing through or heading (8:27; 9:30; 10:32) and

143. Cf. Gundry, “Excursus,” 612. Note Schenke's response (“Mystery,” 77) to this “necessary and difficult question”: “Presumably, he [the expurgator] no longer saw the connection between the two passages—the eyes of the readers may have changed—and then he understood the content of 14:51f. as stating a simple fact of the passion narrative, a narrative that now aroused such great interest that he did not want to omit any available information.”

144. See chapter 6 n. 21.

are said to have taken place “on the way” (8:27; 9:33, 34; 10:32); the responses by which the disciples evidence their misunderstanding attest to a more basic problem stemming from preoccupation with their own status;¹⁴⁵ the discipleship teachings each begin with references to Jesus summoning his disciples (8:34; 9:35; 10:32) and focus on the need for self-denial (e.g. ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτόν in 8:34) and servitude; and the teachings themselves highlight paradoxical sayings (paradox is strongest in 8:35; 9:35; and 10:43–44).¹⁴⁶ As Fowler notes, the paradoxical sayings are followed by further elucidation in 8:36–9:1; 9:36–37; and 10:45.¹⁴⁷ There is also a logical progression to this structure: Jesus’ predictions of his suffering and death cause the disciples to think about their status in relation to the messiah, and therefore to exhibit a preoccupation with themselves; so Jesus responds by attempting to inculcate an attitude of selflessness, asserting that those who wish to be great must make themselves last.

What is essential to note about this tight, logical, and highly-structured pattern is that the inclusion of LGM 1 in the narrative disrupts the logic and the parallelism. Because LGM 1 occurs after 10:34, the episode depicting discipleship misunderstanding and the discipleship teaching (10:35–45) is separated from the passion prediction by thirteen verses. The *message* conveyed by these passages is not appreciably diminished, for all the elements remain and, as I will show later on, LGM 1 and 2 amplify the same discipleship theme. But the parallelism is weakened, and the connection or logical progression between prediction and misunderstanding does not appear.¹⁴⁸ It is simpler to suppose that a later addition disrupted a well-designed structure than to suppose that the stronger, tighter parallelism which 10:32–45 shares with

145. This interpretation will be developed in chapter 6.

146. Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 237.

147. *Reader*, 187–91.

148. The disciples’ rebuke of the bereaved sister in LGM 1:3 substitutes for the expected misunderstanding, but does not as adequately suggest a preoccupation with status as does 10:35–41, and is still separated by ten sentences from the teaching on self-denial.

8:31–9:1 and 9:31–37 in the shorter version emerged fortuitously from the removal of LGM 1. Overall, then, the theory of secondary expansion is a simpler, better supported, and less problematic possibility than is the theory of abbreviation.

**THE QUESTION OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF CLEMENT'S
*LETTER TO THEODORE***

Though most scholars have accepted Smith's discovery of Clement's *Letter to Theodore* as a legitimate witness to an authentic, longer version of Mark, a significant minority of scholars (at least fifteen) have voiced their dissent.¹ The question of authenticity is unavoidable in a dissertation on the subject: if longer Mark is a modern forgery, as has sometimes been claimed, then any conclusions based on the assumption of an ancient origin will be far afield of its real significance.²

1. Of these fifteen scholars, ten definitely reject the Clementine authorship of the *Letter to Theodore*: J. Munck, W. Völker, A. D. Nock, H. von Campenhausen (a position cited by Kümmel), W. Kümmel, H. Musurillo, C. E. Murgia, E. Osborn, J. Neusner, and A. H. Criddle. Four other scholars—Q. Quesnell, M. H. Shepherd, S. B. Marrow, and P. Beskow—have addressed the question with skepticism but did not draw definite conclusions (at least in print; Quesnell informs me that he does consider it inauthentic). J. M. Dillon may be said to have addressed the issue with *extreme* skepticism. One might add H. Chadwick, on the basis of Fuller's information that the former verbally indicated to him "that he was not persuaded of its Clementine authorship" (see *LM*, 4 n. 13); I have not found any comment by Chadwick himself in print, though. Nock is included even though he could not formulate his basis for rejecting the authenticity more concretely than "intuition" (*SG*, 29; *CA*, 67). A number of these scholars are specifically concerned with the possibility of a modern forgery: Musurillo, Quesnell, Murgia, Marrow, Neusner, and Criddle. My survey only includes scholars who have elaborated arguments against authenticity in print or in correspondences to Smith that are excerpted in *CA*; scholars who have merely repeated the reasons of others by way of casting doubt on the Mar Saba Clementine Fragment are not counted here (e.g. Wenham, Marchadour, Charlesworth, and Grelot). Many scholars take an agnostic stance on the question of authenticity and consequently say little about the matter. To my knowledge, over the last two decades only two scholars have elaborated arguments against authenticity in the secondary literature (Osborn and Criddle; Neusner makes accusations but not arguments, and he relies entirely on Quesnell). The number of scholars who have contested the authenticity of this letter is growing disproportionately slowly compared to the number of scholars who have come to accept the document as authentic or at least possibly authentic.

2. If, as I believe, the Markan-style pericope cited in the *Letter to Theodore* was intended to affect a reader's interpretation of the Markan gospel as a whole, a literary study should nevertheless help illuminate LGM 1 and 2 and the mind of their author, even if the letter proves to be a modern hoax.

Suspicion of forgery has arisen on two fronts. Some scholars have suggested that Smith's document is indeed an 18th-century copy of an earlier manuscript, but that the original letter is an ancient forgery. The alternative is that this handwritten copy is itself a forgery. The conceivable motives behind both scenarios are different. The most plausible reason for an ancient forgery, as H. Koester notes, would be to use Clement's authority to legitimize an actual, longer version of Mark's gospel.³ In other words, the Markan quotations with which we are concerned would remain "authentic" insofar as attesting to an actual version of Mark. The possibility that would throw my study of the significance of the Markan material into doubt, therefore, is that of a modern forgery. Nevertheless, both scenarios must be thoroughly explored, for three reasons. First, some of the arguments that have been offered as evidence of an ancient forgery could also be used in an argument in favour of a modern forgery. Second, the assumption that Clement did write this letter will factor into my occasional reflections on the purpose behind the longer gospel's creation. Finally, a close study of the relationship between this letter and Clement's uncontested works will help bridge the gap between New Testament and Patristic scholarship on this document.

It should be noted at the outset that the letter presents itself as a letter by Clement of Alexandria. The only explicit reference to Clement appears in the superscription, "From the letters of the most holy Clement, the author of the *Stromateis*." These words imply that the letter was already part of a collection of letters of Clement when that attribution was added.⁴ Thus we must also contend with the possibility of accidental misattribution. Nevertheless, ever since Morton Smith published his comprehensive comparison of the language of the letter with that of the undisputed writings of Cle-

3. A private correspondence from Koester quoted by Smith in "Score," 459; Koester makes this point again in "Text of the Synoptic Gospels," 34 n. 49.

4. No letter of Clement survives, though John of Damascus knew of such a collection (containing at least twenty-one letters), and excerpted from it in his *Sacra Parallela*. He worked in Mar Saba from 716 to 749. See *CA*, 285.

ment, his conclusion about this attribution has been generally, if not universally, accepted: “the...similarities between the letter and the works of Clement virtually prove that the letter is either genuine or a deliberate and careful imitation.”⁵ Criddle’s statistical analysis confirms the affinity between this letter and Clement’s vocabulary.⁶ Most scholars agree that the letter sounds like Clement, and the authenticity issue has never been characterized as one of misattribution. Those who doubt Clement wrote the letter view it as a deliberate forgery, an attempt to seem like Clement.⁷ The arguments which portray it as an ancient forgery will be examined first.

I. The Possibility of an Ancient Forgery

I.1. *Mark and Alexandria*

I will begin with a common argument directed against the letter. Johannes Munck rejected Clementine authorship in part on the basis of his belief that the letter’s reference to Mark’s coming to Alexandria demonstrates dependence on the fourth-century author Eusebius, from whom this tradition is otherwise first known.⁸ This mat-

5. *CA*, 76. His evidence is set out in the first eighty-five pages of this book. For biographical details of this research, see Smith, *SG*, 26–27, where he notes that his study took him two years to complete.

6. Criddle, “On the Mar Saba Letter.” He believes that a forger took care to make the letter sound more like Clement than like other church Fathers, though this conclusion goes beyond the evidence, which is that the letter has an unexpected ratio of words previously not found in the Clement corpus to words previously used only once.

7. In the following discussion I will at times make use of the literary-critical distinction between the *actual author* of a work and its *implied author* in order to avoid seeming to presuppose that the author is Clement. The implied author of a work is a construct projected in a work of the sort of person who would create this writing. It is the sum total of the various impressions a reader would get of this person. Literary critics tend to view this projection as a deliberate fictional construct. In fiction, the implied author is sometimes deliberately different from the real person who wrote the work, with the consequence that the value structure of the work cannot automatically be taken to be the same as that of the actual author. In non-fiction (e.g. letter writing, scholarship), the implied author is often an ideal self which the actual author would like others to mistake for the real author. So whether the letter is by Clement or just an attempt to seem to be by him, its implied author is meant to be—or seem to be—the person who wrote Clement’s other works. This means that if it is a forgery it is meant to be read with a knowledge of some of Clement’s works. The extent to which it succeeds in seeming like the person who wrote Clement’s undisputed works will, of course, have implications for whether we view its actual author as Clement.

8. Cited in *CA*, 27, 33.

ter was noted as a point of suspicion by Yamauchi and Beskow, and more recently has been restated by Eric Osborn and again by A. J. Criddle (citing Osborn approvingly on this point).⁹ What Osborn states (and Criddle reiterates) is that the tradition connecting Mark with Alexandria is “unknown” before Eusebius, as if Eusebius made it up himself. But as F. F. Bruce had pointed out, Eusebius quotes this information as a tradition, introduced with the word *φασίν*, “they say.”¹⁰ Bruce notes further that this letter’s version of the tradition about Mark coming to Alexandria contrasts with the one given by Eusebius by not making Mark Alexandria’s first bishop;¹¹ “it implies that the church there was already in existence when Mark arrived from Rome after Peter’s death.”¹² Yet the letter’s more modest picture of Mark’s role in Alexandria could itself have been developed in this way. It should also be noted that Eusebius’s attribution to “they” need not be taken as referring to anonymous tradition at all but “could refer to Clement of Alexandria and Papias, whose witness is discussed in the preceding paragraph.”¹³ What Eusebius says deserves to be quoted at length:

And it is said [*φασί*] that the apostle, when the fact [of Mark’s writing of the gospel] became known to him through the revelation of the Spirit, was pleased with the eagerness of the men [who persuaded Mark to do this] and approved the writing for use in the churches.

Clement relates the anecdote in the sixth book of the *Outlines*, and Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, also bears witness to it and to Peter mentioning Mark in his earlier letter. Indeed they say [*φασίν*] that he composed it at Rome itself, and that he indicates this when referring figuratively to the city as Babylon in the words: “The elect [church] that is in Babylon greets you and so does my son Mark” [1 Peter 5:13].

9. Yamauchi, *Review*, 240; Beskow, *Strange Tales*, 101; Osborn, “1958–1982,” 224; Criddle, “On the Mar Saba Letter,” 216.

10. *The “Secret” Gospel*, 13; cf. the comments by L. W. Barnard in “St. Mark and Alexandria,” 149.

11. *The “Secret” Gospel*, 15.

12. Pearson, “Earliest Christianity in Egypt,” 138.

13. Wenham, *Redating*, 284 n. 1. (He is not discussing the “secret” gospel here, evidence which he is leery to use.) It is surprising to see how pervasive is the assumption that in this context *φασί* refers to something like “a report given cautiously as hearsay” (K. S. Latourette, *Expansion of Christianity*, I.91; cited by G. M. Lee, “Eusebius on St. Mark,” 425) or “local tradition” (Griggs, *Early Egyptian Christianity*, 20). Lee (pp. 425–27) has shown that *φασί* does not necessarily, or even usually, connote hearsay or even verbal tradition but does often introduce information taken from books. Having argued this, it is surprising that Lee does not himself propose that Clement was one of Eusebius’s sources for this information.

They also say [φασίν] that this Mark set out for Egypt and was the first to proclaim the gospel which he had written, and the first to set up churches in Alexandria itself. (Church History II.15.2-16.1)¹⁴

We notice here that the first occurrence of φημί is specifically connected in the next sentence with Clement, as if his attestation to this tradition is strongest, with Papias having offered some statement in agreement; the second occurrence would quite naturally refer to both Clement and Papias specifically, whose witness to the previous tradition was just mentioned; the third occurrence is similar to the second and provides no good indication that only impersonal “hearsay” is now in view. Scholars, however, have traditionally tended to read at least the third occurrence of φασίν as an impersonal, presumably because the lateness of this first reference to a connection between Mark and Alexandria makes it seem unlikely that the tradition could be as early as Clement and, especially, Papias. But now that we have a text that purports to be from Clement and which does connect Mark with Alexandria, the preconception that Eusebius cannot have meant what he seems to have said cannot logically be factored into the interpretation of his remarks in order to use his words as evidence against the possibility of Clement’s knowledge of this tradition. The fact that this connection between Mark and Alexandria is otherwise first attested here, in the comments of a fourth-century historian, loses its force when we consider that, syntactically, Eusebius seems to be saying that Clement and Papias were his sources for this tradition in the first place. This passage, therefore, forms a peculiar basis for an objection that Clement could not have known this tradition before Eusebius did. The letter actually is in basic agreement with what Eusebius appears to say Clement wrote in his lost *Hypotyposes*. That Clement, an “orthodox” Alexandrian, strongly concerned with the apostolic heritage of the catholic church, would be Eusebius’s source of a tradition

14. The translation is from B. Orchard, “Mark and the Fusion of Traditions,” 793.

giving apostolic pedigree to the orthodox church in Alexandria makes a certain amount of sense.¹⁵

1.2. *The Letter and Clement's Undisputed Writings*

The preceding objection has been raised many times, but has never been considered an especially important challenge. The main arguments for an ancient forgery are based on discrepancies between Clement's thought as expressed in his undisputed writings and that expressed in the *Letter to Theodore*. Such discrepancies have been taken to imply an imperfect attempt to imitate Clement. The most strongly voiced objection of incongruity has been raised by Massey H. Shepherd and Eric Osborn. The letter refers to secret oral traditions (I.22–23), and Clement's perpetuation of such teachings without making them public through writing seems incomprehensible to Shepherd and Osborn. Both claim Clement would never have had anything to do with

15. Our letter is not necessarily the source of Eusebius's information. It does not support Eusebius's statement that Mark founded churches there, though, as Pearson notes ("Earliest Christianity in Egypt," 138), it does not explicitly rule that possibility out. If Eusebius really got that information from Clement, it must be from another writing. Pearson's survey of traditions about Mark, including the *Letter to Theodore*, led him to conclude that "the tradition of the association of St. Mark with earliest Christianity in Egypt is traceable to the second century and may originate even earlier" (p. 144). His essay is one of a number of recent studies that reconsider the influential opinion of Walter Bauer (*Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 53–58, 60) that "heretical" Christianity preceded "orthodox" Christianity in Alexandria (and other places). Others questioning this view include Barnard ("St. Mark and Alexandria"), Lee ("Eusebius on St. Mark"), Roberts (*Manuscript, Society and Belief*), Ritter ("De Polycarpe à Clément," 161), and Griggs (*Early Egyptian Christianity*). On this passage from Eusebius and its harmony with the *Letter to Theodore*, see Black, *Apostolic Interpreter*, 156–61 (159–60), 179 n. 61. R. M. Grant has no reservations about stating "Clement's letter itself proves that the legend about Mark's visit to Alexandria goes back to the second century" (Review, 62); neither does Sherman Johnson ("Mystery," 91). It is interesting to note that the two Clementine traditions quoted by Eusebius (*Church History* II.15; VI.14.5–7) are not completely in harmony with each other. One says that Peter was happy to hear of Mark's writing; the other says he was indifferent to it. Both concur with the *Letter to Theodore* that Mark wrote (his canonical gospel) before Peter's death and are thereby in disagreement with Irenaeus and the Muratori Canon.

a gospel not to be revealed to the public in general.¹⁶ What is more, R. P. C. Hanson stresses how distinctive this would make Clement, compared to other early church fathers, and notes that Irenaeus and Tertullian “disavow[ed] the possession of secret tradition by the Church.” Hanson himself is not perturbed by this revelation, though, for he deems that Smith has assembled “a wealth of evidence, that Clement should believe in the existence of such a gospel.”¹⁷

I.2.1. *Clarifying the Issue of Secrecy*

These conflicting assessments of Clement’s attitudes toward secret material do not adequately distinguish between two distinct issues. The letter speaks of Mark’s creation of “a more spiritual gospel” (than the first one) by incorporating more *πράξεις*, and certain *λόγια* “of which he knew the interpretation would, as a mystagogue, lead the hearers into the innermost sanctuary of the truth hidden by seven veils” (I.24–26). But he did not include “the things not to be uttered, nor did he write down the hierophantic teaching of the Lord” (*αὐτὰ τὰ ἀπόρρητα ἐξωρχήσατο, οὐδὲ κατέγραψε τὴν ἱεροφαντικὴν διδασκαλίαν τοῦ Κυρίου*)—that is, elements of a *secret*, orally trans-

16. Shepherd, *LM*, 62–63: “I am dubious also about Smith’s position that Clement would have had anything to do with a secret, not-to-be-revealed gospel in the church in Alexandria. This misses Clement’s whole idea about teaching. It is not in Clement’s makeup to hide any gospel tradition he happens to know about.” Likewise Osborn, “1958–1982,” 224–25, which Criddle repeats (“On the Mar Saba Letter,” 216), saying that “the ideas about secrecy and esoteric tradition implied by the letter are difficult or impossible to reconcile with those stated, or implied, in Clement’s undoubted works.” Like Osborn, Criddle is vague about what it is that is supposed to be unlike Clement. It should be noted that Shepherd’s objections were usually directed against what Smith makes of the letter; he did not draw implications concerning the letter’s authenticity, about which he kept an open mind.

17. Hanson, *Review*, 514–15. He somewhat exaggerates Clement’s distinctiveness. Origen (*Contra Celsum* I.7) defended the Christian practice of having esoteric as well as exoteric doctrines by appeal to the practice of the Pythagoreans.

mitted tradition of certain of Jesus' teaching.¹⁸ The two issues, then, are the possession of hierophantic and secret teachings originating with Jesus¹⁹—a secret oral tradition—and a more spiritual gospel which *explicitly contains none of that secret material*.²⁰

18. A comparison between ἄρρητος (I.2) and ἀπόρρητος (I.22) in mystery religion terminology is helpful. Caragounis (*Ephesian Mysterion*, 11) has pointed out that ἄρρητος “denotes that which cannot be uttered or described, ineffable, or, that which it is not proper to divulge because of its sacred or divine nature.” What Clement is referring to at the opening of this letter is the essential or deep teachings of the Carpocratians. Cf. *Quis dives salvetur?* 23.3: “For I will lead you up to a rest and to an enjoyment of unspeakable and indescribable good things ‘which eye has not seen...’” (see also *Quis dives salvetur?* 37.2; *Stromateis* II.2.5.4; 6.26.2). Smith’s translation “the unspeakable teachings of the Carpocratians” (cf. Bruce, *The ‘Secret’ Gospel*, 6: “unmentionable doctrines”) might be thought to convey the connotation of moral censure rather than of profundity or sacredness. Ἀπόρρητος, as in I.22, is the word for “something whose utterance is prohibited, hence, something to be kept secret.” It carries the connotation of forbidden, but, with ἄρρητος, shares the senses of esoteric, mysterious, ineffable, mystically revealed. In Clement’s writings it is often adequately translated by “secret” (esp. in *Stromateis* IV.8.56.1 and V.1.10.1). In addition to *Stromateis* I.1.13.2, 14.2, note I.2.21.2 and V.9.58.1, which use it in reference, respectively, to the secret philosophical teachings of Clement’s Christianity and of the Epicureans; in *Paedagogus* II.6.51.1 the word is used in an injunction to abstain from beholding another’s forbidden parts. In other passages it is not so clear whether “secret” or “ineffable” is the better translation (e.g. *Stromateis* V.1.7.8; 6.40.1; *Paedagogus* I.6.33.3), but the context of the letter best fits a reference to philosophical teaching which initiates are forbidden to discuss with the uninitiated.

19. The former teachings have to do with interpretation, probably exegesis, since hierophantic has to do with exposition or revelation.

20. A generally overlooked point, but noticed by Smith (*CA*, 30, 31; *SG*, 40–41; “Rare Sense,” 261); Richardson (see *SG*, 65); Marvin Meyer (“Youth,” 133); and Christoph Riedweg (*Mysterienterminologie*, 139–40 n. 43). Some scholars, including Völker, Merkel, and Hanhart, have had difficulty appreciating this point. Hanhart (*The Open Tomb*), for example, interprets the letter as referring to three stages. For he distinguishes between the creation of a more spiritual gospel and the creation of a secret gospel. As best I can understand him, the former would include τὰς μυστικάς (see p. 100) and the passages quoted (and others); the latter included the hierophantic teachings in the form of “‘other’ (stories) and ‘certain sayings’ (*logia tina*) concerning things ‘not to be uttered’ (*aporrē*) [*sic*], leading the hearers into the innermost ‘sanctuary’ (*to aduton*)” (p. 97), that is, esoteric teaching material related to the second stage material. (Our Mark is supposed to be a product of the third stage, “except for the material preserved separately in Alexandria” [*italics removed*]). He does not comment on how this third-stage product, stripped of its special Alexandrian material [whatever that is] differed from the first stage product.) Though he correctly realizes that “did not yet divulge the things not to be uttered” (I.22–23) might imply that eventually they were put in writing, he confuses the “certain sayings” with the ἀπόρρητα. Had he investigated Clement’s use of ἀπόρρητα (e.g. *Stromateis* I.1.13.1; I.1.14.2; see n. 18) he would have seen that these refer to theological secrets of the gnostic tradition, not to additional traditions in Mark’s notes, which only *point* an insightful reader *towards these secrets*. The point the author is making is that it was the interpretation, not the λόγοι themselves, that concerned the gnostic tradition, and *therefore* (οὕτως οὖν) Mark was not incautious, for he did not write down the things not to be uttered. The “but” (ἀλλά) in I.24 has the sense of “but rather,” not of “but later.” Hanhart derived this three-part interpretation from C. F. D. Moule’s half-hearted suggestion, without remarking upon the problems that Moule and Smith noted against it (neither accepted it); see *CA*, 35. Hanhart (p. 637 n. 21) cites Elaine Pagels, not Smith, as proposing the normative position. I am unable to locate her “Introduction to ‘Secret Mark’” from which Hanhart quotes (he says it is in her *The Gnostic Gospels: A New Account of the Origins of Christianity* [New York: Random House, 1979]; I do not find the “secret” gospel discussed in this book, and I would be surprised if she considered it a gnostic gospel).

The latter is also called τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον (II.6, 12). In English this is usually and misleadingly translated “the secret Gospel,” but *μυστικός* had a *different*, richer sense in Clement, especially when used in connection with scripture (or symbolism generally).²¹ It will be the purpose of the third chapter of this dissertation to demonstrate that this designation for the longer gospel refers to its preeminently symbolical quality, in comparison with the shorter version. For now it must suffice to say that the so-called “secret” gospel of Mark is not described as—nor do the quoted passages reveal it to be—an inherently (generically) secret work, in the sense of one *meant* to be hidden from the public generally, or even as appealing to that convention, like an apocryphon. Nor can we rightly conclude that it was treated as a book of secret material by the Alexandrian community. Clement’s description reveals it to be a gospel that was thought effectively to reveal the deeper Christian truths, and these are things Clement regularly chose to discuss only before those worthy of receiving this knowledge. That group would not have included catechumens, who were essentially undergoing a probationary period in order to demonstrate their sincerity and character.²² But baptized Christians would presumably be permitted to hear this version of Mark, *provided*, that is, that their efforts toward gnosis had brought them as far as the study of “the great mysteries” (II.2).²³ At any given time these may well have been a

21. The implied author views the longer text as scripture: I.11–12, II.8.

22. See *Stromateis* V.10.66.1–5 and VII.10.55.6–56.1. The latter reads, “But knowledge [ἡ γνώσις δὲ ἐκ παραδόσεως (= the ‘orthodox’ gnostic tradition)]...is entrusted to those who show themselves worthy of it; and from it the worth of love beams forth from light to light. For it is said, ‘To him that hath shall be given’: to faith, knowledge; and to knowledge love; and to love the inheritance. ...Whence at last (on account of the necessity for very great preparation and previous training in order both to hear what is said, and for the composure of life, and for advancing intelligently to a point beyond the righteousness of the law) it is that knowledge is committed to those fit and selected for it.”

23. The great mysteries are discussed in *Stromateis* IV.1.3.1 and V.11.71.1, and a similar distinction, though without the word “great,” is made in I.1.15.3. In these places their contents are described as theological, *not cultic*. They certainly do not refer to baptism or to any ceremonies related to the Pascha. In fact, baptism is distinguished from the small and great mysteries in V.11.70.9–71.1. Chapter 4 will demonstrate that when Clement applied the word *μυστήριον* to orthodox Christianity he did so in reference to esoteric knowledge.

minority of the congregation,²⁴ but we are still a far way off from an elitist, secret society. Contrary to a commonly held opinion, the letter does not claim that the existence of the gospel was kept a secret to those *within* the church.²⁵ We may gather, though, that at least at some point before the implied author is writing, the fact of the *existence* of this not inherently secret gospel became a matter that was not normally discussed *outside* of the church; no reason for this is given, but a few can be inferred.²⁶

The aspects of secrecy pertaining to the *Letter to Theodore*, then, are these: a secret, oral tradition not preserved in writing but known to Clement, and a “mystical” gospel which was not said to be secret by nature, though may have ended up this way by circumstance. We need now to decide whether preservation of a secret, not-to-be-published oral tradition is compatible with what we otherwise know of Clement, and whether is it possible that he might have believed in the authenticity of a more spiritual version of Mark yet also attempted to keep knowledge of this gospel within the church.

I.2.2. *Clement's Thoughts on Writing and the Unwritten Gnostic Tradition*

Though throughout this century a number of Clement experts have seemed inclined to do so, few would finally deny that Clement confirms the existence of a secret, unwritten tradition in the church, which was deemed most important for gnostic instruction. This unwritten tradition is referred to in *Stromateis* V.10.62.2–4, VI.7.61.1–3, and VI.15.131.2–5 as having been passed on through a chain of oral transmission of secret teachings (intended only for a few), delivered from Christ to the

24. H. G. Marsh (“Μυστήριον,” 69–70) comments, “Clement’s *μυστήρια* were not for all Christians; τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια would be experienced only by a few.”

25. There are reasons to suspect that it was, but the letter does not *directly* indicate this. The letter tells us only that the physical text was safely kept within the Alexandrian church and that its *hearing* was restricted to gnostics. My discussion of the issue of secrecy pertaining to this text is made in chapter 3.

26. E.g. the stigma of its prominence in Carpocratian thought would make its use somewhat embarrassing, especially since this scandalous sect is said in the letter to have emerged as a consequence of an elder of the orthodox Alexandrian church procuring a copy for Carpocrates.

apostles and the apostles to the fathers of the church; Raoul Mortley connects this tradition with the “significance” of the scriptures:

Chez Clément le terme *γνώσις* inclut l'idée de la tradition doctrinale secrète, la *παράδοσις*: dans *Strom.* I.1.11.3 nous lisons une liste des détenteurs de cette tradition, qui étaient responsables de sa transmission à partir du Christ lui-même. Le contenu de la tradition constitue la gnose. Il est clair que Clément a emprunté son concept de la gnose, dans cet aspect au moins à l'épître de Barnabé, qu'il considérait comme une épître authentique du Nouveau Testament : un passage du cinquième *Stromate* désigne l'épître de Barnabé comme la source la plus claire de la tradition gnostique (*γνωστικῆς παραδόσεως*). Dans la perspective de cet écrit, la gnose est interprétée comme la compréhension des vérités cachées: la recherche de ces vérités se poursuit dans l'interprétation christologique de l'Écriture, c'est-à-dire de l'Ancien Testament. La vraie signification de l'Écriture est la gnose; en effet le terme *γνώσις* est un synonyme du terme “signification.”²⁷

That a secret gnostic tradition is said by Clement to exist is not what is at issue.²⁸ Shepherd's demur in the Colloquy recorded in the book *Longer Mark* is basically directed against the idea that Clement knew of any authentic teachings which he was unwilling to proclaim or publicize—that is, that Clement would perpetuate the inherited “secret oral teaching” as secret oral teaching.²⁹ Shepherd apparently believes, as have, for example, W. Völker, J. Munck, and E. Osborn, that though Clement indicated that he had learned the gnostic tradition from oral, apostolic succession he took it upon himself to change this process by *publicizing* it in writing.³⁰ What Clement has to say in

27. Mortley, *Connaissance*, 56. See also Lilla, *Christian Platonism*, 56–57, 137–42, 154–55, 159; Stealy, *Gnosis*, 127–28. The relationship between the gnostic tradition and scriptural exposition is discussed in *Stromateis* V.10. In 10.64.1–65.4 the gnostic tradition was described as “treasures, concealed, dark, unseen,” and Clement dissociated it from the clear meaning, beneath which it is “hidden in a mystic veil” (*τὴν ἐπικεκρυμμένην μυστικῶς*). In the lines that follow, and previously in V.4.26.5, Clement appealed to Paul penchant to communicate in person rather through letters for proof that this gnostic teaching cannot be “written without disguise.”

28. According to Smith (*CA*, 31, 32), Völker rejected the Clementine authorship of the letter primarily because he thought it referred to a *written* gnostic tradition, namely the material added to make the “more spiritual gospel,” whereas Clement indicates that the gnostic tradition was unwritten. As Smith argues, and I have also indicated (see n. 20), the letter explicitly says Mark did not write down that tradition (“the hierophantic and unutterable teaching of the Lord”). Nevertheless, Merkel (“Appendix,” 107, 108 n. 5) repeated Völker's mistaken objection, noting the page Smith mentioned it on, but ignoring Smith's comments about what the letter actually says on the topic.

29. See, e.g., *LM*, 62, 63–64.

30. See *CA*, 31–32, 37; Osborn, “Teaching and Writing,” 340 (cited by Smith).

the *Stromateis* about the Christian philosophy and the gnostic tradition must therefore be discussed.

To make his point that there was no real secrecy in Clement, Shepherd quoted from Matthew 10:26–27/Luke 12:2–3. “This [the convention of secrecy] is true in the surrounding culture, but in Christianity, what you heard in secret you proclaimed on the housetop.”³¹ This is one of Clement’s favorite sayings, though perhaps not his favorite part of it. Here is what Clement made of the first half of this saying:

...he [“the Lord”] did not reveal to the people in the street [πολλοῖς] what was not for them; only to a few [ὀλίγοις], to whom he knew it to be apposite, those who could accept the mysteries and be conformed to them. The secrets [τὰ...ἀπόρρητα], like God himself, are entrusted not to writing but to the expressed word [λόγῳ πιστεύεται, οὐ γράμματι]. If anyone says that it is written in Scripture: “There is nothing hidden which shall not be revealed, nothing veiled which shall not be unveiled,” he must listen to us too when we say that in this pronouncement he foretold that the hidden secret shall be revealed to the one who listens in secret, and all that is veiled, like the truth, shall be shown to the one who is capable of receiving the traditions under a veil, and that which is hidden from the majority shall become clear to a minority. <For why do not all know the truth? why is not righteousness loved, if righteousness belongs to all?> No, the mysteries are transmitted mysteriously [ἀλλὰ γὰρ τὰ μυστήρια μυστικῶς παραδίδονται],³² so that they may be on the lips of speaker and listener—or rather not in their voices at all, but in their minds.³³

31. *LM*, 68. Shepherd makes this comment in response to Wuellner’s observation that Smith takes the convention of secrecy “in antiquity in general and in Palestine in particular” as evidence for “an inside/outside, esoteric/exoteric duality.”

32. The topic of Clement’s use of “mysteries” in reference to the deeper Christian truths hidden in the scriptures will be discussed at length in chapter 3. One point that seems to have confused a number of Clement scholars is the fact that in the *Protrepticus* (and in *Quis dives salveur?* and parts of the *Stromateis*) Clement seems to offer revelation of the mysteries freely to the “heathen,” even through allegorical exposition of a deeper, hidden sense. But as H. G. Marsh has argued, Clement believed in two kinds of mysteries—one kind to be proclaimed openly to the Gentiles and another to be transmitted orally to a select few. Clement grounded this distinction in a tendentious exposition of Colossians 1:25–27 in *Stromateis* V.60.61 (he had to change some of the words to make it work). The fact that Clement revealed mysteries to non-Christians should not, therefore, be taken as a reason to believe that Clement wanted to put the gnostic tradition in writing and would proclaim any true thing to anyone—a view frequently contradicted by Clement himself. On these topics (except the last), see H. G. Marsh, “Μυστήριον, 68–70 (64–80).”

33. *Stromateis* 1.1.13.1–5. I am using Ferguson’s translation for this passage; however, his rendition of the bracketed sentence does not fit the sense of the passage (the text is corrupt there), so I changed to Wilson’s translation for that sentence. The words in Stählin are ἐπεὶ διὰ τί μὴ πάντων ἴσαι τὴν ἀλήθειαν; διὰ τί δὲ μὴ ἡγαπήθη ἡ δικαιοσύνη, εἰ πάντων ἡ δικαιοσύνη; Ferguson commented on this section in his book on Clement (*Clement of Alexandria*, 113): “It must be confessed that Clement’s explaining away of his Lord’s injunction to proclaim from the housetops is not free from sophistry (1,10–2).”

Clement was at pains to make this saying say something other than what Shepherd and most of us, maybe a little too facilely, see as its evident meaning. He was inclined not to recognize the part about proclaiming on the housetops what one hears in secret, in favour of extrapolating the inference that the truth is something which is appropriately conveyed in private. It is to be spoken to a minority of those who have proven themselves willing to be conformed to it, privately (in the ear), under a veil, and is best left not on their lips but in their minds. “The secrets [τὰ ἀπόρρητα], like God himself, are entrusted not to writing but to the expressed word” (cf. τὰ ἀπόρρητα in I.22–23, which Mark is said *not* to have written down). Here is what Clement had to say about the second part of the saying:

Since our tradition is not held in common or open to all, least of all when you realize the magnificence of the Word [τοῦ λόγου—ambiguous], it follows that we have to keep secret “the wisdom which is imparted in the context of a mystery,” taught by God’s Son. ...These thoughts obstructed my writing. Even now I am careful (in the words of Scripture) about “throwing pearls down in front of pigs, in case they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.” ...“The unspiritual person does not receive the gifts of God’s Spirit; they are folly to him.” “The wise do not produce in public the things which they discuss in council.” But “announce from the housetops what you hear whispered in your ear,” says the Lord. He is telling us to receive the secret traditions of revealed knowledge, interpreted with outstanding loftiness and, as we have heard them whispered in our ears, to pass them on to appropriate people, not to offer them to all without reserve, when he only pronounced thoughts in parables to them. But in fact, my present outline of memoranda [i.e. the *Stromateis*] contains the truth in a kind of sporadic and dispersed fashion, so as to avoid the attention of those who pick up ideas like jackdaws. When it lights on good farmers, each of the germs of truth will grow and show the full-grown grain.³⁴

34. *Stromateis* I.12.55.1–56.3. See also VI.15.124.4–125.6: “‘And what you hear in the ear’—that is, in a hidden manner, and in a mystery (for such things are figuratively said to be spoken in the ear)—‘proclaim,’ he says, ‘on the housetops,’ understanding them sublimely, and delivering them in a lofty strain, and according to the canon of the truth explaining the Scriptures; for neither prophecy nor the Saviour Himself announced the divine mysteries simply so as to be easily apprehended by all and sundry, but expressed them in parables. The apostles accordingly say of the Lord, that ‘He spake all things in parables, and without a parable spake he nothing unto them’....” Clement’s allegorical reading technique allowed him to explain (away) “proclaim on the housetops” as referring to something other than public proclamation; the image of height stands for loftiness of exposition (see VI.15.115.1). The lofty proclamation is still only to a few “in the ear.” In order to justify the idea of a secret oral tradition, Clement violently bent the literal meaning of those scriptures that suggest there is nothing kept secret from the masses.

Clement's *Stromateis*, though a written work, is in the spirit of "the Word" and "God," who, Clement suggests, are partial to speech and secrecy. Just as Jesus proclaimed the Christian truth in parables to those outside, Clement records this truth enigmatically, at least when the esoteric teachings are involved. We have to be careful to distinguish esoteric and exoteric teachings in the *Stromateis*. The oral teaching of his earlier instructors which are said to be the substance of the *Stromateis* (I.1.14.3–4) are not all secret teachings. What they have in common is that they have all, apart from some personal notes, remained in his memory and are therefore *in danger of being lost to time*. His decision to write them down does not stem from a staunchly orthodox character that compels him to proclaim openly any authentic teachings of Jesus that he knows. Indeed, Clement refrains from recording all of them, for he *strongly feared* the implications of exposing the deeper teachings to the general public in a medium that is especially susceptible to misinterpretation.³⁵ This he makes clear in 1.1.14.2–4:

There is a promise, not to give a full interpretation of the secrets [τὰ ἀπόρρητα]—far from it—but simply to offer a reminder, either when we forget, or to prevent us from forgetting in the first place. I am very well aware that many things have passed away from us into oblivion in a long lapse of time through not being written down. That is why I have tried to reduce the effect of my weak memory, by providing myself with a systematic exposition in chapters as a salutary *aide-mémoire*. ...There are things which I have not recorded—those blessed men were endowed with great power. ...Others were growing faint to the point of extinction in my mind, since service of this kind is not easy for those who are not qualified experts. These I took good care to rekindle by making notes. Some I am deliberately putting to one side, making my selection scientifically out of fear of writing what I have refrained from speaking—not in a spirit of grudging (that would be wrong), but in the fear that my companions might misunderstand them and go astray and that I might be found offering a dagger to a child (as those who write proverbs

35. Cf. Smith, *CA*, 32: "Further, Clement does not, in *Stromateis* I.1, defend himself for writing down the gnostic tradition. Instead, he is at pains to say that he did *not* write down this tradition, and he says so in words strikingly similar to those used in this letter to say the same thing about Mark.... Clement's defense in *Stromateis* I.1 is against the charge of presumption, which might be brought for his writing at all, the charge of indiscretion, for making the truth available to the wrong people, and charge of frivolity, for decking out Christian doctrine with philosophic argumentation."

put it). “Once a thing is written there is no way of keeping it from the public,” even if it remains unpublished by me, and in its scrolls it employs no voice except the one single writing forevermore. It can make no response to a questioner beyond what is written. It cannot help needing support either from the writer or some other person following in his footsteps.

Clement’s expressed motive, then, is not to publicize the truth indiscriminately for all, but, quite the contrary, to produce a personal *memory aid* to assist in the recollection of teachings he has started to forget (cf. I.1.11.1–12.1). His objective that “the discovery of the sacred traditions may not be easy to any one of the uninitiated” is repeated at the close of the *Stromateis*, where he explains that the seemingly unplanned nature of his “composition aims at concealment, on account of those who have the daring to pilfer and steal the ripe fruits.”³⁶ The impression he creates is that when Christian *mysteries* are involved, the *Stromateis* is meant principally to facilitate selective *oral* teaching through the preservation of this material in adumbrations, and secondarily to lead *worthy*, uninstructed readers *toward* the truth (see *Stromateis* IV.2.4.1). Clement presented Christianity as a philosophy, and firmly held to the Greek philosophical convention of requiring probation and silence about the essential doctrines.³⁷ Clement probably played down his interest in creating a readable (in the sense of polished, not in the sense of clear) and generally accessible text, but there is little reason to doubt the sincerity of his intention to conceal the truth from those not worthy of learning it. Clement knew that written works, even personal notes, cannot be kept from readers, thus also from ending up in the wrong hands, so he had earlier exhorted his inevitable

36. VII.18.110.4–111.3 These are the final comments of the *Stromateis*; the existing Book Eight was not originally part of the work. The topic of Clement’s secrecy will be discussed further in chapter 3, where Clement’s adoption of the philosophical appropriation of mystery religion language will be reviewed.

37. He refers to Christianity as a philosophy (or as *the true* philosophy) in, for example, *Stromateis* I.11.52.2 (“philosophy which follows divine tradition”); II.20.110.1 (“our philosophy”); VI.8.67.1 (“the philosophy according to Christ”); and I.5.32.4; 18.90.1; II.11.48.1; VI.7.58.2; VI.11.89.3; VII.16.98.2 (“[the] true philosophy”). Note the full title of the *Stromateis*: Titus Flavius Clement’s *Stromata of Gnostic Notes on the True Philosophy* (mentioned by Eusebius in *Church History* III.13.1). These examples are taken from Einar Molland, *Conception*, 41.

readers to consider for themselves whether their intentions in reading are honorable, that they do not read capriciously, in the same way that one “does not eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord unworthily.”³⁸

There are, then, at least two implied readers of the *Stromateis*. Since these books are represented as Clement’s personal notes, there is, on the one hand, Clement himself and anyone he trusts to use these notes. But as compiled according to the genre of a *Stromateis*, these are not, or are no longer, mere notes. The structuring has a purpose, of concealing the truth in a manner that is nonetheless revealing to one able to comprehend it.³⁹ It is so because there is also an anticipated, uninitiated reader, from whom the esoteric aspects of the Christian philosophy must be kept.⁴⁰ The situation of wanting to preserve oral traditions but not wanting to resort to writing leads to a strange way of formulating his memory aid, which the above passage now goes on to describe. Using a string of paradoxes, Clement indicates the manner by which his notes will reveal through concealing: “My treatise will hint at some things..., it will try to speak imperceptibly, to make manifest in secrecy, to demonstrate in silence.”⁴¹ Con-

38. I.1.5.1-5; cf. I.1.9.1; and I.1.8.1-2.

39. On the subject of the purpose behind the structure of the *Stromateis*, I refer the reader to the article by Louis Roberts, “The Literary Form of the *Stromateis*.” A very similar assessment of Clement’s purpose in writing the *Stromateis* may be found in Molland, *Conception*, 5-14. He agreed that “The disorder and confusion in the *Stromateis* is intentional, and its purpose is to impart the higher Christian knowledge to those who are fitted for it and at the same time to conceal it from others.” R. M. Grant disagrees, charging that Clement’s “claim to produce a jumble on purpose is of a piece with his constant use of the medicinal lie” (“Theological Education at Alexandria,” 181). Against just such an objection, Molland (*Conception*, 7) already noted that the *Protrepticus* and *Paedagogus* attest that Clement could write coherently if he so wished.

40. On another level there are also the various implied hearers implicit in the various arguments recorded—those for whom his teachers’ diverse materials were intended. But it is not necessary to get this precise. At the beginning of *Stromateis* VII Clement announced to his Christian readers that his argument here is directed to non-Christian readers, and so does not rely on the Bible as an authority. Examples like this demonstrate that the implied audience shifts with the contents, though also that he writes with the specter of a critical, orthodox reader peering over his shoulder.

41. Cf. *Stromateis* 4.2.4.1-2: “Let these notes of ours, as we have often said for the sake of those that consult them carelessly and unskillfully, be of varied character—and as the name itself indicates, patched together—passing constantly from one thing to another, and in the series of discussions hinting at one thing and demonstrating another. ‘For those who seek for gold,’ says Heraclitus, ‘dig much earth and find little gold.’ But those who are of the truly golden race, in mining for what is allied to them, will find much in little. For the word will find one to understand it. The Miscellanies of notes contribute, then, to the recollection and expression of truth in the case of him who is able to investigate with

cerning these phrases, Raoul Mortley has commented that “Each...indicates a respect for the doctrine of the Reserve and for the idea that the truth should be surrounded by discretion. Like the initiate in the Mysteries, Clement hesitates to reveal explicitly the essentials of Christian doctrine.”⁴² What could not be said openly to all was hinted at through his choice of an enigmatic composition, or left out altogether.

To summarize, though Clement put much of what he heard spoken by his own teachers in writing, not all of what they passed on to him was secret gnostic tradition; from the memorable teaching that he still remembered he chose what could be put in writing (plainly or enigmatically) and what could not, for he had no intention of proclaiming to *οἱ πολλοί* every bit of authentic tradition he knew. Claims to the contrary ignore numerous, bold statements by Clement himself.

1.2.3. *The Esoteric Side of Clement's Philosophy and the Letter to Theodore*

The mistaken notion that Clement believed that all Christian truths should be proclaimed to all indiscriminately cannot, therefore, stand as a reason for doubting that Clement would have condoned Mark's and the church's perpetuation of secret teachings by not writing them down. Those who reject the letter as incompatible with Clement's universalism neglect to point out that the whole issue of Clement's proclivity to silence about certain matters has been a contentious point in Clement scholarship quite apart from the *Letter to Theodore*. The fact that there are many Clement scholars who take it for granted that Clement held secret traditions and doctrines and accepted as authorita-

reason.”

42. Raoul Mortley, “The Theme of Silence in Clement of Alexandria,” 201. I quoted here from his translation. The doctrine of the reserve is a later formulation, but Clement is certainly following the example of the philosophical affiliations of his time, which surrounded their theories with mystery and did not teach them to the “uninitiated.”

itative a myriad of uncanonical writings is relevant here.⁵⁴³ In questioning the letter, Osborn and Shepherd are indirectly confronting the increasingly commonplace acknowledgement by patristic scholars of Clement's (by later standards, unorthodox) esotericism. W. Jaeger foresaw this resistance, and his comments were cited at length by Smith:

The letter seems to contradict those who have a tendency to interpret away or attenuate the existence in Clement of a theory of an esoteric Christian doctrine, because they feel that it is not consistent with his belief in the Christian religion as a universal message to all. ...We should refrain from letting our modern ideas or preferences influence our historical judgment. There was a strong tendency at Clement's time, and in him most of all, to construe Christianity as a philosophy; and...contemporary philosophical schools insisted on finding an esoteric and an exoteric form of teaching in almost every system.⁴⁴

Osborn cannot acknowledge this common perspective without drawing attention to the fact that what is really at issue is the problem that the letter further supports it. It is not surprising that he has also attempted to segregate, play down, or else tendentiously reinterpret the various references from the *Stromateis* already cited to the contrary. In an influential paper on the first chapter of Book One of the *Stromateis* he managed to deal with this predominant strain in Clement with the remark "There is an esoteric attitude in much that he says and this attitude has its roots in the New Testament; but there is no esoteric doctrine."⁴⁵ A more accurate statement is offered by Lilla:

...the "true message," the highest aspect of Christianity, does not consist for [Clement] simply in some general conceptions about God, or in what can be read and understood by

43. E.g. Kaye, *Some Account*, 214–15; Hort and Mayor, *Miscellanies Book VII*, xxi; de Faye, *Clément d'Alexandrie*, 104; Lilla, *Christian Platonism*, 56, 144–50, 154–58, 162–63; Mortley, *Connaissance*, 56; idem, "The Theme of Silence in Clement of Alexandria," 201; Davison, "Structural Similarities," 209–12. Riedweg, *Mysterienterminologie*, 139 n. 40 (cf. 141, 159).

44. Cited in *CA*, 38 (I quoted only a small portion of his comments). See also Jaeger's comments in *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*, 57, where he attributes the production of longer Mark to "a time that assumed the existence of esoteric sources for almost every philosophic sect."

45. "Teaching and Writing," 341. The passages from *Stromateis* 1.1 that I have quoted are either barely mentioned in this article or paraphrased in ways that support his view that Clement is arguing for the right to put the oral traditions in writing. Elsewhere (e.g. Osborn, *Philosophy*, 25, 120, 168; see p. 90 below), instead of ignoring or reinterpreting these passages, Osborn isolates and properly interprets them, but does not integrate his acknowledgement of secrecy into his understanding of the *Stromateis* as a public presentation of the whole Christian philosophy.

everyone but, first of all, in the ἀλήθεια which is one and the same thing with the divine Logos, i.e. in a system of doctrines which can be known only by a select few and which, therefore, represent the object of an esoteric *gnosis*.

The esoteric character of Clement's *gnosis* enables us also to understand why he insists on the existence of a "secret" or "gnostic" tradition different from the ordinary Christian tradition. Christ—Clement says—spoke in parables in order to prevent his teaching from being divulged and communicated secret doctrines to those few among his disciples who were worthy of apprehending them.... This view is confirmed by what Clement himself says in a letter rediscovered only recently, in which he draws attention to the existence of a secret version of the Gospel of Mark.⁴⁶

Clement proclaimed the fundamentally esoteric nature of the Christian philosophy time and again, and one of the words he used for it is *secret* (esp. ἀπόρρητος). He revealed more of the essential secrets of the Greek mysteries (exposing their secret symbols, for instance) than he did of the essentials of the gnostic tradition, about which he remained circumspect.⁴⁷ Not even a distinct outline of the path to true gnosis can be gleaned from his writings, again probably due to his penchant to conceal the truth from "the casual and hence unworthy reader."⁴⁸

46. *Christian Platonism*, 56. Lilla cites *Stromateis* I.32.4. At the time, the *Letter to Theodore* was known to him only through a summary by Jaeger. Though "secret gospel" is, I believe, an unfortunate mistranslation, Lilla had no difficulty with the idea that this is a "secret version"; neither did John Ferguson, who believed that the letter, "in manner *and in matter*, seems clearly to have been written by Clement" (*Clement of Alexandria*, 188–89; italics added). Riedweg (*Mysterienterminologie*, 139–40 n. 43) noted that the *Letter to Theodore* is in agreement with what we know of Clement's reserve about putting the secret gnostic tradition in writing, though, perceptively, he commented that a *secret gospel* would be unnecessary for the purposes of Clement's gnostic scriptural exegesis. Kaestli ("Version longue," 88–93) offers a brief demonstration of the letter's compatibility with Clement's thought that is comparable to my own. The views of these Clement scholars are quite different from the pejorative rhetoric of Osborn, who claims that "the attribution of the document to Clement is a case of nescience fiction" ("1958–1982," 224). For the most part, though, Clement scholars have avoided the text altogether.

47. Cf. Molland (*Conception*, 83–84): "How far this intention [of Clement to follow the rule of the church] was fulfilled when he had to develop the contents of his Gnosis, we cannot say, for in none of his extant writings does he deal with the contents of Christian doctrine, but only with the principles of theology and with ethical questions. We know the type of his ecclesiastical Gnostic, but we do not know his teaching." Cf. also de Faye, *Clément d'Alexandrie*, 87.

48. A point noted by John E. Stealy, whom I am quoting; *Gnosis*, 100 (cf. 22, 112).

I.2.4. *Clement's Philosophy and the Stromateis*

Why, then, do some Clement scholars tend to doubt that Clement's references to a secret, orally transmitted gnostic tradition demonstrate his approval of the notion of secret doctrines? Why do they doubt him when he says the mysteries should not be entrusted to writing? One significant reason is that they tend to believe that the *Stromateis* must be an overt and systematic expression of the Logos's teaching. This opinion is based on words of Clement himself. Osborn's basic perspective on the *Stromateis* is that it is the third work of a trilogy corresponding to Clement's view of the Logos as having the functions of *protreptikos*, *paidagogos*, and *didaskalos* mentioned in *Paedagogus* I.1.1–3: "...But eagerly desiring, then, to perfect us by a graduation for salvation in an effective discipline, a beautiful *oikonomia* is joined by the all-philanthropic Logos, first exhorting (*protrepōn*), then training (*paidagōgōn*) and finally, teaching (*ekdidaskōn*)."⁴⁹ The former two modes of communication correspond to Clement's two other major writings. Hence the *Stromateis* must be the *didaskalos*, the teaching itself.

This is a not uncommon understanding, though due to the different title—*Stromateis*—and the unsystematic character of this work, the point has always been debated. In Ferguson's opinion, for instance, "The suggestion, made by some, that *Miscellanies* was this culminating work, is merely ludicrous: it is neither systematic nor culminating."⁵⁰ He thinks the contents of what could be called The Teacher were promised to come in a later work, which Clement put off to the point of never writing. One hundred years ago de Faye noted that the various references Clement made in the

49. Cited from Wagner, "Literary Problem," 165. See Osborn, "Teaching and Writing," 341–43.

50. *Clement of Alexandria*, 106. "Miscellanies" translates the word *Stromateis*.

Stromateis to topics he would discuss at a later time all concern points of doctrine, and supposed that the fragments *Eclogae propheticis* and *Excerpta ex Theodoto* now found at the conclusion of the *Stromateis* are preliminary notes for the final book of the trilogy. The *Stromateis* itself is only an “hors-d’oeuvre” to this later work, and its references to future doctrinal subjects were at that point unformed projections.⁵¹ Massey Shepherd himself did not argue that Clement revealed the gnostic tradition in the *Stromateis* but hypothesized, rather, that he publicized it “in a latter work, which cannot now be identified” but which was deemed “heretical and suppressed.”⁵² When discussing the lesser and great mysteries, Lilla also expressed a similar opinion, noting that Clement indicated his intent to deal with higher gnosis in a later book (*Stromateis* IV.1.2.1 and 3.1). Lilla suggested that the *Hypotyposesis* may have dealt with the origin of the world, which is an aspect of the small mysteries.⁵³

It may well be that Clement treated aspects of the gnostic tradition in his lost *Hypotyposesis*, in addition to his “parabolic” and tangential treatment in the *Stromateis*. The matter is difficult to judge. We know that one reader, Photius, deemed the *Hypotyposesis* to contain “strange and impious notions,” and this fact has led some writers to suppose that the work was suppressed.⁵⁴ The surviving excerpts, however, resemble an *Introduction to the New Testament*; there is little interest in classical philosophy, and the interpretations are not extravagant.⁵⁵ The character of these excerpts would not lead one to conclude that the *Hypotyposesis* was either the *λόγος διδασκαλικός* or even a systematic exposition of Clement’s theological system.⁵⁶ Indeed, such a work was probably never written.

51. De Faye, *Clément d’Alexandrie*, 90–95.

52. *LM*, 63.

53. *Christian Platonism*, 189 and n. 4, 190 n. 2; cf. 193.

54. Photius’s comments may be read in Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* 2:17; and Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 56.

55. Ferguson, *Clement of Alexandria*, 181–82.

56. Cf. de Faye, *Clément d’Alexandrie*, 45.

So the matter is puzzling. Clement did propose to discuss matters of doctrine at future points, but he also expressed reservations about putting the essential Christian truths in writing. I prefer the opinion of Walter Wagner, who argues that the *Stromateis* is the conclusion of an ethical discourse in three books intended to prepare the way for study of philosophy and the transcendence of philosophy in “*Epopteia* or initiation into the great mysteries of theology”:

The *Stromateis* was not a *Didaskalos*; indeed it is improbable that Clement would have considered writing a work which boasted putting *epopteis*-revelation into written form.

The *Stromateis* is instead exactly what Clement said it was—a sheaf of notes, artfully planned, through which the reader could continue his advance in soul-improvement. It was for those already sufficiently trained in *kathēkonta* and who had the ability to gain from exposure to the *katorthōmata* which undergirded the specific duties. Yet the work was open to all readers, even non-Christians, but only those subject to the Logos could gain fully from it. The *Stromateis* was meaningful to the highly trained *prokopos*, the man whose actions, habits and passions were strengthened and admost [*sic*] completely healed by the Logos. It led him to the fullness of *aretē* so that he could look forward to advancement in *physiologia* and then ultimate rest (*anapausis*) in *Epopteia*.⁵⁷

The *Stromateis* does not present a straightforward form of teaching that many scholars have come to expect as a consequence of relating the modes of the Logos’s teaching directly to the contents of the books dealing with them.⁵⁸ The *Stromateis*, rather, is an effort to *clear the way* for a full understanding of the Christian teaching. By only hinting at these doctrines it plants seeds that will sprout for careful readers. The same basic opinion is expressed more simply by E. Molland, who, in paraphrasing the opinion of R. B. Tollington, says that the *Stromateis* “is and is not” the *Didaskalos*, in that “it contains the Christian doctrine and the secrets of the Faith, but...it is written not in the didactic, but in the cryptic, style.”⁵⁹

57. Cf. Wagner, “Literary Problem,” 171, 173. Wagner’s much neglected essay is probably the best discussion to be found on this matter, for he situates the problem within an analysis of the ethical literary forms of contemporary philosophical writings, of which these three books appear to be examples. The technical Greek terms in this quotation are explained in his article.

58. As Wagner notes (“Literary Problem,” 167), it is easily overlooked that Clement was talking about the modes of training of the Logos and not necessarily about his own literary plan.

59. Molland in *Conception*, 10 n. 1.

We have seen, then, that Clement believed in an oral tradition concerned with scriptural exposition and suited to the instruction of the gnostic, and that he was exceptionally reluctant to do more than hint at its doctrines in his own writings. This tradition was believed to have been imparted by Jesus privately to his disciples, and from them to worthy Christian teachers. It was the foundation for the “true” Christian exposition of the public tradition recorded in the gospels and in scripture generally. The higher knowledge contained in the secret gnostic tradition was imparted only to those who had advanced through the preliminary stages of Christian initiation. In keeping with this scenario, the author of the *Letter to Theodore* depicts Mark—the same way Clement depicts himself—as having learned the tradition through apostolic succession (Mark from Peter; Clement from Pantaenus and his other teachers) and as having the reserve not to put it in his “more spiritual gospel.”

1.2.5. Recent Objections Concerning Clement’s Acceptance of a Gospel Withheld from the Public

In view of the excerpts from the *Stromateis* I have quoted above one can hardly suggest that Clement would not have associated with something he felt he could not discuss openly. Nevertheless, Osborn’s specific objections to what he presumes is referred to as a secret gospel should be addressed. Unfortunately, he does not devote enough space to the discussion of the secrecy element even to make clear what exactly he thinks this letter contains that Clement could not have written:

What was the secret tradition to which the document refers? There is nothing in Clement that could allow this to be a secret Gospel, or to be something that Clement might write (36–38, 81), since for Clement true gnosis is not attained by acquaintance with hidden documents, but by faith and love as learned through interpretation of public apostolic writings.⁶⁰

60. “1958–1982,” 224.

It is difficult to engage an argument that is presented summarily in assertions. If there is a common theme to the numbers in parentheses, they refer to Smith's discussions of the section I.22–23 of the letter, specifically *οὐδέπω ὅμως αὐτὰ τὰ ἀπόρρητα ἐξωρήσατο, οὐδὲ κατέγραψε τὴν ἱεροφαντικὴν διδασκαλίαν* (“Nevertheless, he yet did not divulge the things not to be uttered, nor did he write down the hierophantic teaching [of the Lord]”). Are these concepts really alien to Clement's thought? We have already seen that Clement spoke of *τὰ ἀπόρρητα* in conjunction with oral teachings not to be fully set forth in writing.⁶¹ As for hierophantic teaching, the concept appears in Clement's writings in ways consistent with the usage here.⁶² A hierophant is an expositor of mysteries. Clement used the word in reference to those priests of the mysteries in charge of explaining the symbols involved in initiations; but he also applied it to Moses as interpreter of the allegorical sense of his own words recorded in scripture, even though it is “the Word” who was speaking through Moses, and Clement himself who was the one explaining the meaning and attributing it to Moses' intention.⁶³ We do not find the adjective or the noun in reference to “the Lord,”⁶⁴ but there

61. E.g., “There is a promise, not to give a full interpretation of the secrets [*τὰ ἀπόρρητα*]—far from it” (*Stromateis* 1.1.14.2); “The secrets [*τὰ...ἀπόρρητα*], like God himself, are entrusted not to writing but to the expressed word” (1.1.13.1).

62. See *CA*, 38.

63. *Ἱεροφάντης* appears in *Protrepticus* 7.74.3, where the sense of interpreter of a symbolic meaning is clear: “And the Thracian interpreter of the mysteries [*ὁ δὲ Θράκιος ἱεροφάντης*], who was a poet too, Orpheus the son of Oeagrus, after his exposition [*ἱεροφαντίαν*] of the orgies and account of the idols, brings in a recantation consisting of truth....” In *Protrepticus* 2.22.7 the word appears in reference to the priest presiding over a Greek mystery. “Quench the fire, thou priest [*ὦ ἱεροφάντα*]. Shrink from the flaming brands, torchbearer. The light convicts your Iacchus. Suffer the night to hide the mysteries....” In this context Clement also speaks of the allegorical (*μυστικῶς*) meanings of the symbols of the initiations. Shortly thereafter (2.25.1), Clement describes Moses as “the hierophant of truth” in the sense of “sacred interpreter” (Butterworth, *Exhortation*, 50, 51): “it appears then that atheism and daemon-worship are the extreme points of stupidity, from which we must earnestly endeavour to keep ourselves apart. Do you not see Moses, the sacred interpreter of the truth [*τὸν ἱεροφάντην τῆς ἀληθείας*], ordering that no eunuch or mutilated man shall enter the assembly, nor the son of a harlot? By the first two expressions he refers in a figure to the atheistic manner of life, which has been deprived of divine power and fruitfulness; by the third and last, to the man who lays claim to many gods...just as the son of a harlot lays claim to many fathers, through ignorance of his true father.” For the idea that the Logos, as Instructor, spoke allegorically through Moses, see, e.g., *Paedagogus* 1.2.5.

64. It probably does not matter much whether *ἱεροφαντικὴν διδασκαλίαν τοῦ Κυρίου* involves an objective or subjective genitive, since Clement would also attribute his own hierophantic exegesis to Jesus'

is no reason why Clement would not have used it this way. He did use the verb at the end of his *Protrepticus* to describe “the Lord” as a revealer of mysteries. This is quite natural considering that Clement thought Jesus, like Moses, conveyed deeper meanings through his words and actions (see *Quis dives salvetur?* 5). After all, Jesus was for Clement the incarnate Logos, the voice that spoke prophetically through Moses and the prophets. He teaches as a hierophant:

O truly sacred mysteries! O pure light! In the blaze of the torches I have a vision of heaven and of God. I become holy by initiation. The Lord reveals the mysteries [ἅγιος γίνομαι μυστήριον, ἱεροφάντει δὲ ὁ Κύριος]; he marks the worshipper with his seal, when he has believed, to the Father’s care, where he is guarded for ages to come. ...If thou wilt, be thyself also initiated.⁶⁵

What is the basis for Osborn’s objection? The above passage depicts Jesus as a hierophant whose teaching is associated with the comprehension of divine realities. Since Clement used hierophantic metaphors in connection with the recognition of the voice of the Logos beneath the literal meaning of scripture and felt free to apply the concrete symbolism of a hierophant to Jesus, there are no grounds for objecting to this word being used by Clement to describe Jesus’ teaching. Perhaps in reading I.22–23 Osborn has imported from the gospel quotation (LGM 1b) a literal impression of Jesus as a *ἱεροφάντης* (priest) of a mystery religion, or facets of Smith’s argument about Jesus’ performance of magical rites. If so, he is missing the explicitly symbolic nature of the imagery in I.22–23.⁶⁶

I similarly have difficulty understanding the meaning of Osborn’s statement that Clement believed true gnosis comes through interpretation of public apostolic writings

intention, as he did with Moses.

65. *Protrepticus* 12.120.1–2. This is the most cultic sounding application of mystery language in Clement. The section is an apologetic appeal to “the heathen” and does not reflect his typical Christian application of *μυστήριον* to theological mysteries requiring contemplation.

66. And also the symbolic nature of the initiation imagery in LGM 1b, but that awaits to be demonstrated.

rather than “acquaintance with” secret gospels. The longer gospel is said to have been *interpreted* (I.26–27) in order to increase gnosis (I.21–22), and to have been conscientiously composed so as to include only the kinds of things that could safely be put in writing, hence made public (I.23–24). The secrecy pertaining to the work is not explained, but comes across as a predicament unforeseen by Mark, arising from extrinsic realities (most likely in consequence of the scandalous Carpocratian use of the text).

Osborn’s objections seem also to imagine Clement championing the later orthodox canon. Clement’s canon is a complicated topic. David Dawson has noted that Clement had a concept of scripture comparable to a canon, but that its contents differed somewhat from ours and from many of his contemporaries. We do not know the exact contents of his canon, but it is clear that the writings Barnabas and Didache were on a par with those that came to form the New Testament. All other writings, including the Hebrew scriptures, are at times subordinated to those of the new dispensation. But there is a certain fluidity in his attitude toward other books, including non-Christian writings, and one could say that such works are treated *as if canonical* by Clement whenever they support a point he is making (i.e. not always, but at those times). And they are *scriptural* whenever he finds within them (e.g. allegorically beneath them) the voice of the Logos.⁶⁷ Outside of those books with a fixed status in his canon, then, it is not the text itself so much as the presence or absence of the divine voice behind it that determines the status of a writing *at any particular moment*.

It is sometimes noted that there is a place in the *Stromateis* where Clement rejects an argument made by Cassian against marriage because it is founded on the interpretation of a passage that is not found “in our four traditional Gospels, but in the Gospel

67. See Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 183–218, esp. 185–86. Whatever struck Clement as comparable to the Christian truth he perceived as influenced by or dependent on the prophetic voice of the preexistent Logos.

according to the Egyptians” (III.13.93.1). This comment does indicate that Clement considered the four traditional gospels to have a special authority, though certainly not an exclusive authority. Clement did not reject the passage itself as a statement of Christ’s words—he went on to give what he considered its true, allegorical interpretation in line with his own doctrine. The reason he evoked the priority of the traditional four gospels here seems to be that he needed some way of diminishing the value of this passage, since he could hardly deny that Cassian’s interpretation is more in keeping with the evident sense of the text. In any case, Clement’s concurrence that there are four especially authoritative gospels is in no way contradicted by the letter. The implied author of the letter differentiates between the two versions of Mark as two separate gospels only when a distinction between them is necessary. Otherwise he speaks simply of the gospel of Mark (I.11–12; II.8). As a longer version of “the divinely inspired Gospel of Mark,” the amplified text is equally apostolic and scriptural, and in conformity with “the true philosophy” (III.18).⁶⁸ Clement’s broad definition of which writings were truly apostolic is well documented, and leaves little room to argue that Clement would not have involved himself with something we might call apocryphal, if that is something Osborn is implying.⁶⁹

Osborn’s own views regarding what we can expect in a work of Clement may be found in his book on Clement, from which I now cite an especially relevant passage.

68. The exhortation in II.11–12 to deny even under oath that the Carpocratian longer gospel is Mark’s would make no sense unless the implied letter writer considered apostolic authority to be essential to the gospel’s authority. The gospel according to the Egyptians does not have that kind of authority. That the *πνευματικώτερον εὐαγγέλιον* is also considered scriptural by the letter writer is indicated in I.11–12 (“Now of the things they keep saying about the divinely inspired Gospel according to Mark...”) and II.8 (“...spotless and holy words...”). The letter writer does not designate the shorter version as the *real* gospel of Mark—both are covered by the description “divinely inspired Gospel according to Mark.” Hence there are still four traditional gospels. For further discussion, see chapter 3, pp. 148–49.

69. For documentation, see CA, 37, 78; Kaye, *Some Account*, 219–21. The fourth-century historian Eusebius found it noteworthy that Clement’s commentary of selected verses of Christian (“New Testament”) scripture, *Hypotyposeis*, deals with “the disputed Scriptures, the so-called Wisdom of Solomon, and of Jesus, the son of Sirach, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, and those of Barnabas, and Clement and Jude” (*Church History* VI.13.6).

Here he concedes the various things he toned down in his article on I.1 of the *Stromateis*:

The most important parts of truth are “hidden.” Some are not written down at all but are reserved for the oral instruction of the initiated. Others are written in an enigmatic and obscure way. The Lord did not reveal to the many the things which belonged to the few. He revealed these things to the few by word of mouth and not in writing. On the other hand what has been written about ultimate things is expressed in a mysterious form. In Scripture there is enigma, allegory and symbol. Some things are clear, unveiled, and convey definite moral teaching, but other things are expressed in riddles and parables and there is need of an interpreter. The *Paidagogos* teaches us clear and definite moral precepts; but we need a *Didaskalos* to handle the riddles and symbols.⁷⁰

It is difficult to see how the *Letter to Theodore* is anything but in agreement with this picture. The letter refers to secret (and presumably ineffable) teachings that Mark did not commit to writing (I.22–23), and to symbolic materials that require interpretation (i.e. the *λόγια* in I.25 and perhaps *αἱ μυστικαί* in I.16–17); these conceal the truth while pointing to it. Like the *Stromateis*, the “mystical” gospel does not contain the gnostic tradition in its overt form, but points the way to the deeper truths through its *interpretation* in accordance with “the true philosophy.”

Osborn is not the only scholar to insist that the *Letter to Theodore* contradicts Clement’s philosophy on matters with which it actually concurs. A. H. Criddle concludes his statistical analysis with a summary of matters of “Clement’s doctrine of Christian ‘gnosis’ and secret tradition” that he believes are better clarified if the “secret” gospel is considered inauthentic.⁷¹ His statement is important because it typifies an inaccurate view that dominates discussion of the *Letter to Theodore*, a view that seems ultimately responsible for its rejection by a few Clement scholars:

The letter implies the existence of a secret written tradition which it is necessary for “gnostic” Christians to know, but which it is equally necessary to keep from simple

70. Osborn, *Philosophy*, 168 (cf. 25, 120).

71. “On the Mar Saba Letter,” 219. His statistical arguments will be addressed later, since they are put in the service of arguing for a modern forgery.

believers. If the letter is not authentic, the balance of evidence from Clement's other work may suggest that simple and advanced Christians are not as clearly distinguishable on externally verifiable grounds as the letter implies, and that the "gnostic" Christian differs from the simple believer, not by access to written texts forbidden to the latter, but by an increased insight into the hidden meanings of texts which are available in principle to simple and advanced believers alike, an insight passed down, Clement believed, from apostolic times by "enlightened" Christian teachers.⁷²

This quotation is both fascinating and distressing, for its characterization of what is expected of an authentic passage from Clement seems to be a perfect statement of notions the letter either presupposes or confirms.⁷³

The idea of "a secret written tradition which it is necessary for 'gnostic' Christians to know, but which it is equally necessary to keep from simple believers"⁷⁴ is a better characterization of Morton Smith's understanding of the letter (and Clement generally), which has dominated discussion of the evidence. The conception that longer Mark was a secret, ritual text that was kept hidden from ordinary Christians pervades Smith's translation and commentary on the letter, as well as his study of the "background" of the longer gospel. It is this sort of picture of Clement that these few Clement scholars are most disturbed by and that inclines them to argue that the letter is a fake. Until very recently, Clement scholars have done a poor job of differentiating Smith's eccentric views from the actual evidence.⁷⁵

I.3. *An Ancient Forgery: Conclusions*

The main arguments presented in favour of viewing the *Letter to Theodore* as an ancient forgery have now been examined. Most of these have involved the recognition that the vocabulary is Clementine but have contended that the thought conveyed

72. "On the Mar Saba Letter," 219-20.

73. Criddle's statement can be contrasted with the assessment by Kaestli ("Version longue," 91), who judges that "Sur ce point, la *Lettre* est en plein accord avec ce que Clément dit ailleurs dans son oeuvre."

74. I assume Criddle means the gospel, not the gnostic tradition.

75. The recent contributions by the French authors Le Boulluec and Kaestli show that this is changing.

through those words is not in keeping with the undisputed writings of Clement. Investigation of these claims, however, has shown the opposite to be the case. The letter fragment is as Clementine in sense as it is in style and vocabulary. In many cases it is this very similarity that is the problem. As Jaeger expected would happen, acceptance of this letter has been hindered by “a tendency” among some patristic scholars “to interpret away or attenuate the existence in Clement of a theory of an esoteric Christian doctrine”;⁷⁶ but acceptance has also suffered from a lack of sufficient attention to the letter, which would have permitted Morton Smith’s eccentric characterization of this document to be distinguished from the letter itself. Although the full argument will be presented throughout the next two chapters, enough has been said to belie the notion that the letter refers to a secret, carefully guarded gospel meant to be known only within a libertine clique in the orthodox Alexandrian church.

The arguments analyzed to this point in no way undermine the positive evidence Smith amassed for attributing the letter to Clement. However, additional objections bearing on the possibility of an ancient forgery have been raised in the contexts of arguments for a modern forgery (i.e. eighteenth century to the present). It is to this weightier matter that we shall now turn our attention.

II. The Possibility of a Modern Forgery

II.1. *The Arguments of Charles Murgia*

It should be apparent that the conceivable motives for a modern forgery are much more diverse than are those for an ancient one, and that piety is not usually among them. Because the scholarly world has not had access to the handwritten copy itself, suspicions about a modern forgery have also usually been based on the content of the

76. CA, 38 (this is from one of the pages Osborn deemed worth dismissing).

letter.⁷⁷ But here presumed inconsistencies with Clement's thought or vocabulary take less prominence and investigation tends to focus on qualities that pertain to the writing as a whole. One such quality concerns the rhetorical impact of the letter, inasmuch as the rhetoric seems directed more to a modern reader than to an ancient one. With an eye to the implied reader, Charles E. Murgia has noted similarities between the *Letter to Theodore* and "Classical fakes," some of which allow him to conjecture about the possibility that this letter is a *modern forgery*.

As characteristic of literary forgeries he notes that most provide information that can function as a "seal of authenticity."⁷⁸ When interpolations into a text are involved, they may attempt to predate themselves with respect to the context by filling in existing lacunas or by offering other evidence of earlier composition.⁷⁹ Moreover, a forgery might also create a few deliberate contradictions so that it does not seem too perfect, in addition to inadvertent ones resulting from the need to create an explanation for the document's own existence.

Murgia's observations about how forgeries provide self-authenticating information give us good reason to wonder if the letter might actually be a forgery. Concerning a seal of authenticity, Murgia made this suggestion:

To me it seems that every sentence of the letter, other than the actual quotation of secret Mark, is admirably designed to provide a SEAL OF AUTHENTICITY for the passage of secret Mark. Great care is taken to convince the modern reader of why he has never heard of this gospel before. It is only known at Alexandria, it is carefully guarded, it is read only to the initiates, its very existence should be denied in public, and even perjury should be committed to maintain the secret of its existence.⁸⁰

In response to this matter, Smith is cited by Levin as commenting,

77. No arguments have yet been raised on the basis of any physical characteristics revealed in the photographs.

78. "Secret Mark: Real or Fake?" in *LM*, 36–38, 39.

79. *LM*, 36, 40.

80. *LM*, 38. Cf. p. 39: "...the sole purpose of the letter is to provide a *sphragis* for the fragment of secret Mark."

His theory of a “seal of authenticity” is the strongest case I have yet seen for the supposition that the letter is a forgery. I think it would persuade me if I could think of a plausible forger (someone capable of doing the job), a plausible reason for the forgery, and a plausible explanation of why, if launched by somebody for some reason, the document has never hitherto been heard of.⁸¹

In 1982, however, Smith treated the question of a seal of authenticity more lightly, and noted that Murgia “fell into a few factual errors.”⁸² What these were is not stated, but some of them become apparent once one begins to question whether “every sentence” of the letter proper indeed functions to explain why no one has ever heard of the longer gospel until its recent discovery. Our preceding discussion of the objections raised against the possibility that Clement would associate with a secret gospel has prepared us to recognize exaggerations in Murgia’s description of the situation.

I will address Murgia’s points in order. According to the letter, the gospel is not known only at Alexandria but is also becoming known wherever Theodore lives, presumably through the willingness of Carpocratians to discuss it openly.⁸³ I have already intimated that the decision to translate τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον (II.6, 12) as “secret Gospel” was unfortunate, as was the decision to read ἀσφαλῶς εὖ μάλα τηρεῖται (II.1) as implying physical guarding or even secrecy about the existence of this gospel within the church.⁸⁴ The restriction to “those being initiated into the great

81. From a letter to Wilhelm Wuellner, 5 August 1976, a copy of which was sent to Levin by Smith; see Levin, “Early History,” 4274. Quesnell also has a high opinion of this study of content: “Unsurpassed. His literary analysis says all that needs to be said” (Private correspondence).

82. Smith, “Score,” 451.

83. Noticed also by Schenke (“Mystery,” 75, referring specifically to the Carpocratian version). It is more likely that Theodore lived in another city. Alexandria was a huge place (“it was easier to traverse the world from east to west than to cross Alexandria”), but Clement speaks of “the church in Alexandria” as a single entity which possesses the longer text. If Theodore lived there he would have known about it. Hence he probably lived in another city. The quotation is Ferguson’s statement of what Bishop Dionysius had to say about Alexandria’s size (*Stromateis Books One to Three*, 4). Ferguson notes the city had around three-quarters of a million residents.

84. These topics are fully discussed in chapter 3. Though there is no clear indication in the letter of any attempt to keep ordinary members of the Alexandrian church unaware of the existence of this gospel, it should be acknowledged that at the very least the officials in Alexandria were not apt to draw attention to it. Theodore learned about the existence of the longer gospel from Carpocratians, not from orthodox Alexandrians.

mysteries” specifically excludes outsiders, catechumens, and those baptized Christians uninterested in, or incapable of, becoming “true gnostics” from attending *readings* of this text.⁸⁵ In no sense, not even by implication, is Theodore asked “to maintain the secret of its existence.”⁸⁶ He is told to deny *to the Carpocratians* that their falsifications are the *μυστικόν* gospel of Mark.⁸⁷ The existence of a *μυστικόν* gospel of Mark is taken for granted in these debates with Carpocratians, *for the Carpocratians have it*. They are the ones who told Theodore about it in the first place! Moreover, the comment “All things are pure to the pure” (II.18–19) would seem to allow “proper” Christians knowledge of this text, even ones outside Alexandria.⁸⁸ The author makes no show of hesitation about divulging the contents of this mystical gospel to Theodore. His reaction is exactly the opposite: “To you, therefore, I shall not hesitate to answer the questions you have asked, refuting the falsifications by the very words of the Gospel.” As far as the incomplete fragment goes (Murgia assumes the fragment is the whole text), there is no direction not to share this knowledge with other (proper)

85. Whether these Alexandrian Christians are only a handful depends on how many received the gnostic tradition, which Clement says is reserved for only a few (*ὀλίγοις*). The question is, when Clement speaks of “a few” as opposed to “the many,” does he mean a few *within* the church or the few *who are* the church? A passage like *Stromateis* V.3 would point to the former. Whatever the conclusion, it can only be determined by the Clement corpus in general and is a reflection of what Clement believed—whether one admires it or not. The *Letter to Theodore* does not specify how many people were initiated into the great mysteries.

86. *LM*, 38; cf. 60. Kermode (*Genesis*, 57–58) and Lockhart (*Heretic*, 230) also make this incorrect claim.

87. As Mondésert, Richardson, Bruce, and Kaestli translate II.11–12. See chapter 3 n. 84. The other alternative is that Theodore is to deny that the mystical gospel is by Mark (Smith’s translation). The statement can be read either way: *οὐδὲ προτείνουσιν αὐτοῖς τὰ κατεψευσμένα συγχωρητέον τοῦ Μάρκου εἶναι τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον, ἀλλὰ καὶ μεθ’ ὅρκου ἀρνητέον*. This section of the letter will be discussed in chapter 3. At the moment it is important to note that Smith’s reading might at most imply a tacit denial that the longer text is used in Alexandria. Lying in order to mislead rival interpreters from one particular sect to believe that this gospel is not accepted in Alexandria is still nowhere near the sort of cover-up that could explain why a modern reader has never heard of the text.

88. Contra Smith (*CA*, 168), the phrases *υἱοὶ φωτός ἐσμεν* and *πεφωτισμένοι* in II.17–19 are used in *Paedagogus* II.9.80.1 and 79.3 (cf. 9.81.4) in reference to *ordinary* Christians, not gnostics. Thus in II.17–19 the implied author seems to be saying that *we* (himself and Theodore) are *proper* (not *special*) Christians, so there is no problem with my quoting the exact passages to you. These terms may allude to the consequences of baptism, as Smith supposed.

Christians.

Not much of this proposed “conspiracy of silence”—if I may call it that—holds up when Murgia’s evidence for a seal of authenticity is examined. We may agree that the gospel was known *mainly* in Alexandria, and, among the orthodox, was *read* only to the true gnostics. We can safely infer that the officials in the church did not go out of their way to discuss its contents with ordinary Christians. But we need not suppose that most Alexandrian Christians knew nothing about it. The stated and implied restrictions on its use fall short of a clear set of reasons why modern readers (or ancient ones, later than Clement) have never heard of the text.

Some of Murgia’s other observations about how forgeries attempt to establish their authenticity are still worth considering. He notes early in his paper that forgeries use various methods to legitimate their existence, including attempts to predate themselves relative to their context when the forged material is an interpolation. In view of this observation, the fact that the absence of LGM 2 “creates” an *aporia* in *canonical* Mark 10:46 is striking, as is the fact that the presence of LGM 1 accounts for what was going on with the young man in 14:51–52.⁸⁹ But without considerable additional evidence for why the letter should be viewed as a forgery, these facts can only appear ambiguous. Curiosity about these incomplete elements of the canonical story may have been the motivation, and improved clarity might have been the *point* of the additions, so the fact

89. The only detail that I consider to be suspiciously self-authenticating is the form of the gospel saying in Il.16: “From him who has not shall be taken away.” The first half of this saying was quoted by Clement in *Stromateis* I.1.14.1 and VII.10.55.7 (Smith, *CA*, 41). Put together, the resultant saying differs from the three preserved forms; it reads: τῷ ἔχοντι προστεθήσεται τοῦ δὲ μὴ ἔχοντος ἀρθήσεται. Smith noted that this is a simpler, more balanced saying. He thought the simpler form might be due to abbreviation, but a form-critical perspective would likely label the resultant saying more original. Crossan (*In Parables*, 77) has noticed that the three versions of this saying preserved in Mark 4:25 (= Matthew 13:12 and Luke 8:18), Q (= Matthew 25:29 and Luke 19:26), and the gospel of Thomas 88 differ from each other precisely in attempting to explain how one can take away from a person who has nothing. He proposed that the original form of this proverb was like a Zen koan in that it verbalized a logical impossibility, and his reconstruction (in English) corresponds to what we find here. This particular version seems too “original” to be found only in Clement, though his citations of the first half of the saying in the *Stromateis* do show that he knew a version independent of the other gospel versions.

that certain elements of the story become more comprehensible through these additions is not unequivocal evidence for an attempt to make the resultant passages look more original.⁹⁰ The evidence in fact supports the other position. The letter itself does not attempt to present the insertions as more original compared to the canonical text; it presents them as *subsequent* additions to that text.

Another significant issue Murgia raised is that the copy of the letter contains no serious errors indicative of a normal history of scribal transmission. The errors that are made, however, are not the type a scribe would make but rather the type a modern *author* would make: “the author, like most modern Greeks, cannot tell his smooth from his rough breathings.”⁹¹ The lack of conspicuous errors was already noted by Smith.⁹² In Smith’s opinion there are indications that the scribe who produced the Mar Saba fragment was a scholar who made few expected errors and might therefore have been meticulous enough to have studied and corrected the manuscript before making his copy.⁹³ Smith had also noticed the presence of modern errors in breathings; this is his interpretation of both facts:

These [modern] errors [in breathings] do not prove that the manuscript he [the scribe] copied was incorrect in these points; nor does the usual correctness of his spelling prove that it was generally correct. He probably copied by reading the phrases and then repeating them as he wrote them down. Therefore it is not surprising that what he wrote should sometimes reflect either his knowledge or his pronunciation, rather than the reading of the text he was copying.⁹⁴

Smith further suggests that the manuscript upon which the copy is based may have lain in the monastery for a millennium without being copied and therefore did not have a

90. Compare Grant, Review, 62.

91. *LM*, 40, 60.

92. E.g. *CA*, 3: “For the most part...the manuscript is amazingly correct, especially considering the small size and obvious speed of the writing.”

93. *CA*, 3–4, 289. This possibility was also suggested to him by Benedict Einarson (p. 289).

94. *CA*, 2.

lengthy transmission history.⁹⁵ Though Smith's explanations are plausible, the lack of obvious, serious errors indicative of transmission would seem to weigh in Murgia's favour.

Murgia's point concerning a seal of authenticity and his argument about textual transmission have some force to them, but they are not convincing in themselves; his study succeeds in making the possibility of forgery seem plausible but not necessary.⁹⁶ His perspective on the document noticeably lacks a convincing rationale for why a forgery such as this would be made in the first place. His explanation appears to be that the document was created for the purpose of satire or self-amusement, for the letter seems to him to read as a humorous parody of both Clement and Mark.⁹⁷ Murgia's perception of parody is an uncommon one, though not quite unique.⁹⁸ Whatever our own perceptions, we still need to ask whether an interest in making Mark and Clement look a little funnier can account for all the effort involved in preparing a forgery that so successfully imitates Clement's vocabulary, verbal associations, comparisons and metaphors, forms of reference, formulas for beginning sentences, use and frequency of prepositions, syntax, and basic thought,⁹⁹ along with Mark's "redactional" language,

95. "Score," 451. See his conjectures about the text's transmission in *CA*, 285–90 and *SG*, 144–47. He anticipated many if not most of the arguments against the letter's authenticity, though those who argue for forgery do not normally cite his counter-arguments.

96. Smith, "Score," 451. It is interesting to note that neither Murgia nor Musurillo imagines that the letter might be twentieth-century. It is the biblical scholars, following Quesnell ("Evidence," 55), who are prone to remark that the document, if modern, must have been written after the publication of the index (fourth) volume of Stählin's critical edition of Clement's works in 1936. Perhaps scholars trained in Koine Greek have more difficulty imagining someone creating a forgery in Classical Greek without the use of an index.

97. *LM*, 39–40, 60, 61, 62.

98. Cf. Mullins, "Papias and Clement," 192: "Mark after Peter's death may have the same style, but he certainly tends to caricature his earlier work."

99. Including Clement's ideas recorded in other authors, for instance his two traditions about the construction of Mark's gospel contained in Eusebius. I am citing, almost verbatim, the categories Smith used to analyze the attribution of the letter to Clement (*CA*, 67–75), leaving out the categories that other scholars have mentioned as seeming least compelling (e.g. euphony and clausulae).

theological emphases, and literary techniques.¹⁰⁰ We should also ask how this forger has benefited from his labour. If it is a forgery, “the pseudonymous writer...has waited patiently for his joke to see the light of day.”¹⁰¹

II.2. *The Controversy Sparked by Quentin Quesnell*

Though Murgia’s examination has perhaps offered the best reasons to suspect forgery that we have encountered thus far, his arguments do not in fact account for why the question of modern forgery has been so prevalent in this case. The current impression that study of longer Mark is bedeviled by accusations of forgery is mainly the result of long-standing *misrepresentations* of what certain other scholars have had to

100. The congruence with Markan composition will become apparent in the chapters exploring longer Mark’s use of Markan literary devices.

101. Danker, Review, 316. Murgia also raised the issue of the apparent contradiction between the letter writer’s injunction to Theodore in II.12 to use an oath to bolster a half-truth and Clement’s comments in the *Stromateis* that a true Christian would not use oaths. This point has been raised by Kümmel (“Jahrzehnt,” 302, citing verbal comments made by H. von Campenhausen), Merkel (“Appendix,” 108 n. 5, repeating Kümmel’s comments) and Levin (“Early History,” 4273). Levin clearly accepted the authenticity of the letter, but considered it conceivable that Clement’s recommendation could “be due to a malignant motive on the part of a pseudo-Clement, to bring discredit upon a father of the church and perhaps upon Christian orthodoxy as a whole....” It would be helpful to review what Clement says about oaths. In *Stromateis* VII.8 Clement reasoned that Christians should never feel a need to use an oath, for the trustworthiness of Christians should be attested through the way they live their lives. An honest life is itself “a sure and decisive oath.” He wrote: “For he ought, I think, to maintain a life calculated to inspire confidence towards those without, so that an oath may not even be asked; and towards himself and with those with whom he associates, good feeling, which is voluntary righteousness.” Clement went on to say that “The Gnostic swears truly, but is not apt to swear, having rarely recourse to an oath, just as we have said.” This comment makes plain that Clement acknowledged that there were times when a Christian *would* swear an oath. I presume that he had in mind situations in which the other party has had insufficient opportunity to appreciate the Christian’s truthfulness through witness of prior conduct. I would imagine that the situation with which Theodore is faced in his dealings with Carpocratians would qualify as such an occasion. In the *Stromateis* Clement was preaching that general truthfulness of life is important for a Christian and has a good effect on others. In the letter, the issue concerns the need to combat what was, to Clement, a heinous Christian sect by denying that its principles were founded on an authentic apostolic writing. The letter writer attempts to characterize this assertion as essentially the truth, reasoning that the longer gospel the Carpocratians know is not really the mystical gospel (I.11–15; II.11–14; see n. 87). This is not especially devious for Clement. Notice that in the chapter of the *Stromateis* which follows his discussion of oaths (VII.9), Clement went on to note that sometimes the gnostic will, “medicinally, as a physician for the sake of the sick, ...deceive or tell an untruth...” (see CA, 53).

say about the document, beginning with the inaccurate impression that Quentin Quesnell's influential article was offered as an argument that Morton Smith forged the letter.¹⁰²

Smith himself is largely responsible for this misleading impression. He immediately responded to Quesnell's article with the characterization "Quesnell insinuates that I forged the MS,"¹⁰³ and staunchly maintained this view despite Quesnell's rejection of this characterization of his article. Quesnell had responded:

Dr. Smith feels the point of my article was to prove that he forged the text. If that had been my point, I would have stated it clearly. He would not have had to compose his reply in terms like "insinuates...suggests...insinuation...suspicion...etc." ...I did state the real point clearly. It was a general point of scientific method, which is why it interested me. ...The point was—and remains—that a person who introduces an exciting new manuscript find to the world has the basic responsibility to make the manuscript available for scientific examination.¹⁰⁴

On a personal level, Quesnell did believe that Smith forged the document. But at the time he recognized that the evidence for this was "purely negative" and susceptible to revision on the basis of better evidence. For this reason his beliefs about the authenticity of the document were not at issue in his article.¹⁰⁵ What did concern him

102. Quesnell, "Evidence." This was a very influential article, and Quesnell's reservations about accepting the document have been repeated by Edward C. Hobbs in *LM*, 59; Grelot, *L'origine*, 87; Crossan, *Four Other Gospels*, 100–103; Kümmel, "Jahrzehnt," 302; Meyer, "Youth," 130; and elsewhere, not counting the times his reservations have been sensationalized into a hypothetical account of how Smith forged the document.

103. Smith, "Authenticity," 197. In his assessment of the first decade of investigation into longer Mark ("Score," 450), Smith reiterated his impression in an unfortunately memorable statement: "Quesnell's denial was part of an absurd attempt to prove me the author of the text. Unfortunately, nobody else has had so high an opinion of my classical scholarship."

104. Quesnell, "Reply," 200. Crossan (*Four Other Gospels*, 102–103) offers a similar summary of this scholarly interchange.

105. Quesnell mentions his beliefs only in his rejoinder: "As for the content, I find it quite harmless and in no way implausible for the period in question. ...I do not find the style typical of Clement, in spite of the careful adherence to his vocabulary. But that must be argued elsewhere; it was not even mentioned in my article." He again attempted to clarify his purpose in a letter he wrote to me (composed on June 9, 1997): "Thanks, first, for reassuring me that you appreciate the real issue for me at that time was the matter of method." Quesnell had recently read a number of studies of forgeries, and when reading Smith's book "everything seemed so familiar. All the characteristics of a hoax were present; all the classic mistakes that popular summaries like Goodspeed's warn against were being made. I listed them and drew the scientific conclusion that had to be drawn—until further and better evidence appears, this has to

was Smith's decision to present his colleagues with mere photographs of the text. According to Quesnell, Smith's approach of not producing the original for scientific study and concentrating his analysis solely on content is congruent with the pattern of known forgers; that fact *in itself* (i.e. not content or any other reason) *theoretically* leaves the possibility of modern forgery wide open.¹⁰⁶ This is not an accusation that Smith forged the document or even that it *is* a forgery—only an assertion that Smith needlessly created a situation that makes acceptance of the document problematic.¹⁰⁷ Quesnell's "general point of scientific method" is "that the primary test of authenticity is examination of the manuscript."¹⁰⁸ It was therefore within the context of a concern for how an important manuscript discovery should be presented to the scientific world that he offered his arguments to the effect that, if Smith had the necessary resources to find and authenticate the document in the late fifties, then so did a potential forger have them to create the document.¹⁰⁹ If the content could in theory have been imitated by the time of the discovery, physical analysis is necessary to rule out the possibility of recent origin (e.g. analysis of the ink, the smoothness of the pen strokes, etc.).

It is section III, "Further Questions for Smith," that has led some readers to agree with Smith that Quesnell, despite his flat denial, was actually attempting to argue that

be judged a forgery. ...Did I personally think Smith (in collaboration with 'the one who knows') had forged the document? Of course I did. But that was not the point of the article. Why did I not make it the point of the article? Because it was a conclusion based on negative evidence. All that followed from the evidence made available was that the document could have been produced anywhere between 1936 and 1958." Cf. Beskow's impression of the issue (*Strange Tales*, 102): "Morton Smith has made an indignant counterattack, in which he declares that Quesnell accused him of forgery, but I cannot see that he has any reason for this"; and that of Levin ("Early History," 4273 n. 6): "Quesnell (1975:52ff.) objects that in the absence of any physical evidence the handwritten text might have been added as late as 1958, any time before Smith discovered it"; concerning the matter of whether Quesnell meant to "impute Smith's honesty," Levin states "That is not and should not be in question" (4273 n. 6).

106. "Reply," 201.

107. "Reply," 200–201.

108. "Evidence," 53; "Reply," 200. Smith continually asserted that content is the only determinant (note "Score," 451: "The question has to be settled by the objective evidence, above all the details of literary style").

109. "Evidence," 56 n. 16; "Reply," 201.

the letter is a forgery by implying that Smith created it and then used deception in his book to cover his tracks. His questions are: 1) "In what sense does Smith's historical sketch of Jesus and early Christianity...result from his research into the meaning of the letter?"; 2) "Can any scholarly reason be assigned for most of the documentation the book includes?"; 3) "How much of the text of CA was actually seen by the many scholars named as readers?"; 4) "Why is there such a high percentage of inaccuracies in such a serious study?"; and 5) "Is there any connection between the dedications of CA and SG?"

This is a peculiar assortment of questions, especially in the context of a study that focuses on a point of methodology. Any reader might suppose that some common theme unites them, and assume they are part of the challenge to Smith's manner of presenting the document. Are these questions further attempts to show that Smith *could* have forged the document? In one sense they are. Quesnell suggests, following Nock, that the letter could, theoretically, be a "mystification for the sake of mystification," meaning, presumably, a forgery devised for no evident purpose except to make people wonder what on earth the whole thing is about. These questions are meant in part to show that Smith's behaviour is "puzzling" and "mystifying," "whether or not the Clement letter is a 'mystification'."¹¹⁰ Though overly personal in its formulation, the point seems to be that, in view of the fact that examination of the document is the only way to rule out recent origin, and, considering that scholars who create forgeries often withhold the document from scrutiny, the evidence Smith offers us (his book and his behaviour) is not only scientifically unsound but also gives us little to put our trust in. One rationale for these questions (or at least 2–4), then, is that we need to examine the document rather than to content ourselves with Smith's presentation of the

110. "Evidence," 67, 58.

evidence.¹¹¹ It is only in the strangest of the questions that Quesnell poses to Smith that we could rightly talk of insinuations, but even here what Quesnell seems to be insinuating is that the mass of evidence Smith has supplied is not only mainly irrelevant to the issue of the time of origin of the letter but would lead us to wonder whether it is intentionally so. Quesnell asks whether the dedications of the two books are meant to be understood together, pointing out that the scholarly book is dedicated to a scholar whom Smith knew did not accept the Clementine authorship of the letter (A. D. Nock) and that the popular version is written “For The One Who Knows.” Quesnell was giving an example of how a person could be left with the impression that Smith offered hints or clues that it is a hoax, in this case a dedication to the one who knows it is a forgery (e.g. someone Smith enlisted to do the writing).¹¹²

It is not difficult to appreciate how this scientific point could be understood as an unscientific way of saying something else, especially considering the oblique connection that some of these “Further Questions” have to the valid scientific point made in the first two sections of his article. Smith’s decision to interpret these questions as an accusation of forgery is easy to comprehend once we realize that Quesnell had written to Smith on November 15, 1973 and voiced the matters he would later raise in his article, expecting Smith to acknowledge to him that he forged the letter as a “controlled study.”¹¹³ On the whole, however, Smith misinterpreted the reasons Quesnell wished

111. His illustrations of how much unnecessary scholarly minutiae exist in this book, and of what he believes to be a representative sampling of the high proportion of mistakes, I believe, are meant to accentuate the little attention Smith paid to the important matter of the physical characteristics of the manuscript (six pages), on which this entire edifice is raised.

112. Cf. “Evidence,” 54 n. 12. Nock’s intuition was that the letter was an *ancient* forgery (“not later than the fourth century”), as Quesnell himself notes (“Evidence,” 54 n. 11), but Quesnell informs me that the above characterization of his implication is basically accurate, to the best of his recollection.

113. Private correspondence. He tells me that “the experiment described hypothetically on 57f. of my article was what I thought actually happened. This was spelled out more directly in a precis and outline of my article sent on December 27, 1973 to NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES: ...Perhaps if a serious scholar became convinced that a controlled study of diverging apologetic interpretations was needed for the improvement of scientific method, he might consider that adequate justification for creating one strictly controllable piece of evidence with which to get the study under way.”

to ask the questions he raised in the published article, particularly Quesnell's reason for attempting to prove that Smith already held his views about Jesus to which he said the text led him.

What Quesnell was doing actually becomes clearer when we consider his initial response to Smith's *SG*, in his review article for *National Catholic Reporter* entitled "'Secret Gospel': Improbable Puzzle."¹¹⁴ His focus there was on the scholarly "game" Smith was playing, "a game professionals love but usually play only among themselves":

The rules are simple: (1) Take a text that looks insignificant and trivial, but which has never been satisfactorily explained. (2) Suggest an explanation consistent with the text, but involving the greatest possible reconstruction of history, the more bizarre and scandalous the better. (3) Try not to contradict other texts or other evidence. (4) Try to show your reconstruction suggests plausible interpretations of other obscure texts. The winner is the player who creates the most fantastic reconstruction (under rule 2) most within the limits (of rules 3 and 4).

Quesnell goes on to explain that Smith "sets his game entry in the context of a 1958 discovery of his," with the result that "his game entry [is] no more probable but only a lot more fun." Quesnell states in this review, as he did later when he wrote "Evidence," that he considered the text Smith chose to have no true bearing on his reconstruction of early Christianity:

Are those 21 lines [of Greek] as exciting as Smith's reconstruction of Christian origins? Well, hardly. ...A resurrection and a lesson on the kingdom can easily relate to baptism, so Smith has no trouble fitting those 21 lines into his historical reconstruction. True, he tells the story as if reading those 21 lines gave him the ideas for the history, and as if he then went to texts of the New Testament and early Fathers only to check them out and confirm them. Perhaps so. But all the elements of his reconstruction could just as well have been found (with the same skillful juggling) in those other texts by themselves.¹¹⁵

114. November 30, 1973, p. 12.

115. Cf. the response of Etienne Trocmé (Review, 292): "On ne peut se défendre de l'impression que M. S. a greffé sur cette monographie relevant de la critique littéraire une théorie personnelle sur les origines du christianisme dont l'originalité masque imparfaitement la grande fragilité."

These thoughts reveal something more of the impetus behind three of Quesnell's Further Questions (1, 3, and 4). When attempting to show that Smith already held these conclusions about Jesus (e.g. as a libertine, hypnotizing magician) that Smith claimed in *The Secret Gospel* to have been led to by the new text, Quesnell was following up on his initial reaction that Smith was playing a scholarly game for erudites and making it more fun by *pretending* the manuscript had forced these unexpected conclusions on him. Quesnell was under the impression that Smith was projecting a phony image of his slowly coming to realize five points of scholarship that should be familiar to any New Testament scholar: "My mind was on showing the implausibility of his tale about gradually growing familiarity and slowly dawning enlightenment."¹¹⁶ His attempt to show that Smith was already well-versed in these basic matters of New Testament scholarship was not, as Smith and many others have thought, directly related to his personal belief that Smith forged the text. Quesnell could hardly have shared Smith's inference of a motive for forging the document in order to confirm prior views, since Quesnell made it clear in the words quoted above, as well as in "Evidence" and "Reply," that the basis for this theory "hardly" needed this text, which

116. Private correspondence. The five points are: "1. union with Jesus; 2. the work of the Spirit: 3 magic (=miracles and exorcisms); 4. ascent into the heavens; and 5. liberation from the law" ("Evidence." 59). These are standard points of New Testament scholarship, though I do not get the same impression reading *SG* that Smith pretends not to have been familiar with them (what strikes me as unusual is the projection of modesty about his own abilities and his reverent respect for, and deference to, the opinions of other scholars). The issue, as I see it, is whether Smith's reconceptualization of these five issues as having a single origin in a particular secret ritual of the historical Jesus was a slow realization based on study of the letter, and Quesnell's evidence does not really address this. He tells me now that his quotations and paraphrases from Smith's earlier works were meant to show that Smith knew about these five points before discovering the document (though clearly some references address different points relating to Smith's reconceptualization of these points), which does not seem particularly relevant to the question of how and when Smith came to see them as related and to interpret them within the framework of the practice of magic rather than religion. However, by including points related to Smith's theory about Jesus the libertine magician (e.g. secret doctrines and rites, and [sexual] libertinism, a term which extends beyond the ordinary connotations of the phrase "liberation from the law"), he gives the impression that Smith *could have* subscribed to the magical paradigm earlier—which is not evidence that he did. Though he disagrees with me on this matter, the general impression Quesnell creates here imposes a magical framework on Smith's earlier *theological* understanding of these themes.

seemed to him “quite harmless and in no way implausible for the period in question.”¹¹⁷

Quesnell’s attempt to draw Smith’s discovery within the compass of an area he was currently studying¹¹⁸—belaboured to the point of claiming that if Smith could authenticate the text, then a contemporary of Smith (who must also be like Smith) could have forged it—paved the way for a popular conception of Smith forging the document in order to promote an irreverent view of Jesus. Nevertheless, it was Smith’s rebuttal in *CBQ* 38 which did the most to create the impression that Quesnell intended to accuse him of forgery, not just because he redescribed Quesnell’s intentions so but also because Smith avoided responding to practically all of the *relevant* issues Quesnell raised. Quesnell was certainly right that Smith did nothing to help put the issue of forgery to rest; his response only clarified his own arguments based entirely on content.

II.2.1. *A Forgery to Validate Prior Beliefs?*

One notable result of this exchange was the emergence of a general impression that Smith perhaps forged the document as a proof text for an irreverent theory about Jesus. The notion that Smith only pretended to come to his conclusions about Jesus the magician as a result of studying the letter continues to have an impact on those who have understood Quesnell’s article the way Smith did. The impression that Smith was being dishonest is magnified by Quesnell’s calm and confident response to Smith’s

117. “Reply.” 201; in a note attached to this point he refers to his initial assessment in the *National Catholic Reporter*. In his letter to me he points to his statement in “Evidence,” 58–59 that “The ‘background’ seems rather to be a theory which—with considerable creative ingenuity, to be sure—could have been spun out of New Testament and patristic texts, whether or not the letter had ever been discovered” (and again to his review).

118. As he notes in “Reply,” 200 and n. 1.

objection that his earlier writings were being “distorted”:¹¹⁹ “Since in each instance my documentation is complete, I am quite content to let my honesty be judged by any reader willing to check the pages concerned.”¹²⁰

Taking Quesnell at his word would entail accepting that Smith was less than honest about his previous work, which in turn would lead one to wonder what he had to hide. In his article, Quesnell took on the airs of a technically and ethically superior scholar, and it is interesting to see how many other scholars found this persona compelling enough on its own to resolve the matter of Smith’s prior views in Quesnell’s favour.¹²¹ My own assessment, however, is that he has not, on the whole, offered plausible evidence for the points he wanted to illustrate.

One basically correct statement Quesnell made was that “as early as 1941 [Smith] is interested in religious ritual as producing a hypnotic, ecstatic [*sic*] experience of ‘ascent into the heavens.’”¹²² It is correct if we remove the word “ecstatic” and change the word “ritual” to “*a particular ritual*” in order to remove the nonsensical notions

119. See Smith, “Authenticity,” 198; “Regarding,” 624: “the passages cited by Quesnell as proofs simply do not say what he said”; “Score,” 450–51: “Quesnell, having persuaded himself that I *could* have forged the text, had no difficulty in making up evidence that I *did* do so. For that purpose he simply distorted passages from my earlier works.”

120. The quotation is from Quesnell, “Reply,” 202. His evidence is presented on pp. 61–62 of “Evidence.” The debate can be traced through Quesnell, “Evidence,” 59–60; Smith, “Authenticity,” 198; Quesnell, “Reply,” 202 and n. 13; Smith, “Score,” 450–51.

121. At the time Quesnell read Smith’s books he “held him without peer among Americans in his scholarly rigor,” but felt that “in CA, all his critical powers seemed to have disappeared,” and this bothered him enough to wonder what had happened (Private correspondence). He wrote to Smith in 1973 with his concerns, but Smith did not address them. Hence the attitude he takes toward Smith’s scholarship in his article “Evidence” seems to owe something to disillusionment. In any case, Quesnell’s arguments about Smith’s prior views were, according to Smith, “adapted without acknowledgement by L. Moraldi in an amusing attack on the Italian edition...” (see Smith, “Score,” 451 n. 4). Beskow (*Strange Tales*, 103) cited Quesnell (and unnamed “others”) as having shown that Smith held these views before finding the document (“Genuine or not, the fragment has not brought out any new knowledge of Jesus. It has only been used by Smith as a tool for promoting ideas that existed beforehand in his own head”). In “Regarding,” 624, Smith pointed out that there were no others. Charlesworth and Evans have also repeated this notion, now filtered through Neusner’s take on Quesnell (“Jesus in the Agrapha and Apocryphal Gospels,” 526–27): “That the epistle apparently (and conveniently) lends a measure of support to Smith’s controversial contention that Jesus was a magician, perhaps even a homosexual, only adds to the suspicion that this Clementine epistle may be a fake.”

122. “Evidence,” 59.

that Smith thought all religious ritual did this and had an interest in ritual for that reason. What Smith noted, in his 1973 book *SG*, was that in 1941, while in Jerusalem, he had read about a Jewish technique from late antiquity involving self-hypnosis as a means of permitting “the experience of ascending into the heavens and sitting on the throne of God.”¹²³ He found this information interesting because it was so similar to the sense of removal from time and space and general “disorientation” produced in the worship services at Mar Saba. From the perspective of three decades later he rightly wondered whether this experience from 1941 affected his interpretation of the longer gospel. Certainly it did. The similarity between what Quesnell noted about Smith’s previous ideas and what Smith actually said does not extend much beyond this, however.

Along with the aforementioned basically correct statement, Quesnell offered a panoply of quotations from three earlier works of Smith to demonstrate that prior to 1958 Smith already believed, in essence, that Jesus was a magician who practiced libertine rites of a sexual nature that were deliberately kept secret. I find none of this conveyed in the material he quoted, but let me begin this deconstruction by pointing out two kernels of truth in what Quesnell presents. Smith did believe prior to 1958 that Jesus *may have* been secretive at times. And he believed that there were secret doctrines in the early church. These are not unusual beliefs. Quesnell, however, discussed them as if they connoted something unusual. On the first point Quesnell quoted Smith this way: “In ‘Comments on Taylor’s Commentary on Mark’ he [Smith] pointed to certain ‘secrecy themes of Mark’s sources, possibly reflecting the behavior of Jesus himself.”¹²⁴ Smith was talking about Mark 8:38. What he said was this: “But it seems

123. Beskow, citing Quesnell, incorrectly represented the date at which Smith *discussed* a ritual of ascension (*Strange Tales*, 103); Smith discussed the ritual retrospectively in *SG*, not, as Beskow indicates, in 1941 when he first read about it.

124. “Evidence,” 60.

easier to explain the apparent distinction [i.e. ‘between Jesus and “the Son of Man”’] as a product of one of the secrecy themes of Mk’s sources (possibly reflecting the behavior of Jesus himself).” That is, in brackets (omitted by Quesnell) indicating extemporaneous speculation, Smith noted that Mark (he also cites Luke 9:26—a more striking example) may have preserved an historically accurate picture of Jesus referring indirectly to himself as the Son of Man, which he did for the purpose of keeping the volatile knowledge of his messianic consciousness a secret. With a little reworking, this becomes for Quesnell evidence that Smith pointed to “certain”—i.e. a number of—“secrecy themes” in Mark as evidence concerning the historical Jesus, rather than to “one of” those themes in Mark in relation to which the meaning of a particular apocalyptic Son of man saying may be understood.

So, yes, in Smith’s words, he considered it possible that “Jesus...practiced secrecy,”¹²⁵ but the belief concerned a messianic self-consciousness and had nothing to do with libertine teachings or a secret rite.

Quesnell also quoted Smith’s statement that “Jesus might have had good reason to limit some of his teaching [*sic*] to a hand-picked group”; however, with no indication of omission, Quesnell dropped the rest of the sentence, which puts the point in perspective: “Jesus might have had good reason to limit some of his teachings to a hand-picked group (Jn. 6.70), especially since one of that group eventually did betray him.”¹²⁶ Smith’s point, again, seems to be that the historical Jesus might have kept his conception of his eschatological role a secret,¹²⁷ for in this subsection of his paper on Taylor’s

125. “Comments,” 29.

126. Smith, “Comments,” 31. John 6:70 reads, “Jesus answered them, did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?” Cf. CA, 202: “As for the secret fact [i.e. concealed in the messianic secret]—it seems likely that Jesus did think he was the Messiah, and had obvious, prudential reasons to conceal his opinion. ...The question of Shemtov ben Shaprut...is worth repeating: If Jesus gave himself freely to his sacrificial death, why did he say that Judas Iscariot betrayed him?” In later writings Smith progressively eliminated the notion that Jesus had messianic (or political) aspirations in addition to his comparatively trivial vocation working as a charlatan (e.g. “Two Ascended,” 70–71 and n. 15).

127. Cf. SG, 85–87.

commentary, dealing with Mark 4:11, Smith's interpretation of Mark's point is that Jesus spoke in parables so that the Jews would not recognize the substance of his message and turn to be saved.¹²⁸ Smith considered this message to have been offered as polemic against a Jewish claim that had Jesus been the messiah, their scholars would have recognized it. In defense that this was *Mark's* agenda, Smith noted that maybe there was some historical truth to Mark's scenario; after all, the meanings of the parables are so hard to determine that maybe they were meant to be obscure.¹²⁹ Thus, as Smith himself asserted, "The other passages cited by Quesnell deal with eschatological and messianic secrets and have nothing to do with any secret rite."¹³⁰ By decontextualizing these quotations and placing them together with the erroneous claim that Smith "insisted against Taylor that the *mysterion* of Mk 4:11 could connote 'secret rites' as well as 'esoteric knowledge communicated to initiates,'"¹³¹ Quesnell produced a general impression that Smith already believed that Jesus practiced secret rites.

Quesnell set these quotations after others implying a libertine dimension to this supposed ritual secrecy. He offered the summary remark that "In 1956 he [Smith] described liberation from the law as the aspect of Jesus' teaching which the early Church was most embarrassed by and which it was most constrained to conceal." Again, I think this paraphrase barely resembles what Smith argued. On the pages Quesnell cited¹³² Smith addressed the issue that some of the legal or halakic material in the synoptics defends the behaviour of the disciples (i.e. the church) whereas others focus only on Jesus, particularly "the most extreme examples...e.g. Mk. 7:15." The point of

128. "Comments," 29–31.

129. "Comments," 29, 31; the same interpretation, but without reference to obscurity on Jesus' part, is offered in Smith's "Forms, Motives," 157 (published 1972).

130. "Authenticity," 198.

131. Smith made no such claim, either implicitly or explicitly. Smith agreed with Taylor that the "mysteries" are secrets (not rites) and only dealt with the question of whether all of them are *open* secrets. The basis of Smith's objections presumes that *μυστήριον* is conceived cognitively rather than ritually.

132. "Jewish Elements," 95–96.

his article is that much that is Jewish in the gospels reflects the environment and theological concerns of various Christian groups and cannot for that reason be presumed to be early or authentic. This fact of “progressive Judaizing” makes it difficult to decide whether legal questions were issues in Jesus’ life or were primarily later church matters.¹³³ Smith reserved judgment on specific passages, but offered as a general conclusion the comment, “it may be...that Jesus had less regard than his disciples for the standards of other Jewish groups, and that only as the Church settled down to life as a Jewish sect did it become concerned to justify itself in Jewish terms and to attribute this justification to Jesus.”¹³⁴ In this and other early writings Smith was well aware of the fringe aspects of Jewish society, “the vague realm bounded by magic on one hand and philosophy on the other.”¹³⁵ Nevertheless he still classified Jesus as a “divinely inspired disturber of the established order” belonging to “the long line of prophets and rebels and religious individualists of the stamp of Spinoza and the Baal Shem Tov”; Jesus’ motivation is explained in terms of “the individual’s response to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in defiance of the customs and authorities of the society around him.”¹³⁶ That is, Smith, like most scholars, thought that Jesus would have understood his own actions within the framework of the will of the God of Israel. This does not sound like his later view of Jesus as “one possessed by *a* spirit and thereby made the son of *a* god,” whose spiritual activity relied on intrinsically efficacious “magical procedures.”¹³⁷ Jesus’ teachings are not described as lawless in the sense that Quesnell infers, and the closest Smith came to implying that embarrassment had anything to do with this later Judaizing is the remark,

133. “Jewish Elements,” 95.

134. “Jewish Elements,” 95.

135. “Jewish Elements,” 90.

136. “Jewish Elements,” 96.

137. *SG*, 105 (italics added).

An original man may take an extreme position from which his followers afterwards try to climb down. Such a man may speak from impulse, act from conscience, and leave it to his followers to justify his sayings and palliate his actions. Such men appear often in the Bible and have been frequent in Judaism.¹³⁸

I see no implication in this that Jesus' disciples concealed their leader's libertine teachings.¹³⁹

As far as the secret doctrine possessed by the church is concerned, it is not at this time defined or attributed to Jesus. Smith pointed to 1 Corinthians 2:6–7, Colossians 2:2 and Ephesians 5:32 as evidence that the “secrets” (*μυστήρια*) were not always “open secrets,” adding only that in “I Cor. Paul says plainly that there is a wisdom which he preaches [only] among the ‘initiate’....”¹⁴⁰ Quesnell gives this a specifically sexual dimension by saying that Smith had interpreted the “‘mystery of the kingdom of God’ (Mk 4:11)...in the context of a ‘similar distinction’ by which the Tannaitic literature kept secret all material ‘dealing with forbidden sexual relationships.’”¹⁴¹ Here one does not need first to look up the quotation to become dubious about Quesnell’s use of his evidence. The book Quesnell is citing is a study in form criticism. Smith was not

138. “Jewish Elements,” 96.

139. In “Comments” (1955) Smith argued that there could not be a simple solution to the contradictory stories and sayings concerning Jesus’ attitude toward the Law. He accepted that Mark 10:2–12 “implicitly denies the validity” of the law on divorce, but he appeared to agree with E. Percy that “the most extreme [saying], Mk. 7.15,” should be rejected (p. 44 and n. 33). In the similarly careful and judicious discussion in “Pauline Problems,” 107–131 (125–26) he pointed out that Jesus’ voicing of opinions on the law is a “typically Jewish thing, and those opinions would probably not have been handed down unless some early Christian community *had* [contra Munck] maintained a completely Jewish standpoint. Only to a community which still thought the halakah important would such halakic decisions be significant....” To this he added only that such pericopae are “distinct and, one is tempted to say, isolated, in the Gospels” and pointed out that “This is not to say that it is also the earliest and most reliable”; his reasoning, as his previous article noted, is that there is secondary Judaizing in these sources. This is a long way off from what he would write in *Magician* (p. 23; cf. 65): “In sum, the bulk of the questions about Jesus’ legal teachings are of dubious historicity, and, for what they are worth, indicate that such legal teaching as he did was mostly *ad hoc*, in attempts to answer objections that arose primarily from his and his disciples’ libertine practice.” To my knowledge, Smith first expressed his libertine understanding of Jesus in the 1967 articles “Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law” (presented in 1965) and “The Reason for the Persecution of Paul and the Obscurity of Acts.”

140. “Comments,” 29.

141. Quesnell, “Evidence,” 60.

interpreting the meaning of μυστήριον in Mark 4:11 with respect to another Tannaitic saying. The context of the comparison is a discussion of parallels between Tannaitic literature and the gospels of statements that are similar in form but contain a fixed difference of the sort that might lead one to suspect deliberate revision. Smith is illustrating the fact that “it is common to find a saying which was applied to God in TL applied to Jesus in the Gospels.”¹⁴² After noting Mark 4:11 what Smith said was this:

A similar distinction was recognized by the Tannaïm between material suitable for public teaching and that reserved for secret teaching, as we learn from *Hagigah T 2.1* (233): “The (passages of the Old Testament dealing with) forbidden sexual relationships are not to be expounded to three (at a time,) but may be expounded to two; and the account of creation not to two, but it may be expounded to a single hearer; and (Ezekiel’s vision of) the chariot may not be expounded to a single hearer unless he be learned in the Law and of good understanding.”¹⁴³

In other words, the comparison concerns *the fact of* a distinction between public and secret teaching. Mark 4:11 is not interpreted by Smith in terms of secret teachings about forbidden sexual relationships (which, by the way, is not libertine teaching but rationale for the Torah’s definitions of degrees of incest) any more than it is interpreted with respect to any of the other subjects in the passage.¹⁴⁴ In fact, in an essay published long after the discovery of the letter (but I suspect written many years earlier, considering how similar its ideas are to those in “Comments”), Smith ascribed the Markan theme of Jesus offering secret explanations to the disciples to later church practice:

One noticeable feature of these appended explanations, including that in chapter 13, is that they are so often represented as secret. This undoubtedly reflects the practice of a church which made a sharp distinction between the more and the less advanced (cf. Heb. 5:11ff.; 1 Cor. 3:1ff.). Here again the Jesus who taught his moral regulations and explanations of difficult texts (in secret, to the closed circle of the church) could well

142. Smith, *Tannaitic Parallels*, 152.

143. *Tannaitic Parallels*, 156. The explanatory comments in brackets were added by Smith. The comma after “time” inside the bracket is as printed.

144. On this passage, see Jeremias, *Jerusalem*, 237–40; idem, *Eucharistic Words*, 127–28.

have been the projection backward of the Christian teacher of a later generation, in this instance not the wandering preacher but the incipient bishop. The contrast between the more and the less advanced serves also an apologetic purpose against other Christian groups. Here, it says, is the true teaching which was privately revealed to the closest followers; accept no substitutes.¹⁴⁵

As far as magic is concerned, I have not found any instances prior to 1958 where Smith used this word to denote the best paradigm within which to consider Jesus' miracles. Like other scholars, he recognized that there were magical elements in the gospel stories and placed no particular emphasis on them. When speaking of these activities he regularly chose the sanguine term "miracles," with its mainstream theological implications,¹⁴⁶ and the neutral term "exorcisms."¹⁴⁷ In the years before 1958 Smith still conceptualized the stories of Jesus' miracles and exorcisms—magical elements and all—within the framework of conventional monotheistic Jewish religion.

145. Smith, "Forms, Motives," 158. Contrast Smith's later view, in *SG*, 84–85, where he argues that "the existence of such stories in Mark, our earliest Gospel, would presuppose an even earlier tradition that Jesus did in fact teach in secret."

146. Quesnell cited "Comments," 23 as evidence that "Smith's writings from before 1958, before he found the letter, show him reading Jesus' miracles as 'magic.'" But in "Comments," Smith was pointing out that Taylor appealed to *both* (what Taylor saw as) the magical elements in the gospels and the distinctive transcendence of magical elements in cures by words alone as evidence for primitive (authentic) tradition. The discussion revolves around Taylor's logic, and Smith nowhere indicated that he thought the miracles are magic. In fact, he pointed out, *contra* Taylor's opinion, that the presence of exorcisms in the gospels "is at least as likely to be a late feature as a 'primitive' one" for "they became more fashionable as the first century went on." In *Tannaitic Parallels* (the publication of his 1944 dissertation) the word "miracles" is used without further comment (e.g. pp. 81–84). At one point in his 1956 essay "Palestinian Judaism in the First Century" Smith discussed Palestinian sects that practiced magic, but even here Smith said nothing about Christians having such practices—this despite including Christian sects in his survey (pp. 107–108). In 1958, when Smith started to work on the letter, he set aside his investigation of Jesus as a *θεῖος ἀνὴρ* (he later published a few studies of the *θεῖος ἀνὴρ* concept, including, in 1965, *Heros and Gods*, written with Moses Hadas). When he wrote *CA*, he argued that magician is a better term than *θεῖος ἀνὴρ* because it is more encompassing (p. 228).

147. In order to imply that prior to 1958 Smith associated exorcism with magic, Quesnell speaks of Smith "being reminded by early Christian exorcisms of 'the widespread use of the [*sic*] Hebrew names in the magical texts'" (citing "Jewish Elements," 93). But Smith did not say that Christian exorcisms reminded him of the Hebrew names in magical texts (and therefore must be conceived in terms of magic rather than religion). Rather, he said that "the widespread use of Hebrew names in the magical texts is proof that he [Josephus] is not exaggerating" his "boasts" that "Jews of this period were famous exorcists." Smith was indicating that Jesus' exorcisms, far from being marginal activities, "may be considered typical of the religion at that time."

II.2.2. *Smith's Beliefs about Jesus and Mark prior to 1958*

The collection of quotations and paraphrases Quesnell offered to prove that Smith already held views about Jesus which he claimed he derived from investigation of the letter does not stand up to scrutiny.¹⁴⁸ What we do find in reading Smith's publications before 1958 (e.g. "Jewish Elements" and "Comments") is remarkably different from what Smith eventually argued concerning Jesus and Mark's gospel in *CA*, the manuscript of which was basically finished in 1966.¹⁴⁹ In his 1955 article on Taylor's commentary Smith constantly criticized Taylor for treating the Markan text as historically accurate and reliable. This criticism included Taylor's tendency to treat imperfect form as an indication of undeveloped tradition (i.e. accurate memory).¹⁵⁰ After writing *CA*, however, Smith was compelled to justify his own historicizing readings of Mark and LGM 1 by arguing that imperfect form does not necessarily mean secondary elaboration.¹⁵¹ In 1955 Smith argued the contentious point that it is *improbable* that Jesus himself was interested in sinners and kept their company.¹⁵² In *CA* he accepts company with sinners as congruent with the picture of a libertine or a magician.¹⁵³ In 1955 he criticized Taylor for thinking that the pre-Markan meaning of "in parables" in Mark

148. Smith mentioned ("Score," 450–51) that an associate editor of *CBQ* came to a similar conclusion from looking up the citations in *HTR*: "Smith deserves some redress. I took the trouble to check all *HTR* passages where S. claims Quesnell has misrepresented him, and S. certainly is correct. Q's reading of those passages is so inaccurate as to be irresponsible." That was my initial impression as well after looking up all of the quotations. I was puzzled enough by my disagreements with Quesnell's interpretations to ask him to reread those passages to see if he still thinks they support the points he used them to demonstrate. He did, and does, and offered me four pages of explanations that attest to the conscientiousness of his reading. His interpretations helped me see some of these passages in a different light, but I think he reads ideas into passages where the actual quotations and the general thrust of Smith's arguments do not bear them out.

149. He notes the year of its completion in *SG*, 76.

150. E.g. "Comments," 24 and n. 6.

151. *LM*, 13.

152. "Comments," 27–28; Q (i.e. Luke) 7:34 is said to have been "put...into the mouth of Jesus' enemies, to discredit them." The notion "was just as false as the charge that John the Baptist was crazy."

153. *CA*, 211, 262; cf. *Magician*, 43, 59.

4:11 was “riddles...which he [Mark] misapplied to Jesus’ parabolic teaching.”¹⁵⁴ In *CA* the same assumption becomes integral to his argument that the saying about “the mystery of the kingdom of God” is an improperly contextualized logion that originally referred to the rite of baptism.¹⁵⁵ Finally, Taylor is criticized for taking as factual the two incidents of Jesus telling his disciples what they will find when they go on ahead of him into a village and into Jerusalem (i.e. a colt tied up; a man carrying a jar of water). Indeed, Smith ridiculed Taylor for thinking that these two stories were something other than “unmistakable folk-tale material” and for overlooking the historical implausibilities they involve.¹⁵⁶ In an especially glaring reversal of this critique, his popular book treats these two stories as factual.¹⁵⁷

There is a great difference between the views Smith submitted to print just a few years before the *Letter to Theodore* came to light and those he expressed by the time *CA* was completed. The prior views are fairly standard and offer good arguments of his own making that can be used against his subsequent magical readings of the longer gospel and the gospels in general. Smith’s magical/libertine interpretation of the origin of Christianity and selectively fundamentalist reading of Mark within that perspective had not yet developed.¹⁵⁸ These emerged after 1955 and were still developing in the 1970s, for they are held in a more extreme form in his book *Jesus the Magician* and the articles “Pauline Worship as Seen by Pagans” and “Paul’s Arguments as Evidence of the Christianity from which He Diverged.”¹⁵⁹

154. “Comments,” 30.

155. *CA*, 178.

156. “Comments,” 47.

157. *SG*, 80. Smith also criticized Taylor for thinking Mark used repetition for “cross-reference” among pericopae (“Comments,” 31–32). This idea is accepted in *CA* (e.g. 136, 177); cf. “Merkel,” 137, 143.

158. NB “Jewish Elements,” 90: “To weigh the evidence we must first notice the nature of the Gospels. None is an account of Jesus’ life. The authors had evidently no interest in doing what is nowadays expected of biographers....”

159. See also the articles on his proposed magical rite of ascension (“Ascent to the Heavens,” “Origin and History,” and “Two Ascended”). When he died he was working on a manuscript entitled *Paul the Possessed*. Many of the parallels he offers between Christianity and magic seem inexplicably contrived.

II.3. *After Quesnell: the Issue of Smith's Integrity*

The familiar notion that Smith could have forged the document to substantiate his irreverent theories about Jesus has grown up around a misunderstanding of what Quesnell set out to do and managed to prove.¹⁶⁰ Nevertheless, a number of accounts about the early reception of the document written during the first two decades after the publication of Smith's work have repeated Smith's understanding that Quesnell accused him of forgery, and have mentioned this inadvertent scandal alongside the negative aspect of the reception of Smith's ideas about the historical Jesus in order to imply a general suspicion directed toward Smith. Schenke, for instance, began his synopsis by quoting at length malicious comments by Kümmel, Merkel, and Conzelmann, then mentioned Quesnell and proclaimed "Quesnell makes no secret of his suspicion that Smith might have forged the Clementine letter himself."¹⁶¹ The comment about Quesnell's views is accurate enough, but hardly representative of the scholarly reception of *CA* and unrelated to the negative things other scholars were saying about Smith. Beskow, on the other hand, capitalized on the mystique of possible forgery by discussing the document in connection with the problems involved in detecting modern forgeries.¹⁶² Despite some misrepresentations of Smith's position, his discussion is reasonably unbiased, and he argues that if the letter is a forgery, Smith certainly was

His arguments improved somewhat with successive publications. His article "Paul's Arguments" is actually quite thought-provoking—perhaps the best statement he made about the possibility of connecting libertinism to the historical Jesus.

160. E.g. Neusner's claims (in "Disgraced by Fraud" and *Refutation*) that Smith forged the document in order to insult Christianity and debase historical Jesus research with fabricated evidence that Jesus was a homosexual magician.

161. Schenke, "Mystery," 71. D. Betz (*LM*, 17) said something similar: "Taking advantage of an opportunity, it seems, he [Quesnell] 'metamorphizes' Smith into a combination of Dr. Faustus and Mephistopheles in order to suggest then by innuendos how the mystery had come about. 'He who knows' turns out to be Quesnell."

162. *Strange Tales*, 96–103.

not responsible for it.¹⁶³ In a review of Quesnell's concerns about authenticity, Crossan reiterated Smith's slant on the point of one of Quesnell's arguments: "If the text is a forgery, then, one might presume that the scholarship used by Smith to authenticate the document in 1973 [*sic*] was actually prepared to forge it in 1958."¹⁶⁴ Next Marvin Meyer added to this popular impression of controversy with his comment, "From the well-known statements of Quentin Quesnell to the more recent dispute over insinuations in Per Beskow's *Strange Tales about Jesus*, the scholarly discussions concerning the Mar Saba manuscript have been conducted within the context of expressed doubts and uncertainties about the authenticity of the text."¹⁶⁵ This is a vague comment, wherein Beskow's "insinuations" establishes the meaning of Quesnell's "well-known statements," and conjures an atmosphere of coded accusations, but Beskow insinuated nothing and argued very little one way or the other.¹⁶⁶

Our next turn in the maze of misrepresentations of what was actually said or shown in print brings us to Jacob Neusner's efforts to standardize the myth of a general suspicion about Smith. Under the pretense of rectifying the problems Smith caused for the area of historical Jesus research, Neusner felt free not only to refer to the *Letter to*

163. *Strange Tales*, 103. Beskow notes that LGM 1 and 2 offer almost no support for Smith's reconstruction of a magical rite. Beskow seemed inclined toward the possibility of an ancient forgery, though his observations do not take sufficient note of what Smith has said on each matter Beskow finds unusual (101). It should be noted that Murgia also claimed that Smith could not have forged the letter himself (*LM*, 60). He judged that Smith's Greek was not as good as that of the author of the letter and noted that, "upon analysis, Smith's book does not seem to have any of the formal elements of fraud. It does give evidence which allows his thesis to be refuted." In reference to Smith's diligence in examining all the possibilities and providing evidence against his own interpretations, Murgia proclaimed, "The only thing wrong with the book is its conclusion" (65). He did note, though, that Smith did have a sense of humour.

164. *Four Other Gospels*, 103. Smith had already answered this perceived attack by pointing out to Quesnell that he had never published anything on Clement before his studies of longer Mark ("Authenticity," 197 n. 7).

165. Meyer, "Beloved Disciple," 95. He previously made similar comments in "Youth," 130: "...the famous intimations of possible forgery (cf. Quesnell)...."

166. Smith's negative response to Beskow's book ("Regarding," 624) had nothing to do with any insinuations that Smith might have forged the letter. Smith was bothered by the fact that Beskow situated the discussion of longer Mark in the context of an interest in detecting modern forgery; Smith reproved him for that and for some misrepresentations of his views.

Theodore as “what must now be declared the forgery of the century” but even to claim that this “brilliant forgery,” this “out-and-out fakery,” was “exposed” by Quesnell.¹⁶⁷ Neusner does not hesitate to assure us that Quesnell’s rhetorical questions were a discreet way of accusing Smith of forgery, a tact adopted in order to avoid getting “sued for libel.”¹⁶⁸ He would also have us believe that Quesnell deserves due recognition as the unsung champion for “plenty of others” (cf. “more than a few” and “the widely held surmise”) who would have claimed Smith forged the document were they not afraid of being sued as well. Neusner is reinforcing a common folklore that has grown up around Smith’s own reading of Quesnell’s article.

Were there a single name added to back up the assertion that many people initially thought Smith forged the document I would not hesitate to grant that this is an *exaggeration*; but for evidence of those many who thought this, Neusner—and the others before him—always refer to supposed insinuations in print that do not hold up to scrutiny, and, surprisingly, never to those few which do. Perhaps Neusner expects us to assume that the fact that he supplies no names indicates only his respect for their reserve—the code of silence lives on! On the other hand, Smith is dead now, and the only person I am aware of who is now no longer afraid to accuse Smith of forgery is Neusner. That the survey by James H. Charlesworth and Craig A. Evans should point out that Neusner “knew the late Professor Smith as well as anyone” but say nothing about the hatred that fuels Neusner’s recent accusations is unfortunate.¹⁶⁹ One can only

167. *Refutation*, 28, 30, 29; cf. 167. Neusner’s excuse for attacking Smith in a review of books by Meier and Crossan is that these scholars helped “Rehabilitate a Field Disgraced by [Smith’s] Fraud.” Neusner does not mention the fact that Crossan accepts Smith’s designation “magician” for Jesus (*Historical Jesus*, 169) and fully integrates the longer gospel into his treatment of the evidence for Jesus, attributing it, unlike Smith, to a stage *earlier* than canonical Mark and, at least in this book on the historical Jesus, *to the same author who wrote the canonical gospel*.

168. “Refutation,” 30; “Disgraced by Fraud,” 174 n. 4, 176.

169. Charlesworth and Evans, “Jesus in the Agrapha and Apocryphal Gospels,” 526. Graham Stanton (*Gospel Truth?* 93) similarly notes Neusner’s opinion of forgery without mentioning Neusner’s defamatory purpose. Neusner changed his mind about Smith after Smith publicly denounced him at the 1984 AAR-SBL meeting.

wonder how much consideration of Smith the man, of Smith's analysis of the text, or of the text itself is displayed in Neusner's latest comments on the subject, for *The Secret Gospel* originally circulated with Neusner's own endorsement on the jacket:

This is a brilliant account of how Morton Smith reached a major discovery in the study of first-century Christianity. We have not only his conclusions and the way in which these are argued, but also his own life and thought as he reached them. The discovery itself ranks with Qumran and Nag Hammadi, Masada and the Cairo Geniza, but required more learning and sheer erudition than all of these together, both in the recognition of what has been found, and in the interpretation and explanation of the meaning of the find. All this Smith has done—and he tells us about it in a narrative of exceptional charm and simplicity.¹⁷⁰

According to Smith, Neusner had actually read the entirety of *CA* before its publication,¹⁷¹ so it is hard to imagine that he originally thought back in the 1970s what he said in 1994, that

The very quest [for the historical Jesus] met its defining disgrace by Smith, whose "historical" results—Jesus was "really" a homosexual magician—depended upon a selective believing in whatever Smith thought was historical [here he cites *SG* in a note]. Even at the time, some of us told Smith to his face that he was an upside fundamentalist, believing anything bad anybody said about Jesus, but nothing good. And no one who so rebuked him objected to his campaigns of character assassination that Smith spent his remaining years conducting; there is a moment at which, after all, truth does matter....

...As a matter of fact, Smith's presentation of the evidence for his homosexual magician, a Clement fragment he supposedly turned up in a library in Sinai [*sic*] in 1958, ranks as one of the most slovenly presentations of an allegedly important document in recent memory; and, to understate matters, it left open the very plausible possibility of forgery.¹⁷²

170. This is printed on the back cover of the Dawn Horse Press 1982 reprinting of *SG*, a reproduction of which was sent to me by Shawn Eyer, who originally brought the endorsement to my attention. I assume the whole statement was also on the jacket of the 1973 publication, for in 1975 Yamauchi quoted a sentence of it in his Review, 238. These comments struck Yamauchi as being "rather extravagant."

171. *CA*, x. Smith thanks him for the "many corrections" that he made.

172. Neusner, *Refutation*, 28. This book as a whole also reflects a complete reversal of Neusner's opinion of Smith's dissertation, *Tannaitic Parallels*—the book that had had the greatest influence on his scholarly thinking (see, e.g., *Refutation*, 140). As recently as 1979 he described it as "the most beautifully argued work of historical reason I know" (*New Review of Books and Religion* 4:3 [1979]: 24, cited by Cohen in his Review of *Refutation*, 86). But here it is called "surpassingly commonplace triviality," "insufficient, shoddy work," and "a mess of contradiction and confusion" (pp. 38, 39). This reversal is noted by Cohen, whose review of *Refutation* in *JAOS* begins, "This book is a DISGRACE to its author and a disgrace to its publisher. The scholarship is shoddy, the writing repetitious, the tone vituperative, and the argumentation flawed." Neusner's *Refutation* contains a ten page appendix on Cohen's "selective fundamentalism" (167).

Neusner's willingness to voice disingenuous opinions about the document for self-serving purposes has been to the detriment of scholarly investigation.

A few scholars have actually said in print, and in conversations with friends, that they think Smith might have forged the document, and did so long before Smith's death and with no legal matters (or character assassinations) pursuant. R. H. Fuller was fond of recounting a dream he once had that Smith met the archaeologist who concocted the skull of Piltdown man, then broke down and confessed that he forged the *Letter to Theodore*. This anecdote is even recorded in a book which draws its title from the question of whether the longer text is a forgery, and in which Smith earlier contributed a response to Fuller's form-critical analysis.¹⁷³ Set out in print, Fuller's comment is in bad taste, though it was recorded in the minutes of the Colloquy rather than as part of an essay. In any event Smith never made (written) reference to this matter, nor to what could be viewed as a similar query about whether he forged the document, made by Stanley B. Marrow.¹⁷⁴ No awareness on Smith's part of a larger suspicion directed against him can be gleaned from his later writings on the subject.¹⁷⁵

173. Fuller mentioned this dream as the opening statement to the Colloquy, recorded in *LM*, 56 (Schuyler Brown also told me that Fuller related this dream to him). Fuller's essay assumes that the document is authentic (he argues that LGM 1 is earlier in form than John's story, and is constituted more from wandering phrases from the oral tradition than from literary borrowings). At the end of the Colloquy, though, he expressed uncertainty (p. 71).

174. "When I saw this very impressive panoply of scholarly apparatus brought to bear to prove that it is Clement, my reaction was that anyone who could produce that array of reasons could also forge it. My skeptical frame of mind remains until I see the document" (*LM*, 59). Marrow was a good friend of Quesnell, so his impression may reflect knowledge of Quesnell's suspicions. The Minutes of the discussion of this Colloquy represents the strongest (actual) controversy over the possibility of forgery. A few of the scholars who did not assume this possibility in their responses to Fuller got caught up in the possibility during this discussion, though, except for the above citations of Marrow and Fuller, they do not impute Smith.

175. Note the remark in his article summarizing the "score" at the end of the first decade: "Quesnell's denial was part of an absurd attempt to prove me the author of the text. Unfortunately, no one else has had so high an opinion of my classical scholarship" ("Score," 450). Smith only raised the issue of an accusation of forgery in his response to Quesnell. The issue of misrepresentation of his research is what always concerned him most in his rebuttals of other scholars' discussions of his views. His written rebuttals were mainly spurred by other writers' claims that he disregarded matters that he actually dealt with at length in his books (i.e. they did not read enough of it, thought up simpler explanations based on

The familiar notion that a number of people were reticent to voice their suspicions against Smith for fear of being sued has never been substantiated.¹⁷⁶ The idea seems to be a hypothesis constructed to explain how the issue of Smith's integrity had become inseparably attached to the document despite the fact that so few people had voiced suspicions against him. *Outside* of the secondary literature on the Mar Saba Clementine Fragment, the notion that Smith might have forged the document has become a favorite piece of scholarly lore, standard "information" that most New Testament and Patristic scholars possess about the Mar Saba Clementine fragment. But within the secondary literature, Smith's integrity has not been a matter of great dispute; rather, it would be far more accurate to say that his scholarship used to present the document was inordinately characterized as "erudite,"¹⁷⁷ whereas his analysis of the

their own ignorance of all the evidence, then claimed Smith missed obvious things that he had in fact dealt with).

176. To quote Quesnell himself, "Dr. Smith feels the point of my article was to prove that he forged the text. If that had been my point, I would have stated it clearly" ("Reply," 200). When I asked Quesnell directly whether he had feared being sued, he wrote "I don't believe it ever entered my mind." Quesnell also cannot confirm or disconfirm "any such climate of suspicion" directed toward Smith in the years following the publication of Smith's books on the letter. Quesnell informed me that a number of scholars wrote enthusiastically to him about his article, but added "it is not necessarily clear to me that their approbation and enthusiasm included everything I affirmed or personally held."

177. The words *erudite* or *erudition* are used in the reviews of his books by, e.g., Achtemeier, 625, 628; Fitzmyer, 570; Hanson, 514, 517; MacRae, 420; Quesnell, 12; Reese, 435; Scroggs, 58; Trocmé, 292; and by an anonymous editor introducing Pierson Parker's article "Smith's Find," 52. E. C. Hobbs (*LM*, 19) self-consciously put the word in quotation marks in reference to the frequency of its occurrence in reviews. Smith's erudition has frequently earned him extravagant praise. His "scholarly thoroughness" has been described as "monumental" (MacRae, 417) and "overwhelming" (Reese, 435). Trocmé (p. 292) has had this to say: "...l'ouvrage de M.S. est un monument d'érudition et un modèle d'argumentation critique. Il est fondé sur une connaissance exceptionnelle du milieu et de la littérature, sur d'innombrables échanges de vues avec les historiens des religions, les exégètes et les patristiciens les plus éminents de notre génération, sur le recours à une impitoyable logique. Il doit être salué comme un très grand livre qu'aucun historien du christianisme des deux premiers siècles ne pourra plus négliger malgré son titre un peu limitatif." Similarly, Kee (Review, 327): "With its textual, statistical, stylistic, and palaeographical analyses and its assembling of biblical, patristic, and heretical parallels, the larger work is a model of responsible publication of an ancient document." Quesnell is the dissenting voice here, and he catalogues a number of the mistakes he believes he has found. Neusner generalized Quesnell's view into the comments quoted above, but even he (like Quesnell) had initially referred to Smith's "sheer erudition." His 1993 position deems "the forgery," rather than *CA*, "a work of formidable erudition (not to say, magnificent obsession)" (*Refutation*, 29). Lest that statement be construed as something of a complement, it is qualified by another: "his was a second-rate mind concealed under a veneer of flurious bluster, and within a cloud of erudition" (p. 31).

tradition history of the longer text and, to an even greater degree, his use of the document to reconstruct a libertine Christianity at its very inception have just as inordinately been condemned. But his “integrity,” *per se*, has mainly been at issue in his own rebuttals of a few scholars (Beskow, Fitzmyer, and particularly Quesnell) and in insubstantial and sensationalizing *summaries* of what has actually been said pertaining to the issue of forgery.

II.4. *Criddle's Statistical Study*

It might seem by this point that the more influential arguments for a modern forgery have fallen a fair bit short of the ideals of disinterested scholarship, but one important study remains to be treated. In 1995 A. H. Criddle published a statistical study of the letter fragment which he believes proves that the letter was not written by Clement.¹⁷⁸ Specifically, he argues that “the letter proper (i.e., excluding the heading and the extracts from the longer gospel)...contains too high a ratio of Clementine to non-Clementine traits to be authentic and should be regarded as a deliberate imitation of Clement’s style.”¹⁷⁹ Criddle uses his own modern model of vocabulary statistics to demonstrate that in the *Letter to Theodore* “there are too many words previously used only once [in Clement’s undisputed writings] and not enough previously unknown. (The discrepancy is significant at the 2.5% level by a χ^2 test.)”¹⁸⁰

According to Criddle, an authentic but hitherto unknown work of a particular author should possess a particular ratio of words not previously occurring in that author’s corpus, to words previously occurring only once; the ratio is generated from

178. “On the Mar Saba Letter.” He does not say in the article whether he thinks it is an ancient or modern forgery, but his inferences about how it must have been composed would involve procedures that would be practically impossible for a writer who did not possess lexicons and author indices (e.g. p. 218). He also implies a modern forgery by claiming that “we have no reason to believe in an early expanded version of the canonical Mark” (219).

179. “On the Mar Saba Letter,” 216.

180. “On the Mar Saba Letter,” 218.

the percentage of unique words known to have been used by that author. From the data that 37.5% of the words in Clement's undisputed writings occur only once, Criddle's statistical model predicts that a genuine work of Clement should have a ratio of eight new words to five previously unique words. The ratio Criddle obtained from the letter is four to nine.

How are we to interpret this data? Criddle believes that someone deliberately attempted to sound like Clement, with the result that the letter sounds too much like him. He points out that some of the words previously occurring only once in Clement but now found again in the letter are rare words for any writer at the time and were probably selected from diverse passages in Clement precisely because they are practically unique to him. This theory is how Criddle accounts for both the high number of words previously occurring only once in Clement and the low number of new words:

The only plausible explanation of the above facts is that the author of the letter, in imitating the style of Clement, sought to use words found in Clement but not in other Patristic writers and to avoid words not found in Clement but present in other Patristic writers. In doing so the writer brought together more rare words and phrases scattered throughout the authentic works of Clement than are compatible with genuine Clementine authorship.¹⁸¹

Is this a good interpretation of the evidence? The few words that Criddle's model has generated as evidence are weak support for his interpretation, for there is no reason why a forger attempting to sound more like Clement than anyone else would include "several" words (six of the nine otherwise unique words) which are almost as rare in Clement as they are in other Patristic writers. More importantly, the theory that the letter's vocabulary was derived through a selection of words distinctive of Clement as determined by a comparison with all the Patristic writings implies an unrealistic amount of work. A pre-modern writer would have to have checked all of Clement's corpus

181. Criddle, "On the Mar Saba Letter," 218.

and the corpora of the other church fathers for most of the words used. The notion of extensive checking only becomes conceivable if we suppose that this was a modern forger who checked most of the words he used in the letter against Stählin's index of Clement's vocabulary to ensure that Clement used them *and* regularly examined a modern Patristic lexicon to make sure that this vocabulary was more or less distinctive. That scenario still stretches credulity. Even Criddle himself did not undertake to check more than the nine once-occurring words against a lexicon.

But Criddle has not proven that this author did for the most part use words that are not found in other Patristic writers: he merely postulated this through generalization from six of the nine words otherwise found only once in Clement. To demonstrate this point, Criddle would have to show that it is generally true also for those words which appear more than once in the accepted corpus, and that Clement's undisputed writings on the whole do not display the same degree of distinctiveness. In fact, it is only those words which could establish the point, for it is precarious to argue that words found only once in Clement's undisputed writings are distinctively Clement-sounding.

Criddle's conclusions certainly step beyond what can realistically be inferred from the ratio. To bolster his conclusion Criddle slipped into his arguments the assertion that the Clementine vocabulary is "often" used with "new meanings, to put across rather non-Clementine ideas."¹⁸² For this he gives no evidence, though it is clear that he is relying upon the opinions expressed in Osborn's article.

What does the ratio really show? It is difficult to say. Certainly the numbers are practically a reversal of what his model would predict for an authentic work of Clement. The problem is that the ratio he produced is based on an exceptionally small excerpt. According to Criddle's criteria of what constitutes a new word, there were *only* 4 new words in the letter. The ratio 4:9 is not based on a larger number of words

182. Criddle, "On the Mar Saba Letter," 218.

than the four new words he found and the total of nine words previously occurring once. In his own estimate, “the numbers of words in the various categories [are] low, at the margin of real statistical significance.”¹⁸³

What Criddle could really claim to have supported is the proposition that the letter is more typically Clementine than Clement typically is. This conclusion is meaningful to the extent that we can abstract a distinct Clementine vocabulary from his undisputed writings, which, like the *Letter to Theodore*, draw considerably on other texts, through citations and allusions. Criddle understandably eliminated the longer gospel citations from consideration, pointing out that one could not reasonably conclude that the text is *not* sufficiently Clementine because it contains these Markan sentences.¹⁸⁴ But the highly intertextual nature of Clement’s writing forces Criddle to accept as Clementine the various allusions and quotations involved in “Clement’s practice of free citation” and therefore to factor into the vocabulary statistics the other, briefer direct quotations in the letter.¹⁸⁵ Unfortunately, it is problematic to use the length of a citation as a basis for deciding whether its words are Clementine. The problem of deciding what words belong to Clement’s vocabulary and, just as important, what words are used only once is complicated by the fact that Stählin did not usually index the words contained in Clement’s direct quotations from other authors. The index which forms the basis for statistics about word use has itself been skewed somewhat by Stählin’s own decisions about what words are relevant to Clement’s vocabulary.

Criddle’s approach to the issue of authenticity is commendable. However, there appears to be too much that is uncertain in this application of vocabulary statistics to the letter to accept the results as sufficient indication of forgery.

183. Criddle <andrewc@wrox.com>, “Secret Mark,” private e-mail to author, February 18, 1999.

184. “Secret Mark.”

185. “On the Mar Saba Letter,” 217, 219.

II.5. *Could Smith Have Created the Document?*

At present, apart from Murgia's suggestions of suspiciously self-authenticating information in the letter and Criddle's efforts to show that it sounds a great deal more like Clement than we would expect from Clement himself, there has been little reason to justify the belief that the letter might be a modern forgery. No positive evidence pertaining to who, when, and where has ever been produced. Currently most people (mainly non-experts) who suspect Smith of having forged the document are content to cite Quesnell and to characterize his points the way Smith did. But, to quote one dismayed voice on the subject, "...unless the forgery is perfect, it is reasonable that Smith's case be addressed on some other basis than...he published it, so he could have forged it, so it must be a forgery."¹⁸⁶ The only tangible reasons we have for suspecting Smith of forgery are suspicions about his behaviour after photographing the document. Partly in response to a stance taken in some of the popular summaries, many people have wondered why Smith not only never attempted later to secure the manuscript for scrutiny by experts in the detection of forgery but never directly responded when pressed to do so. Why indeed did he not do more than photograph it in the first place? Of course the book by Voss was not his to do with as he wished, but having succeeded in making the manuscript available to experts would likely have squelched the issue of a modern forgery—unless it was one. These doubts, though, are based on ambiguous inactions; theories about why Smith did not do things that, years later, we might expect him to have done are weak evidence of anything but an active imagination. There are other avenues to investigate the likelihood of him having produced it, apart from having the document itself (which would not necessarily provide any evidence to

¹⁸⁶. The quotation is taken from a response by participant in an e-mail forum in the loudaios discussion group on the question of whether longer Mark is a forgery, a printout of which was kindly supplied for me by William E. Arnal.

attribute it specifically to him). We can still examine whether Smith had the ability or motive to produce the document.

In terms of ability, a theory of forgery must account for the fact that the handwriting and type of errors are, according to Murgia and the Greek palaeographers Smith consulted, those of an eighteenth-century scholar who pronounced his words in modern Greek. This is not a problem if the letter is considered to be an eighteenth-century composition, but is hard to explain if the letter is the work of Smith. Unless able to imitate this himself, which is not very likely, Smith (or whoever) would have needed to employ a person who could not only expertly forge this writing style (incorporating about fifty stylistic peculiarities in the process)¹⁸⁷ but also produce errors implying spontaneity. One may also question whether Smith's Classical scholarship was adequate to the task. Murgia's impression was that Smith's Classical Greek did not measure up to that of the letter writer.¹⁸⁸ It is also worth noticing that Smith's work on longer Mark constitutes his only substantial study in the area of Patristics. He otherwise showed very little aptitude to study second-century church fathers.

For the matter of motive, it has already been shown that the controversial views about Jesus which he based on this document were either not already in evidence or are actually contradicted in his published writings before 1958. The possibility that he had some other motive can be explored further by comparing how well the text substantiates the various conclusions he based on it. When we do this, any suspicions we might have are outweighed by facts that make it seem almost inconceivable that he could have created the document. The most important evidence will be related indirectly during the succeeding chapters in which I will attempt to show that much

187. These are noted by Smith in *CA*, 293. Handwritten imitations of these peculiarities are presented in the book. I do not know who produced these, but if they are by Smith they are worth comparing with the instances in the photographs of the text, for the styles are clearly different.

188. See Murgia, *LM*, 60; and Smith himself, "Score," 450.

simpler and more internally consistent explanations exist for the original creation and subsequent use of the text than Smith's cultic and libertine interpretations. Smith's radical conclusions about Jesus and the Alexandrian church are only poorly substantiated by the evidence, and Smith had to struggle with both the gospel passages *and the letter* in order to have them support the theories he based upon them.

At this point, though, it is worth considering the kind of evidence the quoted gospel passages represent. The letter offers a fairly innocuous gospel story of an overtly secondary nature. What these verses might give evidence for has never seemed self-evident, though what is clear is that the new passages diverge from the so-called pure form of a miracle story and display numerous Markan characteristics that imply a great deal of reshaping of the material on the part of the person who would have incorporated them into Mark's text. This secondary appearance undermines Smith's conclusions about the historical relevance of the gospel text, as does the complicated tradition history Smith proposed to account for these details. Smith did not conclude that LGM 1 and 2 were composed by the author of the canonical gospel. He argued that the longer text represents a later writer's attempt to rework into Markan style and phraseology a Greek translation of an Aramaic resurrection story found in a source shared by Mark and John, possibly in different (Greek) recensions.¹⁸⁹ Such a complicated history of transmission does not permit solid historical conclusions. The need for traditional-critical speculation about how this story appeared in Aramaic, prior to its initial Greek translation and later Markan rewording, and then about its so-called original form as an oral tradition is painfully obvious. With such a theory, all that Smith could conceivably expect other scholars to accept is that there existed an earlier form of the Lazarus story. The only atypical element here is the esoteric teaching incident attached to the story. But, as Fuller has demonstrated, this incident has features that would lead

189. E.g. Smith, *LM*, 12.

a form critic to view it as a secondary expansion (by the redactor who put it in Mark),¹⁹⁰ and what is actually occurring in that incident is not obvious to anyone.¹⁹¹ Though an unusual encounter, the sense that Jesus is enacting a ritual with homosexual overtones is no more a necessary implication of this story than it is in, say, the Gethsemane scene, where a youth appears dressed in the same way, or the last supper scene in John, where a disciple whom Jesus loved lies against Jesus' breast.¹⁹²

It is Smith's inferences, not LGM 1 and 2 themselves, that give the discovery potentially revolutionary significance. But Smith's conclusions have never seemed compelling; they exhibit weaknesses that belie the possibility that he fabricated the document in order to substantiate them. To begin with, his conclusions rely on a methodology at odds with the presuppositions held by most other scholars at the time of his research. Numerous scholars have criticized his literal treatment of the evidence from the perspective of form criticism, particularly this method's assumption that the synoptic pericopae represent imaginary (or typical) encounters formulated to meet the

190. *LM*, 6–11.

191. Smith did not arrive at the idea of a baptism until 1961 when C. C. Richardson made this suggestion to him ("Authenticity," 197 and n. 8). Richardson subsequently changed his mind (*Review*, 574–76). The gap-filled narration of the longer text allows for a number of very different associations.

192. Smith made only a few, brief comments about homosexuality as an aspect of the ritual (*SG*, 114, 140; *CA*, 251) and distanced himself from the idea in "Regarding," where he claimed that the notion that LGM 1b depicts Jesus as a homosexual was first suggested by conservative scholars and that he offered the interpretation of baptismal and spiritual union as an alternative. Whatever was actually the case, the point he stressed was that baptism effected a *spiritual* union with Jesus; unfortunately, his few (mainly) tentative qualifying statements mentioning physical union have been magnified to the point that many commentators regularly speak of Smith's homosexual magician, and say more about this in their brief reviews than Smith did. Parker (*Review*, 5), for instance, misquoted Smith, saying, "But, we are further told, bystanders knew that Jesus' love for Lazarus too was homosexual (Smith's word)." What Smith actually said was this: "11:36f: ἴδε πῶς ἐφίλει αὐτόν is perhaps intended to show how the Jews twisted Jesus' innocent sorrow into evidence for a charge of homosexuality" (*CA*, 154). Neusner referred five times to "Smith's homosexual magician" in four pages (*Refutation*, 27–31). Other scholars have been better able to separate the facts from their emotional reactions. A number of scholars have described the resurrection/initiation story as benign: Achtemeier (*Review*, 626), Quesnell ("Reply," 201), Shepherd (*LM*, 52), Beskow (*Strange Tales*, 98), Crossan (*Four Other Gospels*, 118), Levin ("Early History," 4281, 4290), and Stanton (*Gospel Truth?* 95). A smaller number disagree: Parker ("Smith's Find," 54), Musurillo ("Smith's Secret Gospel," 328), Burkert (*Ancient Mystery Cults*, 3, 134 n. 12), and Wink ("Jesus as Magician," 7).

needs of communities.¹⁹³ In the judgment of R. H. Fuller, “Professor Smith was correct in using form-critical methods to establish the antiquity of the resuscitation story in the *Letter to Theodore*. But he failed to apply traditio-critical methods in order to establish the earliest discernible oral form of the narrative.”¹⁹⁴ Smith was not averse to the idea that stories are used for particular purposes (e.g. he thought that LGM 1 and 2 were added to supplement material in Mark 10 used as a liturgy for baptism in the orthodox Alexandrian church) or that secondary additions can be peeled off of stories. The problem is he used this method only when it suited his purpose of showing that the longer text is a more primitive tradition than the Lazarus story.

As was noted in the previous chapter, application of form criticism to LGM 1 distinguishes the initiation-like story in 1b as secondary expansion. It has the appearance of an artificial appendage to what was originally (i.e. by definition) a simple miracle story. 1b also does not fit any classic form itself, so does not exhibit any indication of having had an independent existence as oral tradition. The secondary nature of the story is best exemplified, however, by redaction criticism, which was still in its infancy when the letter came to light. When analyzed from the perspectives of redaction criticism and recent literary approaches, the fragment looks even less like what Smith made of it. Smith believed that the word “teaching” was an unexpected word in the

193. The most direct critique to this effect is that by Fuller, who gives an eloquent if condescending outline of the necessary tradition-critical approach in *LM*, 5–6. Amusing criticisms of Smith’s historicizing tendency and disregard for tradition criticism were repeatedly made. Schenke (“Mystery,” 72) complains that “in unrestrained biblicism, he has seen everything on one level.” Cf. Hobbs (*LM*, 70), who is reminded “of the way in which both Smith and ‘The Passover Plot’ handle materials. They go at the New Testament as fundamentalists do and then draw the opposite conclusion.” We find similar remarks in the reviews; to survey only A through G: Achtemeier, 626–27 (“Such a methodological assumption allows Smith, as it allowed those who used the method in the 19th century, to reconstruct Jesus’ emotional state and psychological processes”); Beardslee, 236 (“This perspective is more a product of his enlightenment rationalism than of his sources”); Danker, 316 (“...the old Hegelian view is refurbished, Albert Schweitzer’s requiem over life-of-Jesus research in the nineteenth century ignored, and the last three decades of Markan research passed over in lordly methodological maneuvers...”); Donfried, 760; Gibbons, 48 (“...Mr. Smith has spun an hypothesis in the second part of the book [‘interpretation’] worthy of a nineteenth-century rationalist”); Gibbs, 424.

194. Fuller, *LM*, 6; cf. Achtemeier’s comments on p. 16.

context of what was really going on—a rite of initiation. He therefore asked his reader to accept the emendation ἔδωκεν (“for he *gave* him the mystery of the kingdom of God”) in place of ἐδίδασκε (“for he *was teaching* him...”) in order to justify his use of this passage as evidence that Jesus conducted initiation *rituals* (i.e. “mysteries”).¹⁹⁵

This maneuver was actually the crux of his argument.¹⁹⁶ But the word ἐδίδασκε makes sense in its literary context within Mark/longer Mark, incorporated as it is within an existing discipleship teaching section (10:32–45). The incongruity of the longer text’s “Markan” teaching language with Professor Smith’s purposes cannot be overstated, considering the difficulties this fact poses for the view that Smith created the text himself. Not only is teaching a common activity associated with Jesus entering a house, but a removal to a house for privileged instruction is a distinctively Markan motif,¹⁹⁷ and the central section as a whole (8:22–10:52) is in a sense a special act of discipleship teaching. Indeed, as it stands, LGM 1 is quite similar to Mark 9:14–29, where Jesus symbolically raises a boy from the dead (vv. 26–27; a voice cries out just prior to this act

195. CA, 178–84 (183); SG, 79. In his section of textual commentary, which he completed in 1962 before he developed his historical theories (hence before he found this language problematic), he showed how completely Markan the language of this sentence is and how it suits the larger context, which also concerns (semi-)private discipleship teaching (CA, 117). He even pointed to the use of this phrase in 9:30–31 (“They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he would not have anyone know it; *for he was teaching* his disciples...”). He later abandoned his claim of textual corruption when he found evidence that διδάσκω and its cognates can mean giving a mystery or baptism; see “Authenticity,” 199 and n. 12; and *Magician*, 207 (in the endnote corresponding to Mark 4:11; these references are cited by Koester in “History and Development,” 47 n. 36).

196. See n. 15 in chapter 4 (p. 203). Note especially George MacRae, Review, 419: “Granted that the secret pericope seems to have baptismal overtones, the argument that ‘the mystery of the kingdom of God’ is a baptism is a weak one. The text states that Jesus ‘taught’ the mystery. In order to make Jesus a magical practitioner, Smith is forced to suppose that this is a textual corruption for ‘Jesus gave him the mystery,’ and such an unsupported emendation is made to carry a huge superstructure.” Smith acknowledges this flaw and refers to it himself in his response to Quesnell (“Authenticity,” 199): “Had I been composing a text to support my theory would I, *in the most critical point*, have chosen a word that seemed to me to contradict the theory?” (italics added). Kümmel observed further that Smith’s emendation would require that αὐτόν be changed to the dative (“Jahrzehnt,” 303, cited by Levin in “Early History,” 4277).

197. See M. A. Beavis, *Mark’s Audience*, 91–95; Vorster, “Meaning and Reference,” 35. David Peabody views “the motif of the disciples questioning Jesus privately, usually in a house—4:10, 7:17, 9:28, 10:10”—as one of thirty-nine “redactional features of the text of Mark [that] have the highest probability of coming from his hand” (*Mark as Composer*, 164, 163).

as well) then enters a house privately with his disciples to give them special *teaching*. If Smith's intention were to create a text which, with minor, plausible readjustments, could depict Jesus as a mesmerizing, magical baptizer, would he have created the important scene so much in harmony with the standard devices of Markan discipleship theology and used a Markan verb that undermines the crux of his argument? Smith is an unlikely fountainhead for such a text.¹⁹⁸

The problems which the redactional appearance of the initiation episode create for Smith's historical reconstruction are magnified by the lack of immediate and obvious correspondences in this story to his specific propositions that Jesus was a magician who offered hypnotically-induced experiences of union with his spirit and ascension into the kingdom of God, culminating in the realization of eschatological freedom from the Law. Beskow stated the problem most succinctly: "The odd thing about Morton Smith's theses is that none of them have any worthwhile support in the fragment."¹⁹⁹ If Smith wanted to create a text that gave firm support for irreverent views about Jesus, he did a really bad job. Moreover, though the impetus leading to this irreverent portrait may have come from this particular text, Smith's arguments do not require it; that this is so is evident from the fact that he hardly mentioned this gospel in his follow-up book, *Jesus the Magician*. That book could have been written without the discovery of the longer gospel.²⁰⁰

198. As we shall see, LGM 1 and 2 manifest a number of Markan literary techniques (e.g. gaps, intercalation and the use of framing stories). Such techniques are matters in which Smith never took any interest.

199. Beskow, *Strange Tales*, 103. Cf. the similar comments by Gibbs ("Review," 424), Fitzmyer (Review, 570-71; "Mark's 'Secret Gospel'?" 65); Musurillo ("Smith's Secret Gospel," 328), Quesnell (Review, 12; "Evidence," 58), and Kümmel ("Jahrzehnt," 303).

200. The longer text initiation story is discussed on only two pages of this book, 134-35, and is briefly mentioned in three endnotes on pp. 203, 207 and 210 (the notes are not numbered in this book); a few other endnotes mention discussions of particular topics found in his books on longer Mark, but do not mention LGM 1 and 2 (e.g. p. 168 note to p. 17; 180, 181 nn. to 53, 55; 198, 199/115, 116; 202/124; 203/127; 208/148). The basic neglect of longer Mark in *Magician* was pointed out by Beskow (*Strange Tales*, 130 n. 135). Two of Smith's articles arguing that the transfiguration was a rite of ascent (by hallucination) to the heavens ignore the evidence in longer Mark in favour of other evidence ("Origin and History"; in "Ascent to the Heavens" his books on longer Mark are mentioned in a note), even

II.6. *A Modern Forgery: Conclusions*

If Smith is an unlikely candidate for authorship of the document, an earlier modern forger is even harder to imagine. Considering where the letter was found, the forger would have to have had no interest in ensuring that his work ever saw “the light of day.”²⁰¹ Conceivably the book got in the Mar Saba library by accident. Even so, it apparently did not surface somewhere else first—it got lost rather than discovered.

And what plausible motive can be offered to account for a forger other than Smith? Murgia’s conjecture about rainy day self-amusement,²⁰² Musurillo’s comment about “anything from pure vanity to an exercise in virtuosity,”²⁰³ and Quesnell’s hypothetical suggestion of “mystification for the sake of mystification” (borrowed from Nock) underscore that as a forgery the letter has no evident purpose.²⁰⁴ Dillon seemed to side

though this argument was initially made in connection with the longer gospel. Only the article “Two Ascended” makes substantial use of the evidence in longer Mark, and even this article favours the evidence of a passage discovered at Qumran. His view that rites of ascension were practiced within different sects of Judaism is being taken seriously now that it is based on evidence from 4Q491 (e.g. Perkins, “The Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth,” 427; Craig Evans, “Dead Sea Scrolls,” 564–65; de Conick, *Seek to See Him*, 33–34).

201. Danker, Review, 316. A picture of the tiny, dark and dusty tower library at Mar Saba is contained in Smith’s article “Monasteries,” 174.

202. See *LM*, 58. This is Dillon’s characterization of Murgia’s position, which Murgia did nothing to correct. Murgia imagined an eighteenth-century visitor to the monastery writing the document for amusement and using a seventeenth-century book in order to make the copy appear to antedate a serious fire at the monastery at the beginning of the eighteenth century, thereby explaining the absence of an actual manuscript (see *LM*, 37).

203. “Smith’s Secret Gospel,” 331. Apart from noting the lack of existing references to either the gospel or the letter and the unexpected lack of a reference in the manuscript to its source (330), the article offers no reasons for considering the work to be a forgery in the first place, only a résumé of persons whose learning was of a caliber that they could have forged it. Musurillo considers that “the Clementine style” is “expertly imitated” and notes that “We may assume that many forgeries are so brilliant that, though one may have suspicions, they can be impossible to detect with incontrovertible evidence” (331). This comment explains the lack of evidence adduced, but it also begs the question.

204. As previously noted, Quesnell originally thought the document was created as a controlled experiment in how scholars respond to evidence, but the course of Smith’s writing shows that that could not have been his intention. He took tabs on what scholars thought, but in 1982 his essay “Score” only rated the general acceptance of various theories about diverse aspects of the document, with special concern for whether he was winning; to the end he continued to argue the merits of his own theory, which would make little sense if he were investigating the apologetics involved in how scholars respond to new evidence.

with the likelihood of forgery, but admitted, “In this case, I am unable to decide precisely what kind of fraud it is. I ask, *cui bono*? Either someone is trying to insert a doctrinal point into the tradition, or someone is trying to make some money.”²⁰⁵ The fact that the range of conceivable motives for literary forgeries is huge is no reason to conclude that the lack of a comprehensible motive is unimportant in decisions about whether to view a document as fraudulent or authentic. The sparsity and diversity of the explanations that have been offered in this case are themselves reasons not to consider this letter a forgery, for if its own ostensible logic makes more sense than any scenario that accounts for its creation as a forgery, then we lack a coherent rationale for treating it in terms completely other than its own.²⁰⁶

III. Synthesis

At this point the existing arguments against forgery may be evaluated. The weakest arguments were made in favour of an ancient forgery. The fact that Eusebius is the first person to mention a connection between Mark and Alexandria is unexpected but does not prove that the tradition is not as early as Clement, especially when we consider that Eusebius claimed to be citing tradition and that his phrase “they say” seems, grammatically, to be naming Clement and Papias as his sources. Still, there is reason for doubting Clementine authorship of the *Letter to Theodore* in the fact that Clement never clearly referred to this second version of the gospel of Mark in his other extant writings. Believing in the existence of this gospel requires believing that Cle-

205. *LM*, 57. I assume that he did not decisively opt for forgery, because on p. 58 he noted in passing the possibility that Clement wrote the letter but was taken in by “a forgery of Mark”—a position which I do not view as espousing “forgery” in a meaningful sense. As the literary-critical part of this dissertation will show, the theology conveyed by the quoted verses is already found in Mark. And with no direct discourse of Jesus in these verses, there is no evidence of new “doctrine” here.

206. Schenke reasons similarly (“Mystery,” 71, 72): “No comprehensible motive for an alleged forgery has been named.”

ment avoided mentioning it. We must assume, for instance, that when relating the tradition that John composed a spiritual gospel after the others had put down the bodily facts, Clement chose not to mention that Mark also composed a second, spiritual version.²⁰⁷ In order to accept this letter as authentic, one must assume a fair amount of reserve even to mention a gospel that was an inadvertent source of scandal for the Alexandrian church. But in this connection we must also consider the fact that the gospel of Mark was at this time the least quoted and most apologized-for gospel of the traditional four.²⁰⁸

As far as perceived differences between Clement and the letter are concerned, the principle assertions of incompatibility are based on misconceptions about what the letter says and about what Clement really thought. Contrary to what has sometimes been claimed, the letter does not present the longer text of Mark as an apocryphon intended to be known only by a few or as being locked away in an archive of secret writings. As the next chapter shall argue, τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον refers not to a secret gospel but a mystical (i.e. more spiritual) one, albeit one that caused enough consternation that its keepers *preferred* not to discuss it with non-gnostics. Moreover, the letter does not contradict Clement's statements that the gnostic tradition was unwritten. It supports them. Those scholars who take a different view and claim that the letter is false *because* it presents Clement condoning the preservation of the gnostic tradition as a secret oral tradition have managed to deny the obvious sense of Clement's many statements rationalizing this procedure, arguments he made in no uncertain terms, even appealing to the Markan portrait of Jesus concealing the truth from "the many" by

207. This assumes, of course, that Eusebius quoted everything, for he is the one who preserved these comments (*Church History* VI.14.7). I see no reason to doubt this, though it would not have been uncharacteristic of him to omit information that did not serve his interests. Grant argues that "...under the influence of his apologetic purposes Eusebius suppressed, neglected, or falsified a good deal of the historical information available to him" ("Eusebius and his Church History," 235).

208. See chapter 3 n. 93.

in parables. The *Letter to Theodore* presents a very Clement-like picture of the esoteric instruction (“initiation”) of advanced Christians in the orally-transmitted theological mysteries of the Alexandrian Christian philosophy through exposition of the spiritual or veiled sense of scripture.

The arguments presented by Murgia and Criddle for a modern forgery are somewhat more substantial. Murgia erred in arguing that every sentence of the letter proper manages to explain why modern readers have never heard of the gospel passages, but his arguments do draw attention to the fact that we learn more than we would expect to learn about the history and use of this gospel, especially from a letter. We do not learn enough to account for why we have never heard of the longer text, though with careful scrutiny some plausible scenarios present themselves. Likewise, though there are many inconsequential errors in the letter, Murgia astutely noted that the absence of *significant* errors indicative of a history of transmission makes the fragment seem too well preserved to be ancient. Smith suggested that that fact can be accounted for by the assumption that the scribe who made the copy made corrections to the manuscript and was an especially accurate copyist himself. But Murgia’s point has more force to it. The absence of a reference to which manuscript was being copied is inconsistent with the assumption of an especially good copyist.²⁰⁹ Here it seems that an argument for authenticity must defend a less probable scenario, such as that the manuscript from which the letter was copied had an uncomplicated history of transmission, that at some point a copy had lain for perhaps a millennium somewhere and that it was somehow lost with only a personal copy of the relevant parts made in the back of a book that was also lost until 1958. That scenario is not actually unrealistic, though neither is it probable. But what about Murgia’s alternative? That what really happened was that some impious person, who nevertheless had a great appreciation of the ideas and styles

209. Musurillo, “Smith’s Secret Gospel,” 330.

of Clement and Mark, composed the letter one rainy day for self-amusement, then copied it into the back of a book of Ignatius's letters, hoping that someone might find it some day and either believe all this or have a really good laugh—that scenario is basically implausible. What Criddle's article implies about the amount of work that would be involved in forging this letter suggests that it could not be the product of spontaneous self-amusement. Moreover, some of the things that Murgia found funny about the letter—for example, the reference to Mark's notes and the gospel's γάρ clause about Jesus staying with the young man because he was rich—are actually consistent with Clement's remarks elsewhere about Mark creating "notes" and with some very specific peculiarities of Mark's style.²¹⁰

The statistical evidence produced by Criddle is the least subjective argument against authenticity, though the many uncertainties relating to his method make it difficult to trust. What his interpretation of the evidence asserts, almost paradoxically, is that the letter is too much like Clement to have been written by him. Criddle claims that this similarity only applies to the choice of words, not their meanings, but with Osborn and Shepherd he is incorrect in asserting that there is a basic difference between the undisputed writings of Clement and the letter in terms of Clement's practice of secrecy. His own statement of what we can expect of an authentic letter of Clement really sums up well what is presented in the *Letter to Theodore*.

The possibility that Smith created the document is the least likely scenario of all. Contrary to the popular conception, Smith's controversial historical conclusions about Jesus cannot be found in his writings before he found the document and are only

210. Murgia, *LM*, 39. On embarrassingly peculiar γάρ clauses as a feature of Mark's style, see Bird, "Some Γαρ Clauses," 171–87. I will discuss this verse in chapter 7. Concerning the reference in the letter to Mark's "notes," George Kennedy and Wayne Meeks have noted that Clement, in his lost *Hypotyposesis*, came close to referring to this (historically plausible) conception that Mark first compiled notes, for there it is said that Peter's followers asked Mark for a ὑπομνήμα: a note or memorandum (as reported by Eusebius in *Church History* II.15.1–2). See Meeks, "Untamed Skeptic," 167–69; also Black, *Apostolic Interpreter*, 141–42.

weakly supported by the new evidence. The initiation story itself displays many qualities which scholars normally attribute to secondary elaboration, including basic Markan redactional themes. In order to read an historically accurate reminiscence of a ritual initiation into this story, Smith had to amend a Markan verb expressing a Markan theme of private discipleship teaching and generally abandon the tradition-critical paradigm which he championed only a few years earlier.²¹¹ In subsequent writings on the subject of magic and libertinism in the early church, Smith rarely mentioned the so-called secret gospel, and when he did, he treated other evidence as more valuable. We will see in the next two chapters that his explanations in *CA* of the origins and subsequent use of this gospel show him continually fighting with the evidence. Smith produced a rather controversial theory about a secret gnostic rite of initiation into a libertine clique within the broader Alexandrian church. It is my contention that the evidence of the letter permits a simpler theory about the use of this gospel in the Alexandrian church that harmonizes much better with what we already know of this church's practices relating to higher-level instruction. Smith's theories about the gospel excerpts likewise carry little force when the literary effects of these additions on the narrative of Mark as a whole are considered.

The special insight that the author of the gospel quotations had into Markan composition and theology provides positive evidence for the authenticity of this letter and the longer text of Mark. This congruence will become apparent in subsequent chapters of this dissertation, but I want to draw attention to a few relevant conclusions now since the authenticity of the letter will not be the focus of later discussions. The following chapters will demonstrate that the gospel excerpts are in harmony with the letter's explanation that the additions were meant to create a more spiritual gospel, in the

211. His 1955 article on Taylor's commentary on Mark reveals him as having been as skeptical of Taylor's historicism as others later were to be of his own, and just as quick to dismiss conclusions based on the assumption of accurate memory. See "Comments," 58, 63 and n. 50.

sense Clement attributed to the gospel of John (cited in Eusebius's *Church History* VI.14.7) of a text that brings out the deeper meaning behind the "bodily facts." Indeed, as chapters 5 through 7 will illustrate, these excerpts reveal an impressive appreciation of Markan theology and literary technique, an affinity that no modern author is likely to have been able to imitate by the time the letter was discovered. The gospel quotations may have appeared to most early investigators, including Smith, to be "an imitation of the simplest and most childish sort,"²¹² but they fully comprehend aspects of Markan compositional technique and theology that have taken Markan scholars decades to delineate, matters that Smith of all people could hardly be accused of ever having adequately perceived. In fact, it is hard to imagine *anyone* in the late 1950s understanding these techniques well enough, for the study of Mark as an author had only just begun. When the quoted passages are inserted and the resultant text read as a narrative in its own right, an instance of a Markan-style intercalation and (with 16:1–8) a pair of framing stories for the passion narrative are produced.²¹³ The intercalation, which is formed around the pericope of the question of James and John (Mark 10:35–45), accords well with the defining characteristics of this device delineated by Thomas Shepherd in his recent dissertation. The outer and inner stories moreover become mutually interpretive, a function which scholars did not ascribe to this device with any regularity until after the letter was found (the middle 1960s). As an intercalation, LGM 1 and 2 interpret the theme of the mystery of the kingdom of God in a manner consistent with how a number of scholars today interpret the phrase as it appears in Mark 4:11. And the heuristic implications of this device aid in producing a surprisingly sensible interpretation of the brief appearance of the *νεανίσκος* in Gethsemane (Mark 14:51–52). In other words, the letter's gospel quotations make the most sense

212. *CA*, 76.

213. See chapters 5 and 6.

when considered to be real redactional expansions of Mark's gospel that amplify certain "ideas" or theological motifs of the canonical text.

It is my position, then, that the letter and the gospel fragments are, respectively, as Clementine and as Markan as we would expect from an actual letter written by Clement about an early, expanded version of Mark. If there is a problem with them, it is that they seem too good to be true: too characteristic of Clement, too much like Mark; too much valuable information is given, and the original letter seems too well preserved. Though not authenticating, these qualities do not speak in favour of forgery, for they are harder to account for if the letter is deemed inauthentic.

The truth of the matter may never be known. The most recent information I have about the document is that its curators claim not to have seen it for over fifteen years; at the moment one may surmise that the letter has either been destroyed or has been withdrawn from academic scrutiny due to the controversial and occasionally disrespectful use that has been made of it. Still, if we were able to examine the physical document we would not be able to come to a positive conclusion, only a negative one, provided modern forgery is indicated. If no evidence of forgery is detected, the possibility of forgery is not thereby ruled out. Though unlikely, the Mar Saba Clementine Fragment might still conceivably be an earnest copy of a slightly earlier modern forgery, or itself a modern forgery too good to detect. And no physical tests can rule out an ancient forgery. If physical tests could prove that the letter is pre-modern, the issue of content would remain just as crucial and, for all intents and purposes, as decisive as it seemed to be to Smith. Physical tests will not offer us a positive answer that Clement or even an ancient author is the original writer. In light of what we know of the handling of the text by the Jerusalem Patriarchate, the suggestion that we abandon the letter until such time as it is made available for testing makes about as

much sense as the suggestion that redaction critics abandon synoptic studies until Q is found or the synoptic problem is resolved to everyone's satisfaction.²¹⁴

I am going to proceed on the assumption that the different version of the gospel of Mark mentioned in the letter did exist, and that the letter itself was written by Clement. If the latter assumption proves to be false because the letter is an *ancient forgery*, it will be difficult to determine what conclusions relating to the use of this text by the Alexandrian church and the Carpocratians are thereby negated. The eventuality of discovering that it is a modern forgery would negate the occasional historical inferences I make about possible reasons for the longer gospel's production and about the uses to which it was put. And the arguments made about the literary functioning of the quoted gospel passages would necessarily need to be viewed in a very different light. I would not say that those arguments would automatically be invalidated, for authorial intention has not generally been considered determinative of literary functioning since the days of New Criticism. If study of the text leads to new insights into the canonical gospel, the merits of those insights will not depend on whether the letter is ancient or modern. But one disturbing fact will remain for me, even if the evidence some day shifts to weigh decisively on the side of forgery: namely, the problem that both the letter and the gospel quotations make as much sense as they do within the frameworks of patristic and biblical scholarship. That problem in itself would then need to be explained.

214. According to Talley ("Liturgical Time," 45), the copy of Isaac Voss's *Epistolae genuinae S. Ignatii Martyris* in which the manuscript of the letter was written was moved from Mar Saba to the patriarchal Library in Jerusalem some time before 1980; Talley was told by the librarian there, Father Kallistos, that the two pages of the manuscript had been removed from the book in order to undergo restoration. In 1996, Willy Rordorf spoke to the librarian Father Aristarchos, who was able to produce the book but does not know what has happened to the manuscript. Father Aristarchos is frequently asked about this document. See Kaestli, "Introduction," 59–60 n. 4.

THE NATURE OF THE LONGER GOSPEL

The *Letter to Theodore* tells us a great deal about how Clement conceived of the origin and proper use of the longer gospel of Mark. Elaborating upon received tradition, he informed Theodore that Mark had created this “more spiritual” gospel in Alexandria, after Peter’s death, by adding materials from his own and Peter’s “notes” to the initial version of his gospel, which he had created for catechumens in order to strengthen their faith. Theodore was told, further, that these additional materials were selected specifically for their usefulness in increasing gnosis and included, in addition to more *πράξεις*, certain *λόγια* whose interpretations functioned like a mystagogue, leading the hearers into the innermost sanctuary of the truth; it was pointed out, however, that the revised gospel included neither “the things not to be uttered” nor the “hierophantic teaching of the Lord” and that it was very securely kept by (or “in”) the church in Alexandria, where it was always read only to “those being initiated into the great mysteries.” Clement also called this revision *τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον*.

Any assumptions about how this gospel was viewed and used in the Alexandrian church during the late second century must fit this evidence. But this information is also important for what it might reveal about the nature of the longer gospel as a whole and of the purpose behind its composition. Granted, the earliest evidence we have for how a text was read is not in itself direct evidence for what the redactor meant to produce. But Clement’s depiction of the *kind* of writing this gospel represents—his generic conception—represents the opinion of someone who has actually read the entire

gospel and expounded it. And his discussion of the origin of the longer text is based at least in part on earlier tradition, for Clement spoke of things that antedated his arrival in Alexandria. The information in the letter is the only foundation we have for making informed generalizations about the nature of the longer gospel as a whole, based on what is found in the quoted stories.

So there are good reasons for any study of the extant verses of the longer text to begin by considering Clement's conception of the genre of this writing. For the purposes of *this* dissertation, however, such study is especially important. Investigation of Clement's words on the genre and use of this writing is essential in order to justify the very presumption of investigating the literary character of this text, for the dominant conceptions that scholars have formed on these issues would, by their nature, preclude the question as irrelevant. The position most scholars have maintained—usually without argument—is that this is a secret gospel whose *unique* parts were read by themselves (or in conjunction with some verses from their immediate contexts) as a lection during the Christian initiation rite of baptism. That is, the *genre* of this text is *secret* gospel, the use is cultic, and the *literary* conventions employed within the added materials are nil or not applicable: the known stories preserve traditions that bear no literary connection with the context in which they now reside (i.e. the framework supplied by the canonical gospel) because they were shaped entirely through their use in relation to the rite that they were created to explain or justify and were never read as part of the larger story of the gospel. If these assumptions are correct, then the rhetoric of LGM 1 and 2, and of the other unknown insertions, is not a *fictive* rhetoric to be comprehended with respect to its impact on a reader's understanding of the story.¹ The endurance of this form-critical perspective on the longer text certainly makes it difficult to put forward a more literary understanding, namely that the additions were prepared

1. I am alluding to Wayne Booth's book *The Rhetoric of Fiction*.

with a mind to the Alexandrian fascination with deeper scriptural interpretation, in particular as an effort to bring certain themes in the canonical text into a clearer focus while deepening the sense of mystery that surrounds the Markan gospel. The near consensus about the cultic use of the longer text is thus added reason for devoting chapters to the subjects of Clement's conception of the type or genre of the longer gospel and the situation of its use within the Alexandrian church.

I. Clement's Conception of the Genre of the Longer Gospel

Clement initially called the longer text a *πνευματικώτερον εὐαγγέλιον* (I.21–22). In scholarly discussions, this description has all but been eclipsed by the second description he gave using the words *τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον*. These Smith translated as “secret Gospel,” and that phrase has become the standard title for referring to this work. The question of what might be more spiritual about a secret gospel has for some reason been treated as essentially irrelevant, and investigators continuously present the words “Secret Gospel” (now with a capital *s*) as if there were a known category of apocryphal (in the sense of hidden) writings called *μυστικά*. *Μυστικός* can mean secret, but it was also used in a variety of other senses. Aside from Smith's translation of this letter, the normal translation of the word when used by the early Greek Fathers has always been “mystic” or “mystical.”² It makes a significant difference whether we translate the word as secret or mystical, for a mystical text is not necessarily a secret

2. This is for lack of a better word. There is no adequate English translation for what was meant by *μυστικός* when it was used by the second-century orthodox writers, though “secret” has rarely seemed appropriate. The English words “mystic” and “mystical” are still used, but are not meant to suggest “mysticism” or a transformed state of consciousness experienced through meditation. Though that association can be seen as early as Origen, it was not prominent until a few centuries later. Bouyer's article “‘Mystique’” traces the evolution of the cognitive application of *μυστικός* by Christian writers through what he calls its “biblical,” “liturgical,” and “spiritual” phases, each developing naturally out of the previous convention.

writing, hidden from the masses.³ In order to learn about the generic conceptions pertaining to this gospel's use in Alexandria, the main questions to be dealt with here are: Is τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον really a title? Is the adjective best translated by the English word "secret"? How is μυστικός related to the terms αἱ μυστικάί, λόγια, and πράξεις, which are also used to describe the longer gospel's contents? And what is the relationship between τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον and πνευματικώτερον εὐαγγέλιον—the initial phrase Clement used to describe the longer text's contents? Once the generic conception has been examined, we will be better able to appreciate how the issues of Clement's understanding of the nature and purpose of this text are distinct from the matter of the nature and purpose of the discretion that surrounded its use.

I.1. *Is Τὸ Μυστικὸν Εὐαγγέλιον a Title?*

We may start by asking whether τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον is a title at all. There are extrinsic reasons for supposing that the adjective μυστικός with the definite article may only have been used as a convenient, perhaps *ad hoc*, means of distinguishing the longer version of Mark from the shorter one. I know of no other gospels called μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον that could attest to the use of these words as part of a proper title. There certainly were secret books at this time, but such books normally were not referred to as secret in their titles, the known exceptions being the "Apocryphon of

3. Some scholars have used "mystic gospel" when referring to the longer gospel, but the matter of the difference this word implies concerning the nature of the contents has yet to be discussed. See Moule in Smith, *CA*, 35; Moule, *The Gospel According to Mark*, 5; Grant, *Review*, 61–62; Schenke, *Mystery*, 65; Sellew, "History," 244; Kaestli, "Version longue," 86–87. Merkel ("Auf den Spuren des Urmarkus?" 127) translates αἱ μυστικάί as "die mystischen Taten" but τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον as "des geheimen Evangeliums," which permits ambiguity. Bruce always translated the word as "mystical," and when using the phrase secret gospel put "secret" in quotation marks (see his translation of the letter in *The "Secret" Gospel*, 6–8).

James” and the “Apocryphon of John.”⁴ Moreover, the common titles using *εὐαγγέλιον* usually did not have an adjective modifying this noun.⁵ Normally *εὐαγγέλια* are modified only by a genitival phrase denoting what they are “of” or “about,” or by the preposition *κατά*, as in “according to” someone or some group (e.g. the Egyptians, the Hebrews). The universal convention of having the names of the authorities behind the canonical gospels come after *τὸ εὐαγγέλιον* and be introduced with *κατά* may reflect a conception that *εὐαγγέλιον* in these descriptions originally referred not to a specific class of writings (that might be called a genre) but to their subject matter, the Gospel; the one Good News was considered to be related “according to” a particular author.⁶ In other words, in the titles of these books, the meaning of *εὐαγγέλιον* still seems to bear a connection with the “message of sal-

4. See the discussion in Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 1:14. The number of early Christian books that could be deemed secret is sometimes exaggerated. Only a few writings refer to themselves as secret, and sometimes the reference seems intended to make the writing seem more enticing. The Apocryphon of James, for instance, begins as if it were a letter, instructs its recipient to restrict the readership of its book, states that this book is written in “the Hebrew alphabet,” and mentions another, earlier secret book. Few scholars view all this as anything but invention. The gospel of Thomas, on the other hand, refers to itself as “the secret sayings of Jesus,” but there is no indication that the book was meant to be kept a secret or even that the sayings were revealed to the disciples in secret by Jesus (note the public settings of 72, 78–79, 90–91, 100–101). The proper interpretation is the secret; *whosoever* finds that *interpretation* will never die. On the meaning of “the secret sayings” (*οἱ λόγοι οἱ ἄπόκρυφοι*) as *hidden*, in reference to their concealed meaning, see, for instance, Fitzmyer, “The Oxyrhynchus Logoi,” 368; Robinson (and Koester), *Trajectories*, 92–93; Bruce, *The “Secret” Gospel*, 5, 16; Meyer, “The Beginning of the Gospel of Thomas,” 164.

5. What we call “Infancy Gospels” did not call themselves gospels; Protevangelium (of James) is a modern title. But there were some such titles, for example, the Living gospel, the Great gospel, a life-giving gospel—all descriptions given to a gospel composed by Mani. See Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 1:404–405.

6. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 1:79; Hengel, *Studies*, 65. Hengel notes that in ancient book titles, “As a rule, the author would come first, in the genitive, followed by the title indicating the content: Πλουτάρχου βίαι παράλληλοι οὐ Φιλοστράτου βίαι σοφιστῶν.” If I understand him, he believes that the point of the *κατά* construction was to avoid the implication that the gospel referred to is the author’s gospel; rather, it is *the* Christian proclamation as related by that particular author. Cf. Koester’s general conclusion about the use of the word *gospel* prior to its adoption in reference to a category of writings (“Kerygma-Gospel,” 380): “The evidence of all extant sources from the first and early second centuries reveals that *εὐαγγέλιον* is always and everywhere understood as the proclamation of the saving message about Christ or the coming of the kingdom.” I concur with Koester that there is no specific genre denoted by the word *gospel*, though it must be noted that, by the middle of the second century at the latest, the word *gospel* had also come to be used in reference to a category of writings (to “gospels”).

vation” (however that message was conceived),⁷ and that connection had implications for how εὐαγγέλιον might be modified. Thus, if we take εὐαγγέλιον in τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον as bearing the titular connotation of good tidings, it becomes difficult to imagine a sense of μυστικός which would not be something of an oxymoron (The Secret or Mystical Good News?).⁸ As a *title*, then, τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον would not only be unique, as far as I can tell, but would also be unusual for using an adjectival phrase to modify εὐαγγέλιον rather than a genitival construction, and “gospel” would not have its usual connotation of the good news. It is more likely, then, that εὐαγγέλιον here refers to *the class of writing* to which this version of Mark was thought to belong rather than to a specific title for this particular example. This use, then, seems more in keeping with Clement’s references to “the gospels” (e.g. *Stromateis* I.21.136.2; *Quis dives salvetur?* 4.3) and “a certain gospel” (*Stromateis* V.10.63.7), or to John as “a spiritual gospel” (cited in Eusebius, *Church History* VI.14.7) and the longer text as “a more spiritual gospel” (I.21–22).

The intrinsic evidence is more important. It is not apparent in the letter that the modifiers τὸ μυστικὸν are used as a formal title for the longer text. To start with, it should be noted that when Clement referred to the two versions of Mark’s gospel, he did not distinguish just one of them as the authoritative or canonical version. His first reference to either gospel occurs in I.11–12. Here the putative object of Carpocratian falsification is referred to simply as “the divinely inspired Gospel according to Mark.” The same degree of reverence is exhibited the first time the words τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον are used. Clement indicated that the activity of Carpocrates in procuring a

7. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 1:79, 80.

8. Koester (*Ancient Christian Gospels*, 2–3) notes that the positive sense of “good” is not always apparent in the use of εὐαγγέλιον, pointing out that “the noun normally means simply ‘news,’ ‘message’ and particularly in Christian usage ‘preaching’; the verb should then be translated as ‘to bring a message,’ or ‘to preach.’” Yet even if gospel did not imply “good,” there is a definite tension in the conjunction of secret with preaching or news.

copy of τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον and reworking it has “mix[ed] with the spotless and holy words utterly shameless lies” (II.6). Likewise, before Clement quoted passages from the amplified version he referred to “the very words of the gospel” (II.20). The letter displays no consciousness that one version—i.e. the one that became the canonical version—is *the* gospel of Mark. To Clement, *both* versions were the gospel of Mark.

The use of τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον should be considered in this light. Not only did Clement not treat one version as more authoritative, but he tended only to distinguish these texts for the purpose of clarity. The first distinctive description of the longer text is πνευματικώτερον εὐαγγέλιον, a relative description which is used in I.21–22 to distinguish the second version from the one Theodore already knew. The two references to this work as τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον occur later, only after Clement has related his account of the text’s history, and likewise appear at times when a distinction between the two versions is required for clarity (II.6, 12). In II.6 it was necessary to specify that Carpocrates stole a copy of τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον, and in II.12 Theodore is instructed not to concede to his Carpocratian opponents that their longer version is τοῦ μάρκου...τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον.⁹ The two other references to this text as “the secret gospel” in Smith’s English translation (II.23, III.14) were added by way of explanation; neither μυστικός nor εὐαγγέλιον occur at those points in the text. The decision to supply *this* description to clarify the referent has nevertheless added to the

9. On the translation of this sentence, see n. 84, below. Translated into English, the phrase “the μυστικὸν gospel of Mark” sounds like a title. But the same sense is not conveyed by the Greek. As was mentioned, κατά, not the genitive of the definite article (τοῦ μάρκου), is the regular construction for introducing the authors or sources (“according to...”) in gospel titles in the manuscripts. Clement always used κατά when naming the titles of gospels: ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τῷ κατὰ Λουκᾶν, *Stromateis* I.21.145.2; ἐν τῷ κατὰ Μάρκον εὐαγγελίῳ, *Quis dives salvetur?* 5.1; περὶ τοῦ θεοπνεύστου κατὰ μάρκον εὐαγγελίου, *Letter to Theodore* I.11–12; ἐν δὲ τῷ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγελίῳ, *Stromateis* I.21.147.5; ἐν τῷ κατ’ Αἰγυπτίους εὐαγγελίῳ, *Stromateis* III.9.63.1; ἐν τῷ κατ’ Αἰγυπτίους, III.13.93.1; τῷ καθ’ Ἑβραίους εὐαγγελίῳ, II.9.45.5. Moreover, in II.12 τοῦ μάρκου is separated from τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον by a verb, εἶναι—something which does not occur elsewhere when Clement is relating gospel titles.

sense that this phrase is the longer text's title.¹⁰ But in these places the subject is left implicit, as if Clement were inclined not to have to make another specification.

In this letter, then, Clement only qualified his references to the gospel of Mark when it was necessary to be specific about which version was being referred to, and τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον only occurs twice. It is reasonable to infer, therefore, that Clement viewed both versions as essentially the same divinely inspired gospel—the gospel of Mark—and used μυστικός and πνευματικώτερον when it was necessary to distinguish the longer one from the shorter.

That μυστικός is most likely a *relative* designation made for the purpose of distinguishing one version of the same gospel from another is also supported by *how* the word is introduced. It is important to recognize that when μυστικός is finally applied to this gospel, the word does not appear *ex nihilo*, as could be expected of a standard designation known by both Clement and Theodore and therefore not requiring explanation.¹¹ Rather, the use of μυστικός is prepared beforehand, in the account of Mark's composition, as a description of a certain category of Jesus' deeds which the first version did not include:

As for Mark, then, during Peter's stay in Rome he wrote an account of the Lord's doings, not, however, declaring all of them, nor yet hinting at τὰς μυστικὰς [οὐδ' μὴν τὰς μυστικὰς ὑποσημαίνων], but selecting what he thought most useful for increasing the faith of those who were being instructed. (I.16-18)

The longer gospel, in other words, may be distinguished from the initial writing as τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον because it was the gospel that included αἱ μυστικάί—*a distinctive set of materials not included in the first version.* Whether this adjective was normally

10. E.g. Smith, *CA*, 447, which is the translation most often reproduced by others. He cannot be faulted for supplying a phrase here, for it is difficult to omit the subject of a sentence in English. In *SG* he decided to place these phrases in square brackets (16, 17).

11. As noted, Clement initially referred to “the things they keep saying about the divinely inspired Gospel according to Mark”; there is no indication that Clement thought Theodore knew that the text the Carpocratians were talking about could properly be called something other than the gospel of Mark.

used to distinguish this gospel in Alexandria probably cannot be known, though Clement's tendency *not* to distinguish one version as *the* gospel of Mark and the fact that the description of what Mark left out of the first version can itself account for why the second version would be called the *μυστικόν* gospel imply that this phrase is more a description of convenience than an established title. Like *πνευματικώτερον εὐαγγέλιον, τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον* is an apt summary of its distinctive contents, most likely of what it was that made it a "more spiritual" gospel—that is, of whatever that material was which makes for progress toward gnosis. But we must determine the correct denotation of *μυστικός* in this letter before we can draw any conclusions about what it reveals about Clement's conception of the genre of this writing.

1.2. *The Use of the Terms Μυστικάί, Λόγια, and Πράξεις in the Letter*

1.2.1. Αἱ Μυστικάί

Μυστικάί first appears in connection with *πράξεις*, in I.16–17.¹² These actions or activities are unlikely to refer to the deeds Jesus performed privately, for the canonical gospel is cluttered with such secret acts: there are private instructions (4:10–20; 7:17–23; 8:15–21, 31–33; 9:9–13, 28–29; 10:10–12, 32b–34; 13:3–37; 14:17–31), healings intentionally performed away from gatherings of people (e.g. 5:37; 7:33; 8:23), private "epiphanies" (4:39–41; 6:48–51; 9:2–8), a private vigil (14:32–42), private preparations (11:2–3; 14:13–15), and attempts by Jesus to suppress knowledge of his messianic identity (1:25, 34; 3:12) and even of certain miracles (1:43–44; 5:43; 7:36; 8:26). If "secret" is meant here, it must mean acts which not only were thought to have happened privately, but also were not recorded in any gospels or spoken of openly (LGM 1b might qualify but not LGM 1a or 2). Yet acts of that sort would constitute secret

12. *Πράξεις, πάσας* and *μυστικάς* are each feminine, plural accusatives, so *πάσας* refers to all of the "acts," and *μυστικάς* to one variety of them.

material. We would now need to explain why the inclusion of this secret material was acceptable when Clement was careful to specify that Mark “did not divulge the things not to be uttered, nor did he write down the hierophantic teaching of the Lord.” Is this a less secret sort of secret tradition? But here we must pause, for the letter does not actually say that *αἱ μυστικάι* were put into the second version. What is said—and only in passing—is that Mark added to the previously recorded *πράξεις* “others also,” not *πράξεις* of a different sort (I.24). Clement’s interest was primarily in the *λόγια τινὰ* (I.25) whose interpretations lead their hearers into the innermost sanctuary of the truth. The lack of interest in the “other” acts and lack of elaboration of their nature contrasts notably with the reference to the *λόγια* and most likely implies that the other *πράξεις* were *not* of a different sort from the ones included in the first version. That conclusion in turn implies that *μυστικάς* is not intended to further modify the “other” acts.

But are we to conclude, then, that *αἱ μυστικάι* were not included in *τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον*? Those who would read *μυστικός* in this letter as meaning “secret” do not necessarily presume that *αἱ μυστικάι* (“the secret acts”) were included in *τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον*, for the latter phrase is taken to refer not to the contents of the gospel but to the presumed fact that the writing itself was kept secret. Thus some scholars assume that the words *αἱ μυστικάι* refer to the secrets that were not included (i.e. I.22–23) rather than to the distinctive passages of the *μυστικός* version. It seems more natural, however, to suppose that *αἱ μυστικάι* were among this additional material, if not its distinguishing traditions. Yet there is a problem. If the “other acts” contained in *τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον* are not *αἱ μυστικάι*, then, by elimination, *αἱ μυστικάι* must be included under the description *λόγια*, which is normally rendered “sayings,” not acts.

1.2.2. Λόγια and Πράξεις

This dilemma is actually part of a larger problem pertaining to the translation of these two words, *πράξεις* and *λόγια*. If, as the few English translations presume, a distinction between ordinary *acts* and special *sayings* is intended, what does this imply about the fifteen verses Clement quoted, which, apart from the words “Son of David, have mercy on me,” contain no direct discourse, no *sayings*, at all? If the other *acts* were not important to what makes this gospel a *μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον*, we would have to conclude that the quoted verses were not important either (and certainly not, therefore, distinguished by secrecy), despite the fact that Clement was about to give their “true” interpretation at the point where the letter fragment breaks off.

There is, however, a simple answer to these problems, which has emerged through studies of *λόγια* in the terminology of Papias and the early fathers. Shortly after Smith had made his discovery and translation, a number of scholars began to argue that the word *λόγια* in the second-century fathers does not normally mean “sayings.” Roger Gryson, for instance, has argued that *λόγια* normally refers to “les Écritures dans leur ensemble. ...il soit jamais fait de distinction, en toute hypothèse, entre paroles et récits.”¹³ His conclusion holds true for Clement’s usage. Though in Clement’s writ-

13. Gryson, “Témoignage,” 530-47. This argument was recently reiterated by Wenham in *Redating*, 128-31. The impetus for this line of interpretation was Kürzinger’s article “Papiaszeugnis,” 19-38, the last section of which deals with Papias’s use of *λόγια* in reference to a Hebrew composition by Matthew. But it should be noted that reactions against the standard reasoning that *λόγια* refers to sayings alone have occurred in earlier generations as well. A lengthy article making this point was published by Warfield in 1900 (“The Oracles of God,” 335-91). And in the notes of the 1890 translation of Eusebius by McGiffert it is likewise claimed that “the word *λόγια*, ‘oracles,’ is not necessarily confined to a collection of discourses merely, but...may be used to describe a work containing also a narrative of events” (*Eusebius*, 173 n. 26; 170 n. 1); for support McGiffert and Warfield point to an article by Lightfoot in *The Contemporary Review*, August 1875. So the position is not new; it is quite old but continues to have little impact on those who create—and those who merely consult—lexicons. This penchant to read *λόγια* as “sayings” is unlikely to change so long as scholars continue to use this word to characterize documents and sources that do not use it themselves. Note the efforts of Fitzmyer (“The Oxyrhynchus Logoi,” 366-67) and Robinson (in Koester and Robinson, *Trajectories*, 73-76 [his essay “LOGOI SOPHON”]) to counter the deeply entrenched custom of referring to the gospel of Thomas as a collection of *λόγια* rather than of *λόγοι*, the term Thomas uses.

ings the singular (λόγιον) often refers to an individual saying (e.g. *Stromateis* I.1.13.3; II.4.17.4) or, more generally, to “un texte déterminé de l’Écriture” (e.g. II.10.47.1).¹⁴ the plural, in most of its eleven occurrences, “vise généralement l’ensemble des Livres saints.”¹⁵ A general reference to the scriptures cannot be what λόγια τινὰ refers to in the letter. But there is an exception to this sense, which happens to be the most significant point of comparison to the use in the letter. In *Quis dives salvetur?* 3.1 Clement uses λόγια in a context where what he is referring to seems to be passages or pericopae:

It is the duty, therefore, of those whose minds are set on love of truth and love of the brethren, and who neither behave with insolent rudeness towards the rich members of the church, nor yet cringe to them through personal love of gain, first, by means of the words of scripture, to banish from them their unfounded despair and to show, with the necessary exposition of the Lord's oracles [μετὰ τῆς δεούσης ἐξηγήσεως τῶν λογίων τοῦ κυρίου], that the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven is not completely cut off from them, if they obey the commandments....

As Gryson's comments, “à première vue, on pourrait avoir l'impression qu'il s'agit uniquement des *paroles* de Jésus; mais quand on lit en entier ce petit traité, on voit que l'auteur y commente la péricope du jeune homme riche...dans son ensemble et qu'il n'y explique pas seulement les paroles de Jésus, mais aussi celles des autres protagonistes de la scène, ainsi que certains traits narratifs.”¹⁶ The λόγια referred to in this passage

14. Here λόγιον is best translated “text,” as Ferguson translates it, for it refers to a passage from Leviticus (18:1-5), that Clement is subjecting to allegorical exegesis. Some instances of λόγιον could be translated either with saying or sentence, e.g. *Stromateis* II.18.91.4 (referring to Proverbs 17:3) and III.4.38.2 (Malachi 3:15).

15. “Témoignage,” 546. It basically means “scriptures” in *Stromateis* VI.15.123.1 and VII.18.109.2, 3. 6, where the Old Testament is in view. The meaning “scriptures” is made clearest in *Protrepticus* 10.107.1, where “oracles of truth” (τὰ λόγια τῆς ἀληθείας) is put in poetic parallelism with “these divine writings” (τὰς θείας γραφάς); and in *Paedagogus* II.10.113.3, which reads “His [Jesus'] multi-coloured tunic really represents the brilliance of wisdom, the manifold and unfading value of Scripture, words of the Lord (τὰ λόγια τὰ κυρίου) that glow with rays of truth.” On the latter, the author of the study of “λόγιον” in *TDNT* (p. 140) commented, “emphatic restriction to sayings of the Lord can hardly be intended.”

16. “Témoignage,” 546 n. 77.

are distinguished not as a form-critical category (i.e. as sayings), but, it would seem, by their relevance to a particular hermeneutical agenda; the most useful of these λόγια for this purpose—Mark 10:17–31—is a passage which we might call an episode. Λόγια, then, was not used by Clement to refer to sayings in contrast to narrative and was not *just* applied to scripture in general; it could be used to refer to particular passages of scripture, regardless of whether they are predominately stories or sayings. In this connection it is noteworthy that in most instances the word is used in the context of interpretation of a deeper (or different) meaning.

In the case of the letter, therefore, λόγια may refer broadly to gospel-type materials of a certain value, to any traditions about Jesus which lead their hearers toward the deeper Christian truths; that is, to those materials in Mark's notes which Mark deemed "suitable to whatever makes for progress toward knowledge" (I.20–21). Those other "acts" mentioned in I.24 would be materials belonging to the second version but which Clement did not think contained a prominent "spiritual" sense; these he acknowledged, but without further comment. That Clement was not interested in using πράξεις and λόγια to make a distinction between acts and sayings is confirmed by his use of πράξεις as a characterization for the first version of Mark *as a whole* (I.16). Presumably Clement does not mean that the gospel for catechumens contained only acts with no sayings.¹⁷ Clement was aware of the title Πράξεις Ἀποστόλων (he cites the work by name at least thirteen times, e.g. *Paedagogus* II.1.16.2; *Stromateis* I.11.50.6; 18.89.4; 19.91.1), and here applies the same term to Mark's narrative about the acts of

17. A similar issue pertains to Papias's description of Mark's composition. Kürzinger ("Papiaszeugnis," 37) noted that Papias's comment (in Eusebius, *Church History* III.39.15–16) that Mark did not write down the Lord's λόγια in a systematic order would not be referring only to the sayings of this gospel. Kürzinger offered this observation as a reason for rejecting the idea that Papias's comments on Matthew's systematic arrangement of τὰ λόγια in the Hebrew language refers to a collection of sayings (e.g. something like Q, as Schleiermacher had argued); in both cases, Papias is using λόγια in reference to both acts and words. This line of interpretation is followed by Kittel ("λόγιον," *TDNT* 4 [1967]: 140–41) and Gryson ("Témoignage," 547).

“the Lord.”

If Clement was not in the habit of using *λόγια* to distinguish sayings from stories, but did use it in reference to words of scripture as objects of deeper exegesis, then the word *λόγια* in the *Letter to Theodore* I.25 is probably better translated as (certain) “words” or “texts,” rather than as “sayings” or “oracles.”¹⁸ The term does not exclude narrative material.

This clarification resolves the above mentioned problems, for we now have a more plausible distinction between additional stories like those in the earlier gospel and “certain passages” whose exegesis is especially suited to disclose deeper truths. LGM 1 would represent the latter; LGM 2 probably, to a greater extent, the former.¹⁹ *Αἱ μυστικάί*, then, likely refers to sayings and stories of a special nature, said to lead hearers to the truth through their exposition, and the gospel is likely called *τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον* because of this special nature.

Does this special quality nevertheless involve some sort of secrecy? The proper way to go about determining the sense of *μυστικός* in I.17 and II.6, 12 is to study the use of this word elsewhere in Clement and then compare the results with what has now been noted about the two occurrences in the letter. This examination of how Clement uses *μυστικός* will demonstrate that the two instances which occur in the letter, in reference to “deeds” and as a general description of the longer gospel, are in keeping with how Clement discusses his method of deeper exegesis; as we should by now expect, they combine to reiterate the picture he had begun to convey in the letter itself by the phrase “a more spiritual gospel.” What is more, we shall see that the word never seems to mean secret.

18. “Sayings” is Smith’s translation; Bruce translates *λόγια* as “oracles” (*The “Secret” Gospel*, 7). “Oracular accounts” might have been better.

19. Cf. Levin, “Early History,” 4287: “Clement, if challenged, could hardly have maintained that this addition [LGM 2] is one of those which make Mark’s longer gospel ‘more spiritual.’”

I.3. How Should We Translate *Μυστικός*?

I.3.1. *Μυστήριον* in Clement's Writings

Though the point has been obscured in previous discussions of the “secret” gospel, the first and most pertinent thing to note about the word *μυστικός* is that it is the adjective corresponding to the word *μυστήριον*. Its meaning, therefore, should not be sought without regard also to how Clement uses *μυστήριον* itself and other derivatives of this word. The word *μυστήριον* derives from the mystery religions, where it was almost always used in the plural to refer to the rituals of those religions, the mysteries.²⁰ A great deal has been written on the use of this term by Jewish and early Christian writers. Concerning the period prior to about the fourth century, the consensus has been, and continues to be, that when the word is applied by Christians to Christianity (that is, when it is not used in reference to how the mysteries refer to themselves) the cognitive (theological or philosophical) aspect is in view rather than the cultic.²¹ The lack of a specifically cultic/sacramental connection in Clement's use was thoroughly documented by H. G. Marsh in 1936 and does not need to be fully demonstrated again

20. For a comprehensive discussion of its origins, see Caragounis, *The Ephesian Mysterion*. 3–19. Many New Testament scholars translate *μυστήριον* as “secret” rather than as “mystery.” The prominence of the translation “secret” seems to be the result of an earlier interest in demonstrating a purely “secular” sense to the use of this word in the New Testament, which was motivated by a concern to defend earliest Christianity from the charge of having been directly influenced by the mystery religions. This apologetic motive is evident, for instance, in Nock, “Hellenistic Mysteries,” 200, 204, 206; idem, “Mysterion,” 201; Bouyer, “Mysterion,” 398–99. But the majority of studies of the word *μυστήριον* itself have tended to view the translation “secret” as inexact and inadequate. As Caragounis has shown, the common tendency to translate *μυστήριον* as secret, without the sense of “mysterious or incomprehensible, . . . does injustice to the scope and meaning of the word” (pp. 1–2). Harvey (“Mystery Language,” 327–29) also disputes recourse to the idea of a purely “secular” meaning of “secret” for *μυστήριον*, a sense which he finds only in Pseudo-Callisthenes *Historia Alexandrini Magni* III.22–23 (his position is adopted by Beavis in *Mark's Audience*, 144). In his opinion, “this so-called ‘secular’ usage is not attested until at least the following [i.e. second] century [CE], and should not be assumed in the New Testament except as a last resort” (p. 329).

21. For example, Hamilton, “Language of Mystery,” 479–94. The early Christian application of *μυστήριον* tended to be predominantly theological, tending to eschatology in the first century, to philosophy in the second and third.

here, though certain of his conclusions should be iterated.²² As was noted in chapter 2, Clement was fond of the word *μυστήριον*, probably because the word occurred in the Christian scriptures and could therefore legitimate “the suggestion that the Scriptures recognize such a practice by which the divine truth is concealed from unworthy seekers.”²³ A contrived exposition of the two occurrences of this term in Colossians 1:25–27 (*Stromateis* V.10.60.1–62.4) provided Clement with the basis for his claim that the divine mysteries (Clement makes it a plural) were of two types: one kind reserved for “the few,” that were passed on privately to the apostles and then to holy teachers (*μυστήριον τὸ ἀποκεκρυμμένον...ὃ νῦν ἐφανερώθη τοῖς ἀγίοις αὐτοῦ*), the other the mystery to be proclaimed to the Gentiles (*πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης τοῦ μυστηρίου*).²⁴ The mysteries are theological truths concealed beneath the literal meanings of the scriptures (e.g. *Stromateis* I.5.32.3).²⁵ On occasion Clement follows Philo and Justin in using *μυστήριον* “as a synonym for *παραβολή* and *σύμβολον*” (*Stromateis*

22. Marsh, “*Μυστήριον*,” 64–80. In the following discussion I will relate by way of summary a number of the points Marsh made, in order, on pages 65–67. Thus, for a fuller discussion of the evidence, see Marsh. An independent assessment of Clement’s use of *μυστήριον* was offered by Echle (“Sacramental Initiation,” 54–65). His conclusions basically corroborate Marsh’s, even though he sometimes categorized individual instances differently. This is important considering that Echle wished to push the case that for Clement baptism had aspects of a mystery rite. Both he and Marsh did their utmost to find sacramental overtones in Clement’s use of *μυστήριον*, and came to similar conclusions concerning a few ambiguous cases (see 74–80 for Marsh, 56 for Echle). Echle parted with Marsh in pointing out that Clement perceived the similarity between Christian baptism and “the heathen mystery rite or ceremony of initiation” (56), and did refer to baptism as a *μυστήριον* at the end of the *Protrepticus*. Echle acknowledged, however, the apologetic motivation and “literary” quality of this uncharacteristic appeal to heathens to see Christianity as the true mystery religion (60); Echle wished mainly to stress that a fundamental congruence exists between the rite of mystery initiation (he inaccurately projected a common conception pertaining to all the mysteries) and Clement’s understanding of baptism, even if Clement did not normally apply mystery religion language in a cultic way. He felt that this somehow “throws new light upon Clement’s concept of *μυστήριον*” (60). For criticisms of Echle’s conclusion on this matter, see Hamilton, “Language of Mystery,” 485. For a brief history of the discussion of Clement’s use of *μυστήριον*, see Mortley, *Connaissance*, 174–77.

23. Marsh, “*Μυστήριον*,” 65–66. See also Lilla, *Christian Platonism*, 147 and n. 3.

24. Marsh, “*Μυστήριον*,” 66; Lilla, *Christian Platonism*, 147–48; Mortley, *Connaissance*, 176.

25. Marsh, “*Μυστήριον*,” 67.

I.12.55.1; V.12.80.7);²⁶ however, *μυστήριον* does not usually refer to the form or manner by which scripture reveals its truths: that is the function of *μυστικός* and *μυστικῶς*. *Μυστήριον* is normally used to designate the deeper truths themselves.

I.3.1.1. *The Great Mysteries*

Because Clement divided *τὰ μυστήρια* into two kinds, he was able to “disclose” those Christian truths of a less deep nature through allegorical exposition, using the same method by which the mysteries restricted to the gnostics were imparted (*Stromateis* VII.1.4.3; 1.6.1: *παιδεύων μυστηρίοις τὸν γνωστικόν*).²⁷ But he still preserved the distinction between what belongs to the many and what only to a few. This point leads us to a fact vital to an adequate understanding of the *Letter to Theodore*’s description of the use of the longer text. This distinction among the mysteries was sometimes expressed using mystery religion language of a gradation of *μυστήρια*, including a distinction between *τὰ μικρὰ καὶ τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια* (IV.1.3.1; and V.11.71.1; cf. I.1.15.3). But as Clement himself articulates (*Stromateis* V.9), this use of mystery terminology follows the example of its application in philosophy to esoteric *knowledge* rather than rites.²⁸ There, as Bornkamm says, “the mysteries are not cultic actions but obscure and secret doctrines whose hidden wisdom may be understood only by those capable of knowledge. The gradual ascent of knowledge to full vision is here the true initiation.”²⁹ Massey Shepherd offered a des-

26. Marsh, “*Μυστήριον*,” 66–67. Also Bornkamm, “*μυστήριον, μνέω*,” 825, who adds *τύπος*; and Echle, “Sacramental Initiation,” 55. On Justin, see Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery*, 218–19. Bockmuehl discusses the earliest second-century usages on pp. 214–20.

27. “*Μυστήριον*,” 67, 69–71, 78–79.

28. “*Μυστήριον*,” esp. 67–68 and n. 1; 70, 74. “The fact is that the doctrine of reserve came from the philosophers rather than from the mystery cults” (70).

29. Bornkamm, “*μυστήριον, μνέω*,” 808. Pp. 808–10 provide a very useful discussion of philosophy’s figurative adoption of the cultic language of the mysteries and its distinctive use in Alexandrian theology; Harvey elaborates the mystery religion connotations as living metaphors that enriched philosophical borrowings (“Mystery Language,” 321–25). Much fuller discussions of the philosophical use can be found in Wedderburn, *Baptism and Resurrection*, § 2 (esp. 113–139, 148–58); and des Places, “Platon et la langue des mystères,” 83–98. Hort and Mayor also supply examples of the

cription of the greater and lesser mysteries in Clement, which may serve as a useful introduction to these passages:

But the minor mysteries of the Christians have to do with preliminary instruction, what he describes as “physical matters,” and then one goes on to the major mysteries that go beyond space and time. Thus “abstracting all that belongs to bodies and things called incorporeal, we cast ourselves into the greatness of Christ, and thence advance into immensity by holiness” so as to reach somehow “to the conception of the Almighty, knowing not what He is, but what He is not.”³⁰

Clement’s mysteries involve the same general approach and have the same goal as those

figurative use of mystery language in philosophy (and other similar appropriations) in *Miscellanies Book VII*, liii–liv. See, also, Bouyer, “‘Mystique,’” 9–13 (on the Alexandrian philosophical usage of mystery language “dans un sens purement métaphorique”); Hamilton, “Language of Mystery,” 479–82; Caragounis, *Ephesian Mysterion*, 20–21; Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 300. Philo’s use of mystery religion language is discussed by Wedderburn (*Baptism and Resurrection*, § 2.4.2). Riedweg (*Mysterienterminologie*) devotes chapters to Philo’s and Clement’s metaphorical (i.e. Alexandrian) use of mystery language. Marsh (“*Μυστήριον*,” 67–68) notes that Clement distinguishes between small and great mysteries in basically the same way that Philo does (*De Sacrificiis Abelis et Caini* 16); Lilla (*Christian Platonism*, 148–49) gives fourteen examples of Philo’s use of mystery language in reference to the esoteric guarding of higher theological doctrines, including one passage which Clement has copied into *Stromateis* V.12.80.3 (*De Sacr. Ab. et C.* 60: “Because the holy speech concerning the ungenerated principle and its powers must remain hidden”). A broader and more systematic discussion of the Christian use of mystery language in the early centuries is offered by Hamilton (“Language of Mystery,” esp. 482–87), who describes the progression of the shift away from the non-cultic New Testament use in reference to God’s eschatological will, including the middle to late second-century Alexandrian use, via Philo and Middle Platonism, wherein the cultic language of the mysteries was adopted with a philosophical referent (485–86): “Clement’s use of mystery terms, when contrasted with his vociferous attack of the mystery cults, seems to indicate a distinction between mysteries which are cultic and mysteries which are philosophical. What is unique in Clement is his application of those terms as initiatory motifs to Christianity, an initiation which is not a cultic action, a *dromenon*, but rather the disclosure of the teachings of the Christian religion. Christianity, for Clement, is the ‘true philosophy’ (*Stromateis* V.11.67.2)” (cf. the last words of the Mar Saba Clementine Fragment). The point is also made in Butterworth, “Appendix on the Greek Mysteries,” 389–90 in his *Exhortation*; and in Bouyer, “Mysterion,” 408–10. Clement’s disdain for the rites of the mystery religions is evident throughout the *Protrepticus*, but is especially clear in 2.13.1: “Now it seems to me that the terms ‘orgy’ and ‘mystery’ must be derived, the former from the wrath (*ὀργή*) of Demeter against Zeus, and the latter from the pollution (*μύσους*) that took place in connection with Dionysus.” (These are two of the crudest myths he can think of.) Cf. his comments in 2.16.2: “Here we see what the mysteries are, in a word, murders and burials!”

30. *LM*, 50–51. (See the similar discussion of the small and great mysteries in Lilla, *Christian Platonism*, 189–90; the whole of his chapter “Pistis, Gnosis, Cosmology, and Theology” [118–226] is relevant to this discussion.) Anxious to defend Clement from the charge of esotericism, Shepherd also argued that Clement’s deeper mysteries are *open* theological instruction though comprehensible only to those who have learned the more basic truths, i.e. the mysteries are esoteric only in this limited sense. But it is hard to perceive a difference here between Clement’s esotericism and the esotericism of the philosophies or even the mysteries, which were also open in principle to anyone.

of philosophy, namely, “the vision of the divine.”³¹ The great mysteries are specifically “the department of theology, ‘vision’ (ἡ ἐποπτεία),” and he even cites Plato in this respect:

Moses’ philosophy has four divisions: first, history; second, that which is properly called legislation (which would be properly classified under ethics); third, religious observances (a part of natural philosophy); fourth, in general, the nature of the understanding of the divine, revelation [ἡ ἐποπτεία], which Plato places among the really great mysteries [ἦν φησιν ὁ Πλάτων τῶν μεγάλων ὄντως εἶναι μυστηρίων]. Aristotle calls this form “metaphysics.”³² (*Stromateis* I.28.176.1–2)

Thus in *Stromateis* IV.1.3.1–3 the terms small and great are applied by Clement to the lesser mysteries of cosmology and the study of the observable world (φυσιολογία or physics) and the great mysteries belonging to “the department of theology”:

On completing, then, the whole of what we propose in the commentaries, on which, if the Spirit will, we ministering to the urgent need...shall address ourselves to the true gnostic science of nature, being initiated into the minor mysteries before the greater [τὰ μικρὰ πρὸ τῶν μεγάλων μνηθέντες μυστηρίων]; so that nothing may be in the way of the truly divine declaration of sacred things [τῆ θεία ὄντως ἱεροφαντία], the subjects requiring preliminary detail and statement being cleared away, and sketched beforehand. The science of nature, then, or rather observation, as contained in the gnostic tradition according to the rule of the truth, depends on the discussion concerning cosmogony, ascending thence to the department of theology. Whence, then, we shall begin our account of what is handed down, with the creation as related by the prophets....³³

31. Bornkamm, *Μυστήριον*, 808 (cf. Riedweg, *Mysterienterminologie*, 159). This is the highest Clement believed could be realized in the body. In Clement’s thought, the soul of the deceased gnostic (not the ordinary Christian) ascends through the heavens to become deified (θεοί—a dignity equal to the angels), so that, no longer constrained by materiality, it can contemplate God “face to face” and remain in his “rest” (e.g. *Stromateis* VII.10.57.1; 11.68.5). See Lilla, *Christian Platonism*, 175–89.

32. The terminology of great and small mysteries comes from Eleusis, but was used by Plato in a metaphorical sense which became a standard figure for philosophy. Ἐποπτεία is the Eleusinian word for the highest grade of initiation, a state of divine vision. On this subject, see des Places, “Platon et la langue des mystères,” 86–87; on this passage in Clement, see Méhat, “Les sens de l’Écriture,” 355–65.

33. On this passage and its connections with Philo, see van den Hoek, *Jewish Model*, 188. On Philo’s distinction of small and great mysteries, Hamilton (“Language of Mystery,” 481) writes: “In Eleusinian fashion, Philo can describe the individual stages of consecration as an initiation into the small and great mysteries (*Sacr. Abel*, 62; *Cherub.*, 49; *Leg. All.*, III.100). Moses and Jeremiah are true hierophants, and the Bible is a book of mysteries (*Cherub.*, 42–49). ...There is an emphasis on meaning, but a symbolic or hidden meaning. The vocabulary of mystery is non-cultic in Philo.” Lilla (*Christian Platonism*, 190 n. 1) and Wagner (“Literary Problem,” 170, 171) suggest that Clement’s distinction between small and great mysteries was influenced most by Philo’s use, and reflects a similar conception. According to Lilla, the μικρὰ μυστήρια involve “the indirect knowledge of God,” i.e. what [humans] can perceive

The same philosophical understanding is presupposed in V.11.70.7–71.1. A conscious analogy between Greek mysteries and those of the Jews and Christians (the *βάρβαροι*, lit. “barbarians”) is drawn, but the substance of the comparison, apart from baptisms forming the earliest stage, is the thought of “instruction and preliminary preparation” (cf. V.4.20.1). The *μεγάλα μυστήρια* are again described in terms of a profound comprehension of “nature and things.” They are also quite clearly differentiated from baptism:

It is not without reason that in the mysteries that obtain among the Greeks, lustrations [*τὰ καθάρσια*] hold the first place; as also the laver [*τὸ λουτρόν*: ceremonial washing with water] among the Barbarians. After these are the minor mysteries [*τὰ μικρὰ μυστήρια*], which have some foundation of instruction and of preliminary preparation for what is to come after; and the great mysteries [*τὰ...μεγάλα*], in which nothing remains to be learned of the universe, but only to contemplate and comprehend nature and things.³⁴

I.3.1.2. *The Mysteries in the Letter to Theodore*

The fact that when Clement speaks of great mysteries he is referring to an advanced stage in gnostic instruction rather than to a ritual or set of rituals is vital for our interpretation of what Clement says about the restriction of the longer text to “those being initiated into the great mysteries” (II.1–2). Despite the objections of Massey Shepherd, most New Testament scholars studying the Mar Saba Clementine Fragment have not considered the results of studies of mystery language in the early church, or

about God indirectly through study of his works, or nature, and the *μεγάλα μυστήρια* are “the direct knowledge of [God].” Wagner’s discussion is more elaborate. He explains that the lesser mysteries were the fulfillment of the practical aspect of ethics through instruction in “absolute duties” or general principles, learned after study of the “conditional duties” (the subject of the *Protrepticus* and *Paedagogus*); the lesser mysteries represent the theoretical dimension of ethics, and are more adequately described as philosophy, though he points out that for Clement and Philo the greater mysteries “transcended philosophy”: “The supreme mysteries were in the crowning realm of initiation-vision, *Epopteia*” (p. 171). The words “gnosis” and “wisdom” are more appropriate to these mysteries than “philosophy.” If I understand him properly, Wagner would group *φυσιολογία* with the great mysteries rather than the lesser, however.

34. A distinction between preparatory and higher mysteries is also made in I.1.15.1–3.

even Clement's use of *μυστήριον* and *μεγάλα μυστήρια*, and have almost always interpreted this phrase to refer to a cultic practice, usually baptism (the cultic practice to which the phrase is specifically opposed in *Stromateis* V.11.70.9–71.1).³⁵ The incorrectness of this understanding will be the topic of chapter 4. Here, though, it needs to be recognized that Clement draws upon the philosophical precedent of a figurative use of mystery language as a means to describe advancement in “the true philosophy” (III.18), that is, in gnosis.

For Clement, initiation into the great mysteries refers to an advanced stage in a continuous and life-long process. We are not, therefore, to imagine a special day or a special ceremony occurring in connection with the use of this gospel. The consensus opinion, unfortunately, has always been that Clement is referring in II.1–2 to the proscribed *time* of the text's use, as if to say it is only read *on these ceremonial occasions* (and otherwise locked away); he is actually referring to the *persons* exposed to it: those Christians sufficiently advanced in the pursuit of gnosis.³⁶

Perhaps the clearest indication that in the *Letter to Theodore* the “mysteries” pertaining to τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον are of a contemplative and intellectualistic nature (in the broadest sense) is the reference to this gospel's special λόγια whose interpretations, acting as a *mystagogue*, lead the hearers into the innermost sanctuary of the truth

35. Shepherd's remarks may be found in *LM*, 46–52 (esp. 49), 62, 68. Objecting to Smith's baptism interpretation, he stressed that “The word ‘mysteries’ does not have to do with cult, in the Christian usage, but with instruction and research into the revelation of the Word” (p. 51). “For Clement it is not cultic. The ‘greater mysteries’ are given to the graduate students” (p. 68). Cf. Bruce, *The “Secret” Gospel*, 18: “The letter-writer himself uses the language of mystical initiation with regard to the mature Christian (as Clement does with regard to his ‘true Gnostic’), but with him (as with Clement) this is but a figure of speech.”

36. The time is usually taken to be the Paschal evening, when, most believe (probably incorrectly), baptism was performed in second-century Alexandria. E.g. Richardson is quoted by Smith as suggesting “The insertion was read only *in the course of* the ‘great mysteries.’ I take this to mean baptism, to which Clement applies all degrees of mystery language...” (*SG*, 65; italics original). Cf. Crossan, *Four Other Gospels*, 99. The Paschal vigil setting was Richardson's suggestion, and is accepted by Wink (“Jesus as Magician,” 8). Hanhart (*Open Tomb*, 569) projects the baptismal evening interpretation, along with a slew of other preconceptions, directly onto II.1–2: “According to Clement, it [LGM 1] was originally part of Mark's (post-70) Haggadah and was kept for baptismal instruction in the basilica of Alexandria.”

hidden by seven veils. Mystagogues are those officials who initiate persons into the mysteries. Here mystery religion language of initiation is referred explicitly to *interpretation* of special sayings. A personified *interpretation* “initiates” one into a figurative “innermost sanctuary” of truth hidden by a veil. The latter metaphors, sanctuary and veil, are also used elsewhere in Clement, and refer to the hiding of the gnostic truth beneath the scriptures.³⁷ In these passages the metaphor of the innermost sanctuary aptly signifies both the divine realities concealed by the scriptures and the requirement of holiness for entering this “space.”

Bornkamm has written about the “mystagogic philosophy” that influenced Alexandrian theology:

The aim of the knowledge of this mystagogic philosophy is to distinguish between real truth and its symbolic appearance or concealment. ...Its greatly varied theme is the allegorical interpretation of the mysteries, their divine names, rites, myths and symbols. The mysteries are an adequate envelope for truth even in their incongruity, for they express the fact that the secrets of the divine cannot be declared openly but there can only be representation of certain reflection (symbols) τῶν μυστικῶν καὶ ἀποκεκρυμμένων καὶ ἀφανῶν νοήσεων [Iambl. Myst., VII.1]. The terms μυστικά and μυστήρια are now ontological rather than cultic terms. They denote that which not only ought not to be declared but also that which by nature cannot be declared. Mystical speech, being inexact and symbolical, discloses hereby its knowledge of ineffable μυστήρια, and mediates this knowledge to initiates.³⁸

The mystery-laden descriptions in the *Letter to Theodore* reflect the conception that interpretation of the deeper meaning of scripture is the essential aspect of gnostic

37. The analogy of the temple veil and sanctuary is found in *Stromateis* V.4.19.3–4, where it refers to the enigmatic or figurative quality of sacred writing, by which it conceals its deeper truths from the unworthy. The comparison between the metaphorical quality of the scriptures and a veil is also evident in *Stromateis* VI.15.126.1–4, where the divine realities contemplated by the gnostic are the matters said to be veiled. Initiation language and the metaphor of veiling are also used in VI.15.129.4: “But prophecy does not employ figurative forms in the expressions for the sake of beauty of diction. But from the fact that truth appertains not to all, it is veiled in manifold ways, causing the light to arise only on those who are initiated into knowledge, who seek the truth through love.” See also the comments in Smith, *CA*, 40–41.

38. “Μυστήριον, μύεω,” 809. He adds (809 n. 64) that “For Philo and the Christian Alexandrians the Bible is the book of mysteries; its figures and events conceal mysteries appointed only for initiates, cf. *Cher.*, 42–49.”

instruction. This philosophical use of cultic mystery language is the correct context in which to understand the use of the longer gospel in the Alexandrian church. A context of theological/philosophical study is further confirmed by a detailed study of the word *μυστικός*.

1.3.2. *Clement's use of Μυστικός*

In order to appreciate the lack of a cultic or ritualistic meaning to *μυστικός* in the *Letter to Theodore*, it is essential to make a distinction between Clement's use of the language of the mysteries on their own terms in order to refer to their practices and his "figurative" (or philosophical) application of this language to aspects of Christianity. When referring to the "pagan" mysteries, Clement's uses of *μυστικός* normally mean "pertaining to the mysteries," though the connotation of "having a symbolic significance" is sometimes also involved.³⁹ Clement also makes reference to the use of this word within philosophy.⁴⁰

As with *μυστήριον*, Clement's Christian applications of *μυστικός* are in keeping with the scriptural (esp. New Testament) association of *μυστήριον* with cognition and

39. In *Stromateis* III.4.27.1 we read, "Those who call Licentious Aphrodite a mystical communion insult the latter name. It is called an action alike whether you do something wrong or right." No deeper meaning is indicated by the context, and the point seems to be that promiscuous sex is not a religious act and therefore not a communion; mystical here probably means religious rite, in the sense of the mysteries. His defense of this phrase against abuse implies that he could apply the conception of a mystic rite to Christianity, though he actually did this only a few times (see n. 41 below). In *Protrepticus* 2.22.3 Clement referred to the contents of the "mystic chest" used in one of the mysteries, as *αἱ κίσται αἱ μυστικάι*. "Mystic" here would likely include both senses of "pertaining to the mysteries" and, with respect to its contents, "having symbolic/allegorical meaning." In 2.22.5 the word is applied to one of τὰ ἀπόρρητα σύμβολα of Gē Themis, namely the comb, ὅς ἐστιν, εὐφήμως καὶ μυστικῶς εἰπεῖν, *μόριον γυναικεῖον* (a mystic and euphemistic term for the vagina). Here the word is applied to an element of a myth, allegorically interpreted within a rite revealing its symbols. Similarly, in *Protrepticus* 2.34.5 the setting up of phalloi to Dionysus is called a "mystic memorial" to an episode of "unnatural lust" committed on his part and retold in a myth.

40. In *Stromateis* III.3.24.2 Clement talks of the "mystic ban" Pythagoreans place on eating beans. And I.15.66.2 speaks of Thales being circumcised in order to learn the mystic philosophy of the Egyptians.

knowledge—theological truths that are “mysterious.”⁴¹ But though Clement’s usages of *μυστικός* often involve the general sense of “having the quality of mystery” or the specialized sense of “pertaining to a mystery of the divine will,” the overwhelming majority of Clement’s usages of *μυστικός* demonstrate a technical application.

Μυστικός is most often used to refer to the quality (or activity, if an adverbial) of figurative signification with respect to (religious) narrative, especially in written texts (usually scriptures). Sometimes simple metaphor or symbol is involved, as in *Paedagogus* I.6.46.3, where Clement quotes Jesus’ discourse on himself as the true bread from heaven that gives life to the world, and explains, “In this passage, we must read a mystic meaning for bread.”⁴² More commonly, though, *μυστικός* is used in specific reference to the enigmatic, allegorical quality Clement attributed to all scripture, of (overtly) saying one thing but, in a more profound and more relevant sense, meaning something else. The Hebrew Scriptures in their entirety are viewed as having been composed on two levels; the Christian truths, not apparent on the literal level, are the “mysteries” that lie beneath them. The Christian truths are therefore said to be expressed through a mystical form of signification. Hence Clement spoke of “the mystic silence of the prophetic enigmas” (*Protrepticus* I.10.1) and, of course, of the “mystic veil” of the non-literal sense of scripture: ‘*ἡμέρα γὰρ τῇ ἡμερᾷ, τὸ γεγραμμένον ἄντικρυς, καὶ νύξ νυκτὶ ἀναγγέλλει γινῶσιν, τὴν ἐπικεκρυμμένην μυστικῶς*’ (*Stromateis* V.10.64.3–65.4). This usage actually applies to all scripture,

41. A few partial exceptions occur in the *Paedagogus* when Clement applied the word to “necessary evils”: that is, when practices he would otherwise consider to contradict his gnostic ideal of *ἀπάθεια* are required in a passionless form—namely, sex (the “mystic rites of nature” ordained in Genesis 1:28; II.10.96.2), the holy kiss (III.2.81.3), and Esther’s mystical adornment of herself with jewelry and makeup, which Clement interpreted as a symbol of the high price of her people’s ransom (III.2.12.5). The common theme to these applications of *μυστικός* to biblically ordained practices or occurrences is the paradox (mystery) that certain ungodly behaviours associated with passion have divinely ordained exceptions.

42. *ἐνταῦθα τὸ μυστικὸν τοῦ ἄρτου παρασημειωτέον*; this is part of a series of “many ways [that] the Word is figuratively described, as meat, and flesh, and food, and bread, and blood, and milk.”

including those of his Christian canon and anything else through which he believed the voice of the Logos speaks allegorically. However, since the “mysteries” of the Christian truth are the content of the allegorical interpretation, the connotations of “mysterious” and of “conveying a deeper, different (and sacred) meaning” occasionally flow together. The simplest way to summarize Clement’s basic use of *μυστικός* was offered by Clement himself, when he said “the mysteries are transmitted mystically” (ἀλλὰ τὰ μυστήρια μυστικῶς παραδίδονται; *Stromateis* I.1.13.4).

Many of the preceding comments are well illustrated by a passage in *Quis dives salvetur?*, 5.1–4, which also, by the way, shows the influence of Mark’s conception of parabolic concealment on Clement’s understanding of scripture.⁴³ These words demonstrate well how Clement would have read a *τοῦ μάρκου μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον*:

And as we are clearly aware that the Saviour teaches [his own] [τοῦς ἑαυτοῦ] nothing in a merely human way, but everything by a divine and mystical wisdom [θεία σοφία καὶ μυστικῇ], we must not understand His words [bodily] [μὴ σαρκίνως], but with due inquiry and intelligence we must search out and master their hidden meaning [τὸν ἐν αὐτοῖς κεκρυμμένον νοῦν]. For the sayings which appear to have been simplified by the lord himself to his disciples are found even now, on account of the extraordinary degree of wisdom in them, to need not less but more attention than his dark and suggestive utterances. And when the sayings which are thought to have been fully explained by him to the inner circle of disciples, to the very men who are called by him the children of the kingdom, still require further reflexion, surely those that had the appearance of being delivered in simple form and for that reason were not questioned by the hearers, but which are of importance for the whole end of salvation, and are enveloped in a wonderful and super-celestial depth of thought, should not be taken as they strike the careless ear, but with an effort of mind to reach the very spirit of the saviour [τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ σωτήρος] and his secret meaning [καὶ τὸ τῆς γνώμης ἀπόρητον].

43. See also his references to the lord speaking everything in parables; e.g. *Stromateis* I.1.2.3; I.12.56.2; VI.15.124.6–125.2; cf. VI.15.127.3. The influence may be mainly indirect, via Matthew. The occurrence in *Excerpta ex Theodoto* 66 is relevant here, though it is a quotation from Theodotus rather than a reflection of Clement’s thought: “The Saviour taught the Apostles at first figuratively and mystically, later in parables and riddles, and thirdly clearly and openly when they were alone.” (Ὁ Σωτὴρ τοὺς ἀποστόλους ἐδίδασκεν, τὰ μὲν πρῶτα τυπικῶς καὶ μυστικῶς, τὰ δὲ ὕστερα παραβολικῶς καὶ ἠνιγμένως, τὰ δὲ τρίτα σαφῶς καὶ γυμνῶς κατὰ μόνας.) Clement did not distinguish between parabolic/figurative and mystical, but this perspective is similar to his thought. Smith (*SG*, 142) suggested that the third scenario, which mentions a “naked” private exposition of the truth (γυμνῶς κατὰ μόνας), might be a hint that Theodotus knew τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον.

Broadly speaking, when Clement used *μυστικός* in connection with figurative meaning, the mode of signification involved is allegory. As Dawson has pointed out, the term allegory is most properly applied when either the literal level of the text or the literary level of the interpretation involves a narrative.⁴⁴ I am using the word in its less technical sense, for its proper sense would not cover all types of this kind of reading in relation to which Clement employed the word *μυστικός*. For example, his temple “allegory” (*Stromateis* V.6) is not based on a narrative nor is the interpretation a narrative in any sense. Allegory proper, moreover, involves a connection between the literal and symbolic meanings of a not entirely arbitrary sort, but the connections Clement drew could at times be so mysterious (i.e. tendentious) that *μυστικός* occasionally seems to express a concession that the meaning he inferred has very little connection with the obvious or literal sense.⁴⁵ In any case, in its broader sense, allegory is what Clement was engaged in when he used *μυστικός* in connection with literature (or verbal narrative). He used the word when his interpretation appealed to the standard tropes employed by allegories to draw a different meaning out of the obvious or literal one,⁴⁶ including personification,⁴⁷ symbol,⁴⁸ metaphor,⁴⁹ etymology,⁵⁰ numerology,⁵¹ and

44. Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 3–7. His book provides a useful discussion of allegory and its use in ancient Alexandria (pp. 1–21). Clement’s approach is the subject of chapter 4 (183–234).

45. A number of very tenuous interpretations of intended meanings are introduced with *μυστικώτατα* or *μυστικώτερον*. See, e.g., *Stromateis* II.15.70.5; IV.23.149.1; V.14.89.7; V.14.102.2. Clement describes these meanings as being devised “more mystically.”

46. For the elements of allegory I am drawing on Dawson’s discussion in *Allegorical Readers*, 5–7 (he mentions metaphor, etymology and personification).

47. E.g. the word “mystically” is used in *Paedagogus* II.8.62.3 to designate an allegorical interpretation of the anointing of Jesus’ feet that includes interpreting the tears of the woman as “sinners who have repented.” *Stromateis* V.6.37.1: “But the face is a symbol of the rational soul, and the wings are the lofty ministers and energies of powers right and left; and the voice is delightful glory in ceaseless contemplation. Let it suffice that the mystic interpretation [*τὴν μυστικὴν ἐρμηνείαν*] has advanced so far.”

48. *Stromateis* VII.18.109.1. He offered an interpretation of “the law of sacrifices respecting clean and unclean animals” as including symbolic commands which mystically distinguished non-Christian Barbarians (Jews and heretics) “from the divine church.”

49. E.g. *Paedagogus* I.5.14.4: “There is a passage in scripture which shows that he refers to us also as young birds: ‘As the hen gathers her chicks under her wings...’ In that sense we are young birds, a name which graphically and *mystically* describes the simplicity of soul belonging to childhood. At times, he calls us children, at other times, chicks, sometimes, little ones, here and there sons....” Also *Paedagogus* I.6.46.3 (already noted). And *Stromateis* IV.23.150.2, 151.3: “Man, then, generically considered, is

typology.⁵² Accordingly, Clement referred to the whole of his allegorical interpretations of various elements in the Exodus description of the temple as a “mystic interpretation.”⁵³

For Clement, the literal or historic level of scripture was often considered to have “happened” for the sake of conveying, yet hiding, the more real, Christian significance until Jesus, the incarnate Logos, could disclose this purpose.⁵⁴ The various historical figures may have said things with meanings plainly unrelated to Clement’s exegesis, but they are said to have so spoken so that the actual, allegorical meaning pertaining to Christianity would not yet be apparent. Clement claimed that the Hebrew dialect “has certain properties, consisting in a mode of speech which exhibits the national character,” and this quality, of having to do with Hebrew things, he related to the *tropes* of Hellenic literature, which have an obfuscatory effect (*Stromateis* VI.15.129.1–3). Such a conception allowed him to assert that “prophecy, in proclaiming the Lord, in

formed in accordance with the idea of the connate spirit. For he is not created formless and shapeless in the workshop of nature, where mystically the production of man is accomplished, both art and essence being common. But the individual man is stamped according to the impression produced in the soul by the objects of his choice.”

50. *Stromateis* I.24.164.3: “However, Apollo, mystically understood in terms of the absence of plurality, is the one and only God. Finally, this fire in the likeness of a column and the fire in the tree are symbols of the holy light....” Ferguson explains (*Stromateis Books One to Three*, 144, n. 729) that Clement was appealing to the derivation of “Apollo” from α , meaning negative, and πολλοί or “not many”: not many equals one.

51. In *Stromateis* I.21.147.6 the three sets of fourteen generations before Christ’s birth, according to Matthew, are called “three mystical periods fulfilled by six sets of seven generations”; in VI.16.145.2 Clement writes, “And the blessed David delivers clearly to those who know the mystic account of seven and eight, praising thus....” See also *Stromateis* V.6.33.4 and 34.4 (the allegory on the temple description in Exodus 26–28).

52. In *Paedagogus* II.8.75.1 Jesus is said to have mystically allowed himself to be crowned with thorns so that he would end his “legislation” among men the way he began it, when he appeared as a vision to Moses in a burning bush of thorns. Thereby “the Word renewed that by which He had first come.” Also, *Paedagogus* I.5.23.1.

53. *Stromateis* V.6.36.4; cf. *Paedagogus* II.10.100.4. Also, *Paedagogus* II.8.62.3, an allegorical interpretation of the anointing of Jesus’ feet.

54. Cf. *Stromateis* IV.23.151.3, where Clement explains that a Pythagorean saying, “man ought to become one,” was mystically uttered, for it conveys the Christian philosophy that humans must become one with God through progressive deification. As was noted earlier, scripture was for Clement whatever happens to contain the voice of the Logos beneath it.

order not to seem to some to blaspheme while speaking what was beyond the ideas of the multitude, embodied its declarations in expressions capable of leading to other conceptions"! That is, the literal level is in the service of the allegorical level; the clear meaning depends on the intended deeper meanings for its existence.

I.3.3. *Related Meanings of Μυστικός*

The meaning of *μυστικός* was extended by Clement to designate not only the activity of speaking with the purpose of conveying a deeper (or at least figurative) sense (e.g. *Paedagogus* I.6.49.2; 119, 16) but also to activities related to the comprehension of the mystical meaning of scripture. A person who reveals the deeper meaning of scripture may be called *μυστικός*, along with the nature of his teaching. Jesus, for example, is called "that mystic angel" whose appearance permitted the law to function as something other than a discipline of fear (*Paedagogus* I.7.59.1). In the context of a discussion of the necessity of ignorance about Jesus' coming and of the Christian truths effected by "the parabolic [*παραβολικόν*] style of [the Hebrew] Scripture," Clement referred to "the mystic teaching that was to be delivered by Him [*τὴν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ παραδοθησομένην μυστικὴν διδασκαλίαν*]" (*Stromateis* VI.15.127.13). Moreover, in keeping with his philosophical use of mystery language, the practices leading to the ability to discern the deeper mysteries mystically conveyed by scripture are referred to as the "mystic habit":

And as knowledge is not born with men, but is acquired, and the acquiring of it in its elements demands application, and training, and progress; and then from incessant practice it passes into a habit; so, when perfected in the mystic habit, it abides, being infallible through love [*οὕτως ἐν ἔξει τελειωθείσα τῇ μυστικῇ ἀμετάπτωτος δι' ἀγάπην μένει*].⁵⁵

55. *Stromateis* VI.9.78.4. Compare VII.10.57.1, which speaks of the mystic stages of advancement (*τὰς προκοπὰς τὰς μυστικὰς*). Both passages refer to progress toward perfection in gnosis through study and a disciplined, ethical life.

Likewise, the revelation of “the things respecting God,” which results from this practice, is said to come from “the mystic choir of the truth itself” (*Stromateis* VII.7.45.1).⁵⁶

I.3.4. *A Cultic Connection?*

So far we have come across no distinctive cultic connection in Clement’s Christian applications of the word *μυστικός*. Apart from his application of this word to necessary evils and to potentially excitable behaviours that are divinely sanctioned in a passionless form, Clement’s various Christian usages of *μυστικός* revolve around its principle application to the non-literal dimensions of “scripture,” usually to deeper, allegorical meanings, but sometimes merely to figurative (e.g. metaphorical) ones.⁵⁷ There is one occasion in which the word is associated with an allusion to the eucharist; but this application is yet another reference to a deeper meaning behind scripture: “The scripture, accordingly, has named wine the [mystic] symbol of the sacred blood [*μυστικὸν ἄρα σύμβολον ἢ γραφὴ αἵματος ἁγίου οἴνου ὠνόμασεν*]; but reproving [immoderate drinking], it says: ‘Intemperate is wine, and insolent is drunkenness’” (*Paedagogus* II.2.291). Clement’s point is that because wine was made into a symbol of the blood, it was thereby sanctified and its use cannot unequivocally be viewed as evil. The redundancy of “mystic symbol” where “symbol” by itself would be sufficient seems, however, to imply either that the symbol is based on something inappropriate, hence mysterious (drinking wine), or that Jesus’ action during the last supper of designating

56. Cf. Bouyer, “‘Mystique,’” 12–13, who noted the extension of *μυστικός* to those things which help one achieve “toute connaissance des choses divines.” His remarks concern all the Greek Fathers before Cyril of Alexandria (see pp. 9–13).

57. Jackson’s recent assertion (“Cloak,” 5) that *μυστικός* in the *Letter to Theodore* means “accessible only to more advanced or proven members of the religious community” is a welcome change from “secret” but does not appreciate the fact that Clement’s Christian usages (particularly in connection with writings) are related to the concealed meanings of the scriptures. Jackson’s interest in refuting all symbolic interpretations of the *νεανίσκος* in 14:51–52, including ones offered in connection with longer Mark, may account for his comment that the translation “mystical” is “as misleading as secret.”

wine this way was mysterious. I prefer the latter option, but even viewed as an instance of Jesus' mystical activity recorded in scripture, the connection between *μυστικός* and a cultic rite (the eucharist) is incidental. This example is entirely in keeping with Clement's tendency to apply *μυστικός* to the figurative nature of scripture.⁵⁸

I.3.5. *Μυστικός* in the Letter to Theodore

Μυστικός, then, in Clement's Christian applications usually refers to a deeper meaning to literature or to things associated with this (e.g. the personages speaking in or through the text, the stages of progression in the study of deeper meanings). The literal meaning is thought to be in the service of the deeper one; it exists to hide the deeper meaning from those not ready to appreciate it and conform themselves to it. Since the literal meaning "happened," and is sometimes in conflict with Clement's purposes or just plain irrelevant from a Christian perspective, its existence is sometimes attributed to the intention of the character(s) in question to do or say something that would contain the deeper meaning while hiding that sense for the time being. Hence Clement could take his allegorical interpretations and project them onto the intentions of the characters in the narrative, as when he said that "Isaac rejoiced for a mystical reason, to prefigure the joy with which the Lord has filled us, in saving us from destruction through his blood" (*Paedagogus* I.5.23.1). The intentions behind things said by or done through Moses and the prophets are often treated that way, too.⁵⁹ But

58. For further discussion of the topic with specific reference to *μυστήριον*, see Marsh, "Μυστήριον," 74–80; and Echle, "Sacramental Initiation," 56–65. Marsh plumbed this and a few other passages for any conceivable special associations between *μυστήριον* or its cognates and the sacraments. I find some of his suggestions somewhat forced, but when taking the entire usage into account even these possible associations do not alter his conclusions that 1) *μυστήριον* or its cognates rarely occur in conjunction with Clement's sacramental doctrine (p. 74), and 2) "there is nothing to suggest that in Clement's works the term was ever applied to either Baptism or the Eucharist as a description peculiar to them and distinct from the other uses of *μυστήριον*" (p. 80).

59. In *Stromateis* VI.16.134.1 the two tablets on which the ten commandments were written are said to have been "mystically renewed, as ignorance along with sin abounded."

more basically the scriptures were taken to attest to the influence of the pre-incarnate Logos, who controlled the literal level in one way or other.

The same applies to the incarnate Logos. For instance, Clement claimed that Jesus allowed himself to be crowned with thorns because of the act's typological significance with respect to his initial appearance to Moses in the burning bush, or that "he intended the oil [of his anointing] to mean the Apostle who received mercy, and the treated, diluted oil the deceitful betrayer" (*Paedagogus* II.8.63.1), or that his action in breaking the five loaves was mystical due to the numerological significances of the number five (*Stromateis* V.6.33.4). Likewise the holy spirit mystically put the voice of the Lord in the mouth of the apostle, when Paul said "I have given you milk to drink" (*Paedagogus* I.6.49.2). Therefore, when an act recorded in scripture has a deeper (or just figurative) meaning, the act itself, or the intention behind it, can also be called mystic.

This would be the most likely sense in which to understand *αἱ μυστικάί* in I.17: they are acts (and sayings) performed for the purpose of conveying a deeper meaning. Clement did say on one occasion that anything Jesus did or said could have a mystical meaning, especially the material which seems to be plain or completely explained (*Quis dives salvetur?* 5). But in that instance he also recognized that some material more overtly indicated its deeper meaning. Considering that the letter also calls the longer text *α πνευματικώτερον εὐαγγέλιον*, like the gospel of John (i.e. less concerned with the "bodily" facts than with their deeper significance), it may be appropriate to view its distinctively "mystical deeds" as ones with an enigmatic or mysterious quality, more overtly symbolical than usual.

The stories Clement quoted support this assumption. Perhaps the clearest way in which they differ from the majority of stories in Mark, despite sharing the same vocabulary, style, syntax, and so forth, is by being more puzzling. The reader is

prompted to ask a series of “Why” or “What” questions in response to every unexplained detail: Why the six days? What command did Jesus give the young man? Why was he dressed in only a linen sheet? Where are the disciples? Why did Jesus choose him to teach? What is the significance of the ritualistic features? What is the mystery of the kingdom of God? Is he going to be baptized? Why, then, at the end, does Jesus just get up and leave? Why were the young man’s mother and sister and Salome in Jericho? Who is Salome? Why does Jesus not receive them? Why relate any of this at all? Certainly Mark’s style frequently invokes these sorts of questions: the use of provocative gaps is recognized to be a distinctive Markan literary technique. But nowhere does a Markan passage do this to quite the same extent (the flight of the young man in 14:51–52 and the prologue are perhaps the closest examples of strong reliance on this technique).⁶⁰ Surmising that αἱ μυστικαί were a part of τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον, I propose that the other stories so described were similar to the quoted ones by being equally overtly enigmatic; that is, they gave some clear indication of having a deeper significance. Some perhaps provided a series of gaps for the reader to fill; others perhaps were overtly symbolic (making more sense on a deeper level than the literal one, like the story of the young man in Gethsemane). The sayings may have included a greater use of tropes, such as hyperbole or parable. One can only speculate.

As for τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον itself, the application of this adjective to a work of scripture is completely in keeping with Clement’s tendency to use μυστικός in reference to the way scripture conceals its theological mysteries beneath the literal level. The application of μυστικός to a book may be compared with Clement’s reference to “the mystic silence of the prophetic enigmas” (*Protrepticus* 1.10.1). Marsh gave an adequate, general definition when he noted that “the adjective μυστικός attached to a noun invests the latter word with the quality of a hidden treasure which can be enjoyed only

60. These matters will be discussed in chapter 4.

by those who are not only aware of [the treasure's] existence but have the key to its discovery."⁶¹

I.4. Τὸ Μυστικὸν Εὐαγγέλιον and Πνευματικώτερον Εὐαγγέλιον

If all scripture has a mystical dimension, why is *μυστικός* an especially apt description for this gospel? As with *τὰς μυστικάς*, the difference is not so much of substance as of degree. Longer Mark is oriented to the meaning beneath the external presentation, and is therefore similar to how Clement viewed the gospel of John in comparison with the synoptics. In other words, a *μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον* is essentially synonymous with a *πνευματικώτερον εὐαγγέλιον*. Clement's description of how the gospel John was produced suggests an effort to get behind the "mere facts" of the other gospels in order to disclose the inner or spiritual significance. In other words, we learn from Clement's reference to John that a "more spiritual" gospel would be one wherein the literal details are treated as primarily mystical, that is, as being there only to give way to a more real, deeper symbolic meaning.⁶² F. F. Bruce was one of the first to see clearly the relevance of this connection, and his insight deserves to be quoted:

When the author of the letter says that Mark, after publishing his first book, "compiled a more spiritual Gospel," it is impossible not to be reminded of Clement's statement that, after the first three Evangelists had published their works, "John last of all, conscious

61. "Μυστήριον," 72. Cf. the remark of Bouyer ("Mystique," 10, speaking of Clement and Origen): "c'est l'idée foncièrement évangélique et paulinienne que toute la Bible, et toute l'histoire du peuple de Dieu, ne trouve son sens définitif et comme sa clef que dans le Christ. C'est juste au contact de cette idée que vont surgir les emplois habituels du mot mystique par les Alexandrins chrétiens."

62. Cf. Pearson's assessment in *LM*, 40, esp.: "It is clear that *πνευματικόν* has the connotation of non-literal, to be understood allegorically—opp. *σωματικόν*. ...I think this use of the term *πνευματικόν* holds good not only for Clement (and Origen, esp. *De Princ.* 4.2–3), but for the Alexandrian community in general, as a long-established usage. Indeed I think it sums up the intentionality of the author of the "Secret Gospel" himself—whoever he may have been. (Perhaps the same could be said of the Gospel of John?)" Pearson did not quite draw the connection between *μυστικός* and *πνευματικώτερον εὐαγγέλιον*, for he continued to read *μυστικός* as "Secret." See also Grant, *Review*, 61–62. About John, Grant had earlier said "At Alexandria the Christian scholars Clement and Origen held that the synoptics provided a literal, historical account of Jesus' work, while John composed an allegorical version which gave the inward, spiritual meaning of Jesus" (*The Secret Sayings*, 27–28).

that the 'bodily' facts had been set forth in those Gospels, urged by his disciples and divinely moved by the Spirit, composed a 'spiritual' Gospel" (*ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. vi. 14.7*). By the "bodily" facts in the Synoptic record Clement appears to mean the outward historical details, whereas John's Gospel is "spiritual" in the sense that he brings out their allegorical significance. Presumably Mark's "more spiritual Gospel" was one which brought out the allegorical significance of his first edition, but we are not told what the allegorical significance of the extract we are given might be. If the letter-writer is Clement, he may well have given it a moralizing interpretation such as he gives to the conversation with Salome in the Gospel of the Egyptians, and he might be just as far astray from the true sense.⁶³

It is not surprising that Clement should have seen a connection between these two spiritual gospels, for longer Mark includes a character who is the equivalent of the Johannine beloved disciple, who was himself the authority behind the deeper insights which John's gospel claimed to convey.⁶⁴

I.5. *Clement's Generic Conception: Conclusions*

The preceding discussion has shown that the description *μυστικός* makes perfect sense as a way of describing a more spiritual work intended for those being perfected (in gnosis) through "initiation" into the great (theological) mysteries of the "true philosophy"; the word refers to the longer gospel's special ability to lead hearers to the deeper philosophical truths of Christianity due to the inclusion of certain *λόγια* ("texts"—presumably *αἱ μυστικαί*) especially apt at leading one, through a mystical interpretation, into the deepest "sanctuary" of the truth. The important *meanings* of a *μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον* are thought to be secret, in the sense of hidden through the figurative quality of literature, but there is no implication in this adjective that *the text*

63. *The "Secret" Gospel*, 16. Probably something more than moralizing is involved, considering the text's connection with the great mysteries; nevertheless, Clement's lost remarks about the true interpretation might well have been of this sort, considering he was not apt to consign the deeper truths to writing. Bruce's study is the only one, thus far, that takes the question of the gospel's genre seriously. It is significant that he makes a point of putting the word "secret" in quotation marks, without a capital 's'. A useful discussion of Clement's words on John as a spiritual gospel may be found in Macgregor, *The Gospel of John*, xxv-xxvi.

64. This affinity between the young man and John's beloved disciple will be discussed in chapter 8.

itself must be stowed away. Clement's uses of *μυστικός* cannot be translated with the English word "secret" without destroying its technical sense and creating a false impression of what is at issue.⁶⁵ The fact that all the English translations of Clement (that I know of) translate the word *μυστικός* with forms of the word "mystic" (when the word is not omitted as redundant) shows an appreciation among translators of this technical sense. The mysteries are transmitted "mystically" (*Stromateis* I.1.13.4) so that they will remain secret, but the hiding is attributed to the figurative quality of scriptural language, which by itself is said to conceal truths from some while revealing them to others who hold the hermeneutic key; this hiding is not something done to the text and the secret is not the text itself. A mystical text can be read by anyone, but only one who has progressed in the "mystic" practice would find such secret, deeper meanings. The translation "secret gospel" simply obliterates this distinction and substitutes the different sense that this text was physically concealed from outsiders because its (overt) contents contained secrets or were illicit—exactly the thing Clement says was not the case (I.22–23, 27). Clement used other words when referring to something kept secret (e.g. *κρύπτω, ἀπόρρητον*).

Why Smith himself used "secret" is not much of a mystery. Smith normally translated the noun *μυστήριον* as "secret,"⁶⁶ and he felt that LGM 1 depicted an actual, secret ritual. He only cited a few examples to show that *μυστικός* is used with "actions, things, or rituals," one example of Jesus' teachings as "hidden from former ages," and produced no evidence that any of Clement's usages make more sense if

65. As Dillon tried to clarify, in the Colloquy recorded in *LM* (p. 63), "There is a difference between having secret scrolls somewhere and having public works with a higher meaning only expressible through a succession of oral teaching."

66. Cf. his earlier article "Comments," 29.

translated as “secret.”⁶⁷ For a translation he considered only three options, each apparently in their non-Christian senses: “secret,” “pertaining to the mysteries.” and “symbolic.” The last option was judged most likely by Nock and Mondésert, but apparently Smith did not appreciate their point; their opinions are added in square brackets and are otherwise not commented upon. For Smith the only real issue was whether *μυστικός* referred to something to which others have no access or meant “pertaining to the mysteries,” in the Greek, cultic sense: “Clement uses this [*μυστικός*] often, both in the sense of ‘secret’ and in that of ‘pertaining to the mysteries’; it is impossible to prove which is intended here.” But this is a false dichotomy between an unattested meaning and one that applies only to non-Christian usages. The most common usage, the sense related to gnostic interpretation of a deeper meaning to scripture, is supported by everything said about *τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον* in the letter.

II. The Reason for the Discretion Surrounding the Use of the Longer Gospel

II.1. Was this a “Securely Guarded” Text?

If a secret gospel used in connection with secret rites is not indicated by *τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον* or *τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια*, are there perhaps not other reasons for viewing the longer text so? By way of casting doubt on the Clementine authorship of the letter, a few scholars have referred to its historically incongruous “description of a

67. For “actions, things, or rituals” Smith cited the kiss as mystic and the mystery of the bread, though the latter did not refer to a rite in John; Clement was noting that Jesus’ statement “I am the bread...” is an example of metaphor in scripture. Concerning Smith’s reference to Jesus’ teachings as hidden, he did not note that they are hidden in the parabolic nature of scripture. His discussion of *μυστικός* is confined to about half of a page on *αἱ μυστικά* (I.17) in *CA*, 24; when discussing the word’s occurrence in II.6, 12 in relation to the gospel, he referred the reader to this discussion of *αἱ μυστικά*. Note how in *CA*, 44 Smith tactfully minimized then dismissed Marsh’s basic point that the overt and demonstrable referents to Clement’s applications of *μυστήριον* to Christianity are philosophical or theological.

church archive containing secret writings.”⁶⁸ The notion of an archive might imply that the existence of this gospel was an important secret kept from ordinary Christians, and thus that its contents were of a secret nature. Smith in fact believed that the letter said the text was “most carefully guarded”—an incredible idea if taken to mean something more than the storing of the text somewhere safe. Does the letter say any of this?

The above readings are based on the two subordinate clauses in the sentence *καὶ ἀποθνήσκων κατέλιπε τὸ αὐτοῦ σύγγραμμα τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τῇ ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ ὅπου εἰσέτι νῦν ἀσφαλῶς εὖ μάλα τηρεῖται· ἀναγινωσκόμενον πρὸς αὐτοὺς μόνους τοὺς μνουμένους τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια (I.28–II.2)*. Smith translated this sentence as “and, dying, he left his composition to the church in Alexandria, where it even yet is most carefully guarded, being read only to those who are being initiated into the great mysteries.” The suggestion of anachronism begins with the assumption that the Alexandrian church “where” the text was kept is a reference to a building rather than a community or group of interrelated communities. This assumption is not self-evident. On its own, *τηρεῖται* need not imply physical guarding, as in a vault or archive (or men with spears!); it need not even imply that the text was always kept at one location. Liddell and Scott supply nine senses in which the verb *τηρεῖται* is used: “guard, keep, preserve; watch, give heed to; watch for, lie in wait for; notice, observe; keep, observe (a law or engagement); keep a secret; have regard for, reverence; retain; and reserve.” Many of these senses would work here, among them guarded, kept, preserved, respected, and heeded. However, this verb is modified by the adverb *ἀσφαλῶς*, which usually means “securely,” but can also mean “certainly” or “beyond a doubt.” Smith pointed to Acts 16:23, where both words are combined in the sentence “...they threw

68. The description is from H. von Campenhausen, cited by Kümmel (“Jahrzehnt,” 302), cited in turn by Merkel in “Appendix,” 108 n. 5. R. E. Brown also refers to this gospel being kept in “the archives” (*The Death of the Messiah*, 1:295). And Allegro refers to it being “locked away” (*Dead Sea Scrolls*, 139).

them into jail, charging the jailer to keep them safely” (RSV).⁶⁹ Here the safe keeping does involve physical guarding, but that sense is made clear from the *context* rather than from the words themselves (a jail and instructions to a jailer; the objects are people; and the point is to keep them from leaving). Put differently, the basic *meaning* is “safely kept”: the *means* in this instance is physical guarding.⁷⁰ Only the context within which these two words are used in the *Letter to Theodore* can determine the means by which the text was “very securely kept,” if that is the right translation.⁷¹

Smith’s translation of the verb as “guarded” is surprising considering what has come before. Smith’s assumption that the text was primarily kept from other Christians is perfectly logical in terms of the structure of the sentence, which explains ἀσφαλῶς εὖ μάλα τηρεῖται with ἀναγινωσκόμενον πρὸς αὐτοὺς μόνοις τοῦς μουμένοισ τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια. But it clashes with everything that has been said up to this point in the letter, which has described the work as a completely orthodox writing that does not even contain the orthodox secret teachings it helps elucidate. Smith seems to have imported into his translation an assumption that caused him to view Clement’s discussion of the contents of this gospel quite differently. Clement’s explanation of why Mark did not include “the secrets” and “the hierophantic teaching of the lord” (I.22–23) is phrased more like a wish to protect one’s companions from something harmful if misunderstood than a “grudging” wish to keep something from them (οὐ φθονερώς, as in *Stromateis* I.1.14.3–4). But on the basis of his inferences about

69. Smith, *CA*, 43. Cf. Mark 14:44 (“under guard”).

70. In the RSV the context is not factored into the translation of the phrase itself because the implication of guarding is clear from the context; other translations choose to say “guard them well” (NAB), “keep a close watch on them” (JEB), “keep them under close guard” (NEB), adapting the basic sense of “securely kept” to the context.

71. Not a great deal of elucidation comes from the undisputed writings of Clement. *Τηρεῖται*, of course, is used in a variety of senses, though ἀσφαλῶς is used only one time, in a sense different from “carefully.” *Stromateis* I.9.45.2 uses the word in relation to the prophets’ and disciples’ *perfect* (or inerrant) comprehension of the mind of the prophetic and instructive spirit. The cognates ἀσφάλεια and ἀσφαλής are used three times and seven times, respectively. The noun is used in *Stromateis* II.18.80.1 and VI.11.89.3, where it means “security.”

the secrecy pertaining to the story in LGM 1, Smith found in this statement an indication that this gospel concerned a secret so extreme that it could only be alluded to even in a secret gospel; that is, that it pointed to a secret that put it well beyond what Clement would consider orthodox.⁷² Smith even believed that Clement did not like the gospel and its rites but reluctantly accepted them because of their antiquity.⁷³ Only through Smith's alternative proposal could a comment about physically guarding the text make sense at this point, but he has not substantiated his suggestions that a secret society held its own *cultic μεγάλα μυστήρια* of which Clement himself felt uncomfortable but was compelled to accept as old tradition.

The broader context, then, creates problems for any reading of II.1 that suggests that the work was locked away from other Christians in the Alexandrian church, as if a secret, elite society feared that ordinary believers should find out about it. But if

72. "The central problem, I had gradually come to see, was the element of secrecy in primitive Christian tradition. Why did Clement's church have a secret Gospel? And why did even this secret Gospel merely hint at further secrets it would not reveal (for instance, the content of 'the mystery of the kingdom of God')? What was there to conceal?" (SG, 73). Note also the inferences he made on p. 79. He discussed the development of these ideas on pp. 72-114. For Smith, the text was produced by *libertines* (142) and was used in connection with a second, gnostic baptism *into libertinism*. He was appropriately vague about this reconstruction, since Clement would have thoroughly opposed what Smith suggested was its use in Alexandria, which is essentially a less extreme form of the Carpocratian use, based on what Smith took to be Jesus' magical baptismal practices. His arguments will be addressed in chapter 4.

73. At times (e.g. CA, 80-81), Smith adopted the conservative position that Clement was naturally disinclined to the thought of secret tradition due to an innate universalism, but I see this as a way of implying that the whole gnostic tradition was something Clement would not have particularly liked, and thus that the notion of a secret gospel for libertines was in keeping with what we know of Clement. At other times, for other reasons, Smith argued against this position (e.g. in citing the comments by Werner Jaeger in CA, 38). In SG (p. 142) he actually stated that "The libertine wing gave rise to many of the gnostic heresies, but also persisted in esoteric groups, like that of Clement, within the 'orthodox' communities." This is about as close as Smith came to actually saying that Clement was a libertine. The notion is inconceivable. The *Paedagogus* reveals Clement to be a person who was excessively prudish for his time. He was uneasy about public greetings with the holy kiss, marital intercourse in daylight (II.10), women adorning themselves with anything but a wedding ring (II.13; earrings are excluded in III.11), women exposing their bare feet (II.12), laughter (II.5), the use of public baths (III.5), men who look effeminate (e.g. by shaving their beards, III.3; by having girlish locks of hair, a feminine gait, and by wearing their wedding ring on the wrong finger, on the joint, III.11), and any pleasures (e.g. from such things as eating, sleeping, and bathing [II.1; II.9; III.9]) that do not derive from noble pursuits like learning.

guarding the text to prevent public knowledge of its existence within the community is not a viable inference from the conjunction of these two words, what is better? The readiest supposition is that it was “safely” or “securely kept” in the sense that the wrong people, especially outside the church, did not get their hands on it. Keeping in mind the apologetic function of this verse, which is to excuse Mark and the Alexandrian church from the scandalous consequences of the Carpocratian use of the longer gospel, the point seems to be that those who heard it were few and apt to be trusted not to misinterpret it or to discuss it with those liable to put it to improper uses.⁷⁴ But other meanings are also possible. If we choose Smith’s reading of “carefully” for ἀσφαλῶς we could translate the phrase as “most carefully *preserved*”—i.e. *by the fact of* the restriction of its readership, like a rare book. That notion would also make good sense of the preceding clause, which describes the bequeathal by Mark of this version to the Alexandrian church. This reading would make the words more of a comment on the text’s veneration than on its contents.⁷⁵ But it does not make as much sense of the position of *μόνους*, which modifies not ἀναγινωσκόμενον but τοὺς μουμένους τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια. Whether physical preservation is a part of what is meant here, the connotation of veneration is probably involved; Clement is referring to the text as if he believed the church preserved and, at least in formal use, read from Mark’s original copy.

I can also think of another possible translation, one which also does not attribute to *τηρεῖται* the strict sense of keeping others away, but makes as much sense of *μόνους* and more sense of *αὐτούς*. As was noted, the adverb ἀσφαλῶς is used only once in the preserved corpus (*Stromateis* I.9.45.2), in relation to the prophets’ and disciples’

74. Cf. R. E. Brown’s paraphrase in “Relation,” 467: “where it is still carefully kept and read only to ‘those who are being initiated into the great mysteries.’”

75. Cf. the translation by Merkel in “Auf den Spuren des Urmarkus?” 127: “wo sie auch jetzt noch außerordentlich sicher bewahrt wird; sie wird nur denjenigen vorgelesen, welche eingeweiht werden in die großen Mysterien.”

perfect (inerrant) comprehension of the mind of the spirit. A similar sense of perfect *discernment* and appreciation may be involved in the letter as well. If we read ἀσφαλῶς as “inerrantly” (*sic*; or infallibly, without stumbling, unerringly, etc),⁷⁶ then in this context τηρεῖται probably means “respected for what it is,” as in *Stromateis* II.4.14.2: “...since it was Anaxagoras who was the first who assigned to Mind the supremacy over material things. But not even he *preserved the dignity suited to the efficient cause* [ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ οὗτος ἐτήρησε τὴν αἰτίαν τὴν ποιητικὴν], describing as he did certain silly vortices, together with the inertia and even foolishness of Mind.”⁷⁷ If inerrant or unflinching respect for the nature of the work is intended, one could translate the phrase in II.1 something like “where even now it is most perfectly respected (or, unerringly appropriated), being read only to those being initiated into the great mysteries.” This would supply a better contrast for the δὲ that immediately introduces a description of the equally complete violation of its intentions (both are apologetic exaggerations). The reference to it being read “only to those being initiated into the great mysteries” (II.1–2) indicates this respect and comprehension of its nature, for these hearers correspond to the kind of person for whom it was said to have been written. To paraphrase the point: yes, we share this gospel in common with the Carpocratians, but we have always treated it as it should be treated, whereas the Carpocratians defiled and misunderstood it.

II.2. Carpocrates's Magic

It is difficult to decide which translation of ἀσφαλῶς εὖ μάλα τηρεῖται is most appropriate: “very securely kept,” “most carefully preserved,” “most perfectly respected,” “unerringly appropriated.” But regardless of whether the emphasis is

76. These are the words used by Smith (*CA*, 43), Wilson, Ferguson, and myself, respectively, to translate the occurrence in *Stromateis* I.9.45.2.

77. Wilson's translation; see Ferguson for textual uncertainties.

placed on safeguarding, preservation, or conscientious appropriation, the text was probably kept away from the unworthy. The sense of withholding the text from outsiders emerges subsequent to II.1–2, where Carpocrates is depicted as having to use magic in order to procure a copy. That detail appears intended to imply that the text was never made available to *outsiders* to the church: it was securely kept in that sense. One might additionally infer from the mention of demonic instruction, though, the implication that the *existence* of the gospel was originally kept secret enough that Carpocrates could only learn of it by supernatural means, and from the use of strong magic that acquiring a copy was so difficult that the text must have been locked up. But those assumptions are unnecessary and take us beyond the point Clement is making. Clement's tale is a "cock-and-bull story," as Smith put it,⁷⁸ designed to exonerate the church (and Mark) from what *subsequently* happened. I am inclined to share Koester's doubt that an authoritative, "firmly organized" and distinctively catholic church existed in Alexandria in Carpocrates's day, and to see more truth in his conclusion that "in the first half of the 2d century...anybody could obtain copies of any writing used by Christians in Alexandria."⁷⁹ It is easy to imagine that once the gospel became inextricably linked with Carpocratian doctrine and practice, those in the developing

78. Smith, *SG*, 40; *CA*, 90.

79. *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 295. Koester exaggerates his point, but one can certainly agree that access to the various Christian writings in Alexandria could not have been impeded by such mechanisms as Clement envisioned. The traditional portrait, related by Eusebius, of an orthodox succession of bishops beginning with Mark is seldom defended today. Though fewer scholars are now as certain as W. Bauer (*Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 44–60) and Grant ("Early Alexandrian Christianity," 133–44 [136]) that "heresy" was predominant at this time and resemblances of orthodoxy mere "mirage," it is clear that no *commanding* "orthodox" institution existed in Carpocrates's time. The two Alexandrian figures of note before the middle of the second century—Valentinus and Basilides—were both eventually labeled heretical gnostics. The fact that such teachers as Valentinus and Marcion were in and out of favour with the church in Rome indicates that in the first half of the second century "it was exceedingly difficult to tell which teachers were orthodox and which heretical" (Lampe, *Seal of the Spirit*, 101–102). Indeed, it might be more accurate to say that "the dichotomy—either Gnostic or Catholic Christian—however sharp it looked to the experience of later generations, is at this period somewhat unreal" (Roberts, *Manuscript*, 50; cf. Griggs, *Early Egyptian Christianity*, 32–34). Clement's idea that there was already a normative and authoritative orthodox church with control of the dissemination of writings and special provisions to keep potentially problematical writings out of the hands of would-be heretics is unrealistic.

“orthodox” community (or communities) who possessed copies of this text would have taken measures to ensure that persons not approved of by the church could not gain access to it. But the difficulty Carpocrates is said to have had in getting his copy can hardly be accepted as a *reliable* indication that this writing was initially accessible only to the presbyters of an orthodox church.

Much of the tale spun about Carpocrates was likely extrapolated from two of Clement’s fundamental convictions about the development of the church, beliefs from which he derived all sorts of “facts” about heretics. The first belief is that the true tradition was passed on by Jesus to his disciples, and from them it came under the guardianship of the orthodox church. The second is that most expressions of the true philosophy that were formulated outside the Judeo-Christian tradition were nevertheless dependent on the Church (or Hebrew scripture, earlier revelations by or about the Logos, etc.) and usually stolen (see, e.g., *Stromateis* VII.17). The reference to evil demonic designs sounds like an appeal to the theory that the foreknowledge and activity of demons was the cause of contemporary embarrassments for Christianity. Justin frequently asserted that demons took it upon themselves to corrupt certain humans into creating demonic parodies of the truth in order to make true things look false:

But those who hand down the myths which the poets have made, adduce no proof to the youths who learn them; and we proceed to demonstrate that they have been uttered by the influence of the wicked demons, to deceive and lead astray the human race. For having heard it proclaimed through the prophets that the Christ was to come, and that the ungodly among men were to be punished by fire, they put forward many to be called sons of Jupiter, under the impression that they would be able to produce in men the idea that things which were said with regard to Christ were marvelous tales, like the things which were said by the poets.⁸⁰

80. *First Apology* 54.1–2. See also 56, 62, 64, and 66. Justin used this theory to create scenarios—always, like Clement, stating them as simple facts—to explain grave misrepresentations of Christian doctrines (14) and the religion’s scandalous reputation for immoral practices. Note the last sentences in *First Apology* 10 and 23. Cf. Clement’s discussion in *Stromateis* I.17.81.4 of how early Greek philosophy stole the Christian truth: “Some power, some angel learned a portion of the truth, but did not remain within the truth, and stole these things and taught them to human beings by way of inspiration” (cf. I.20.100.4–5; 21.135.2). When a close similarity to Christian scripture was evident, Clement claimed straight plagiarism (e.g. I.21.101.1; all of V.14), suggesting that the Greeks “copied the miracle stories of our history” and “plagiarized our most important doctrines and debased them...” (II.1.1.1). In his

Clement's appeal to the theory of demonic parody implies embarrassment about the fundamental role this text played in the development of Carpocrate's theology and the longstanding use of this text in his sect. One may perceive in this a tacit acknowledgment that the authority and integrity of the version known only in the orthodox Alexandrian church was a matter difficult to demonstrate due to the existence of the Carpocratian version. In short, the enduring appeal of the longer version of Mark to the Carpocratians apparently marred the sanctity of the version in the Alexandrian church, and the notion that demons planned and produced these sorts of dilemmas serves as an explanation that at once excuses Mark and the orthodox church and asserts the validity of the Alexandrian version. Here, similar to the quotation from Justin above, humans are given a necessary intermediary role; the demons did the planning, then instructed Carpocrates, but he did the enslaving and manipulated another human in order to bring about the demonic parody. The grandeur of an appeal to demonic plans to destroy "the race of men" (II.2-3)⁸¹ underscores how tangible was the embarrassment produced by the parody and how difficult it was to account for the similarities between a gospel which is supposed to be wholly good and one which must be asserted to be wholly evil (II.11-19). It is most likely, then, that the apologetic tale of Carpocrates's theft owes more to theological inference than to fact. This is particularly true of its references to demonic involvement and magical enslavement; these particular ideas cannot therefore be taken as actual evidence that the text was originally a physically guarded secret or even controlled by a proto-orthodox Alexandrian sect, though

discussions of how the ancient Greeks stole Hebraic *and* Christian philosophy, his accusations were formed in as concrete a manner as he could pretend happened. Osborn ("1958-82," 224; followed by Criddle in "On the Mar Saba Letter," 216) has little reason, therefore, to suggest that Clement would not have depicted heretics stealing the truth in a literal sense.

81. Cf. Justin, *First Apology* 54 ("to deceive and lead astray the human race") and 58 ("For they who are called devils attempt to do nothing else than to seduce men from God who made them").

they are evidence that it was not, at least by Clement's time, circulated outside the orthodox Alexandrian church.

II.3. *Clement's Injunctions to Theodore*

The perception that the gospel itself was a closely guarded secret also depends upon a particular reading of II.10–13, particularly Clement's direction to Theodore to offer a firm denial to the Carpocratians backed with an oath. The standard paraphrase of this section is as old as Smith's public announcement of his discovery to the Society of Biblical Literature in 1960:

...Clement apparently made an unusual concession in revealing the "secret gospel." Clement emphatically lectured Theodore on the necessity of keeping knowledge of the gospel a secret—he "should even deny it on oath," Clement wrote.⁸²

We encountered this understanding earlier, when reviewing Murgia's essay. It owes much to the prior assumption that this was a gospel intended to be kept secret. But as a paraphrase of the evidence it makes little sense. As I have mentioned, Theodore cannot preserve the secret of the existence of this gospel from the persons who told him about it in the first place. Close attention to what the letter really says shows that the denial concerns the authorship, hence authority, of a gospel known by both parties; the denial has nothing to do with suppressing knowledge of the *existence* of this gospel. Yet Smith was intent upon reading the latter implication into the evidence. He understood Clement's comments on this matter as designed to imply that Mark did not write any secret gospel, and therefore as representing an attempt at least to preserve the secrecy of its existence in Alexandria (CA, 53–54). This attenuated conception of secrecy is not exactly compelling, and it creates a problem. If the Car-

82. As reported by Sanka Knox in the article "A New Gospel Ascribed to Mark," *New York Times*, 30 December 1960, p. 17, col. 3. This article, the beginning of which was on the front page, gives a quite accurate and unsensational discussion of Smith's views on the evidence.

pocratians did not already know that the Alexandrian church also had the longer gospel, then how did Theodore come to realize that he should enquire about it in Alexandria? The Carpocratians either explicitly directed Theodore to Alexandria for verification of their claims about this other version of Mark, or told him their own version of its creation in Alexandria.

The notion that Theodore is supposed to deny the existence of this gospel to all who might inquire about it not only misreads the object of this denial, but also overlooks the fact that Clement's directives specifically concern disputations with Carpocratians. There is no reason to infer that this specific directive about what to do when the Carpocratians put forward their falsifications is a general direction concerning all non-agnostics. (We do not even know if Theodore would qualify as a gnostic in Clement's view.) The expressed purpose for this denial is quite clear and does not concern the supposed secrecy of the gospel. Rather, it has to do with opposing the Carpocratians in everything and in every way:

Such men are to be opposed in all ways and altogether. For, even if they should say something true, one who loves the truth should not, even so, agree with them. For, not all true things are the truth (*οὐδὲ γὰρ πάντα τὰληθῆ ἀλήθεια*), nor should that truth which merely seems true according to human opinions be preferred to the true truth, that according to the faith. (I.7-11)

This idea is again developed in II.12-13, after the call to use an oath: "For, 'Not all true things are to be said to all men'" (*οὐ γὰρ ἅπασιν πάντα ἀληθῆ λεκτέον*). The parallelism between this saying and the similar phrase in I.9 is quite clear. Clement's use of this saying might lead one to perceive that he is proscribing a false oath. But when we consider the connection between these two discussions, as we are intended to do ("To them, therefore, *as I said above...*"), it becomes apparent that the truth which Clement would have Theodore deny does not concern the "true truth" (*ἀλήθεια* or *τῆς ἀληθοῦς ἀληθείας τῆς κατὰ τὴν πίστιν*; I.11). He is to deny a "compromised" truth,

that is, the truth status of the Carpocratian version. “From him who has not shall be taken away.” As Clement went on to explain in the earlier discussion, the truth of the real longer gospel has been nullified by the falsifications, so that even the true things the Carpocratians have been saying are not really true and should therefore be denied: “For the true things being mixed with inventions, are falsified, so that, as the saying goes, even the salt loses its savor.”

With the broader context of Clement’s directions in mind, it becomes clear that Theodore’s oath would involve what Clement considered a half truth. Viewed together, I.7–15 is countenancing that the truth in what the Carpocratians say about the longer gospel is to be denied, and II.10–16 is advocating that Theodore not attempt to set them straight about the matter by disclosing the true truth, of which they are unworthy. What exactly this half truth is which Theodore must suppress is not completely clear, however. He is either to deny that the mystical gospel is by Mark, as Smith believed,⁸³ or that the Carpocratian falsifications are Mark’s mystical gospel. The sentence can be read either way: οὐδὲ προτείνουσιν αὐτοῖς τὰ κατεψευσμένα συγχωρητέον τοῦ μάρκου εἶναι τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον, ἀλλὰ καὶ μεθ’ ὄρκου ἀρνητέον. As C. Mondésert proposes, τὰ κατεψευσμένα may belong “both to προτείνουσιν and to the infinitive clause dependent on συγχωρητέον.” This same inference is apparent in the way Kaestli, F. F. Bruce and Cyril C. Richardson read this statement.⁸⁴ The difference may not seem especially significant. One concerns the

83. Merkel’s translation agrees with Smith: “auch soll man ihnen nicht zugeben, wenn sie ihre erlogenen Geschichten hervorholen, daß Markus der Verfasser des geheimen Evangeliums ist, sondern soll dies sogar mit einem Eid ableugnen” (“Auf den Spuren des Urmarkus?” 127).

84. Mondésert’s remarks to Smith are quoted in *CA*, 52. He would translate this part of the letter as “à ces gens-là, il ne faut donc, comme je l’ai déjà dit, jamais céder ni, quand ils présentent eux-mêmes leurs falsifications, accorder que c’est là l’‘Evangile mystique’ de Marc: au contraire, il faut même le nier avec serment.” Cf. Kaestli’s translation (“Fragment,” 105): ...que c’est là l’evangile secret de Marc.” Richardson’s opinion appears on p. 53. Bruce’s translation (*The “Secret” Gospel*, 8) reads “...nor must one make any concession to them when they pretend that their tissue of falsehoods is the mystical Gospel of Mark, but rather deny it with an oath.”

more spiritual gospel generally, the other only the Carpocratian version. If Smith is correct, Theodore's denial *might* have the added implication that no such text is used in Alexandria because only writings with apostolic credence are accepted; but that could not be said to be the real issue.⁸⁵ If these other scholars are correct, it becomes unlikely that Clement is encouraging even so much as a denial that a similar gospel is known and used in the orthodox Alexandrian church.

Smith's reading makes perfect sense grammatically. But, again, the larger context has to be considered. For Theodore's oath to be effective, he would have to be in a position to know about the history of τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον. His knowledge can only come from asking an authority on the subject, which is what Theodore is doing in writing to Clement. In fact, the simplest scenario to explain why Theodore contacted Clement would be to presume that the Carpocratians indicated to Theodore that the Alexandrian church could confirm the authenticity of this text for him. The authority of the Alexandrian church is therefore the basis for the authority of his oath. The alternatives are that Theodore made a lucky guess or that a third party told him that the Alexandrian church had it, but he did not trust this person and so still needed Clement to confirm its existence (note I.11–12). It seems, then, that what Theodore is to deny is on Clement's authority, and is simply that the Carpocratians possess Mark's (i.e. the true) mystical gospel; all they should be told is that their gospel is inauthentic, for the light of the truth should be hidden from the mentally blind. Yet even if we go by Smith's translation, and accept that Theodore is supposed to deny, with an oath, Mark's authorship of the longer text, and possibly, by implication, its acceptance among those who seem to know so much about its origin, denial that Mark wrote this gospel would merely amount to a denial *to these Carpocratian opponents* that a version

85. Another alternative, which occurred to Richardson (CA, 53), is that Theodore is implicitly to concede that the Alexandrian church has this gospel, but to suggest that it was written by someone other than Mark. I do not see how that possibility would have relevance to their debate, though.

of the same gospel is used in Alexandria. However this denial is envisioned, it is apparent that its purpose is not to hide the existence of this gospel from the world—about which nothing is said—but to combat the Carpocratians by denying everything they proclaim, even if this means rejecting what in ordinary circumstances would be called the truth.

II.4. *Clement's Reticence about Mentioning the Longer Gospel*

The letter states that the longer version of Mark contained no secret teachings itself—only materials suitable for public consumption. The work was not conceived to be an apocryphon, but rather a “mystical” and “more spiritual” gospel, something akin to the gospel of John. Presumably, the longer gospel’s utility in imparting elements of the secret gnostic tradition led to the restriction of its proper exposition to those persons on the path to gnosis. Yet this association with the gnostic tradition does not explain why it was not read at all in the church apart from sessions of gnostic study. In view of Clement’s theory of the polyvalence of religious writings (*Stromateis* V), even a more spiritual gospel could have a variety of symbolic meanings, some of which would be suitable for the instruction of ordinary Christians.⁸⁶ Likewise, the need to restrict its proper exposition does not account for why the longer version was never (clearly) mentioned in any other extant writings by Clement and other Alexandrian fathers or even

86. In *Stromateis* V.3.18.5–4.20.1 Clement referred to the necessity of offering less profound scriptural interpretations to non-gnostics, appealing to mystery religion language of initiation and purification as justification. For example, “And again, ‘The wise will conceal sense.’ For the many demand demonstration as a pledge of truth, not satisfied with the bare salvation by faith. ...For says Solomon, ‘Answer a fool according to his folly [II.14].’ Wherefore also, to those that ask the wisdom that is with us, we are to hold out things suitable, that with the greatest possible ease they may, through their own ideas, be likely to arrive at faith in the truth. For ‘I became all things to all men, that I might gain all men.’” The fourth chapter then goes on to describe why the truth is concealed in scriptures from the uninitiated, and how there are different levels of meaning, the allegorical being the most profound.

why Theodore had to learn of it through *Carpocratians*.⁸⁷ A natural progression might well have been for the longer gospel simply to have replaced the shorter one in the Alexandrian church. These considerations do imply that the longer text was something that orthodox Christians refrained from discussing publicly. What was the reason for their reserve? Might their silence reflect upon the nature of the longer gospel itself?

A clue emerges from a particular puzzle in the letter. Theodore learned of the gospel from Carpocratians, not from Clement or other Alexandrians, yet Clement felt free to divulge its contents to Theodore. What transpired to allow him to do so began, of course, with Theodore's Carpocratian opponents forcing the issue, but ended once Clement has fully set the matter "straight," with an orthodox, apologetic account of the development of the situation, quotations from the text itself, and, afterward, a "true explanation...which accords with the true philosophy...." We see that he was reluctant to mention the text unless pressed (he did not volunteer any more information about its contents than what was necessary to clear up grave misunderstandings), but would do so, indeed quote from it, provided an orthodox interpretive framework was in place. It seems reasonable to infer from this that the reasons which precluded its open use and discussion had to do with the various misconceptions that surrounded it.

This ambivalence about discussing the text is likely a byproduct of the Carpocratian scandal. Notice that Clement's references to Mark's caution and forethought are similar to the reason Clement stated in Book One of the *Stromateis* for not putting in writing all of the traditions of his great teachers: fear of misunderstanding and consequent harm. The similarities between his description of his own writing and that of

87. Richardson (*Review*, 575) and Smith (*CA*, 16–17) have conjectured that the longer gospel may be behind Clement's reference in *Stromateis* V.10.63.7 to "a certain gospel" in which appear the words *μυστήριον ἐμὸν ἐμοὶ καὶ τοῖς υἱοῖς τοῦ οἴκου μου*. Smith additionally noted that a version of this saying occurs in the *Clementine Homilies* 19.20.1 in connection with an allusion to Mark 4:34, as if both came from the same source (the allusion also contains elements of Matthew 13:11).

Mark in compiling the longer gospel are quite apparent:⁸⁸

These I took good care to rekindle by making notes [ὑπομνήμασι]. Some I am deliberately putting to one side, making my selection [ἐκλέγων] scientifically out of fear of writing what I have refrained from speaking—not in a spirit of grudging [οὐ τί τοῦ φθονῶν] (that would be wrong), but in the fear that my companions might misunderstand them and go astray and that I might be found offering a dagger to a child....⁸⁹

...not, however, declaring all of them, nor yet hinting at the [mystical] ones, but selecting [ἀλλ' ἐκλεγόμενος] what he thought most useful for increasing the faith.... But when Peter died a martyr, Mark came over to Alexandria, bringing both his own notes [ὑπομνήματα] and those of Peter, from which he transferred to his former book.... Thus, in sum, he prepared matters, neither grudgingly [οὐ φθονερώς] nor incautiously, in my opinion, and, dying, he left his composition to the church in Alexandria, where it even yet is [very securely kept], being read only to those who are being initiated into the great mysteries.⁹⁰

The *Letter to Theodore* goes on to note the abomination that resulted when someone unworthy got his hands on this writing and, albeit willfully, misunderstood it. Clement had no access to the mind of the author of the longer gospel. He probably drew upon personal experience of the controversy and damage that results from putting certain things in writing and projected his own prudence onto Mark. In any case, at issue in his comments about Mark not incautiously and not grudgingly preparing the longer text is the question whether these passages should ever have been added to the gospel, considering what ultimately happened. That the Alexandrian church eventually avoided openly appealing to a special gospel that had created this level of scandal and embarrassment is easy enough to imagine. Even though the gospel was not synonymous with the gnostic tradition and its manifest contents were not secrets like the gnostic tradition, the reason for not making a point of discussing this gospel seems quite similar to some

88. These similarities were noted also by Smith in *CA*, 32, 81.

89. The passage, it will be recalled, goes on to mention the peculiar nature of writing: the author is not present to ensure that misunderstanding does not occur.

90. Another example of fear of harming the uninitiated is offered in *Stromateis* V.8.53.5–54.4, where the gnostic tradition is compared to a pit that must be covered lest “those who are unfit to receive the depth of knowledge” are made to stumble by it. This example is not specifically concerned with writing.

of the reasons Clement adduced for keeping the gnostic tradition from non-Christians: fear of misunderstanding and concomitant ridicule and perversion of the truth. Our lack of knowledge about this gospel is not so hard to comprehend when we realize that the contents of the Alexandrian gnostic traditions suffered a similar fate.

Standard prudence can explain why the gospel was not openly discussed. This reasoning finds support in the quoted passages themselves. As noted, Clement's explanation that demons devised this scandal implies that a strong similarity was perceived between the truth of the orthodox version and the lie of the Carpocratian version. This in turn implies that the Carpocratian interpretation did not appear to be a wholly absurd reading of what was found in the Alexandrian church's text. The passage that Clement quoted about the young man exhibits many features which certainly could have led a typical Alexandrian of the time to misunderstand the story in much the same way Carpocrates is intimated to have misconceived it—as a mystery religion (or gnostic) rite.⁹¹ Clement would have been painfully aware of the similarities between many of the details of this incident and elements typical of Greek mysteries and also of the rites of his gnostic opponents. It is quite apparent from *Protrepticus* 2.22.1–2, 6–7 that Clement viewed as characteristic of the Greek mysteries secret, nocturnal gatherings by fire light, presided over by hierophants; the darkness and nighttime setting were to him symbolic of the inherent evil of the rites (except when he applied the same imagery to Christianity in 12.120.1). Moreover, as Marvin Meyer has noted, some of the mystery religions used white linen as the garment of initiation.⁹² Nighttime rituals

91. Cf. Koester's impression in *Introduction*, 2:223, that "the *Secret Gospel of Mark* gives indications of a secret initiation rite.... ..This fits very well with what is otherwise known about secret rites of initiation among the gnostic sects of Egypt." (Cited by Schenke in "Mystery," 76.)

92. "Youth," 146. Meyer is combining the detail of the whiteness of the robe worn by the *νεανίσκος* in Jesus' tomb with the material mentioned in LGM 1b, which is not said to be either white or a garment. I suspect many readers would likewise relate these details, so his unconscious assimilation of linen and white does not so much detract from his point as confirm it. Compare the double transference that occurred in Parker's recollection (Review, 5): "After six days the lad came, clad only in a *white robe*, and spent the night with Jesus..." (italics added). R. E. Brown ("Relation," 477 n. 24) and Fuller (*LM*, 3) also let the word *white* slip into their descriptions of a ritual presupposed by the gospel, as did Smith

involving ordinary, anonymous persons wearing linen were so characteristic of the mystery religions that Clement was sure to find the story in the longer text to be something that would seem misleading, to say the least, to a convert not far enough advanced to comprehend this story within a framework different from that customary of the mystery religions. That in itself is reason not to read the longer text to those who needed their faith strengthened.

II.5. *The Reason for Discretion: Conclusions*

It is likely, then, that the orthodox longer gospel was not secret by design but by circumstance. Presumably its potential for creating misunderstanding and embarrassment moved its custodians to avoid reading it to non-agnostics and referring to it in public writings.⁹³ This discretion may be compared to the withdrawal of certain Jewish

(CA, 165). Many scholars also unconsciously refer to Jesus teaching the young man the “mysteries” of the kingdom of God, in consonance with mystery religion terminology, which tends to the plural (though recollection of the parallel to Mark 4:11 in Matthew and Luke may sometimes be the trigger). E.g. Hanhart (*Open Tomb*, 747 n. 106) actually devotes an endnote to explaining how the (nonexistent) plural in secret Mark does not contradict Mark’s style and what he takes to be the Pauline meaning of “mystery” in 4:11 (“in Secret Mark *mustêria* (plural) are *taught* [cf. Matt 13:11 par.]”). Also Talley, “Liturgical Time,” 45; Mann, *Mark*, 424; Grant, *Review*, 59 (cf. p. 61: “I do not know why Jesus did not ‘receive’ the three women. ...Perhaps they had not yet been initiated into the mysteries”); R. E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah*, 1:297; and Wenham, *Redating*, 144–45 (“Can we believe that Mark wrote the ill-fitting insertions attributed to him, which suggest that Jesus initiated nocturnal ‘mysteries’ in the nude?”).

93. One may wonder whether the same attitude is apparent to a lesser extent in relation to the canonical version. Grant (*Review*, 62) noted that apart from the explicit references to Mark in Clement’s letter, his *Hypotyposesis*, and *Quis dives salvetur?*, there are only two explicit citations from Mark in Clement’s writings: “This suggests that for some reason Clement usually did not consider it suitable to use the Gospel of Mark.” Black (*Apostolic Interpreter*, 12) perceived the mystery well: “Among the fascinating characteristics of the early traditions about Mark [the evangelist] are their proliferation and oddity: relative to their references to the other Evangelists and Gospels, patristic texts seem to discuss Mark more yet use his Gospel less. Furthermore, in their comments about the Evangelist, the majority seem noticeably awkward, apologetic, and sometimes even pejorative. Even if it proves beyond our ability to recover completely, something’s afoot in all of this; compounding the mystery is the reticence of New Testament investigators to pursue it.”

scriptures from public reading, for reasons related to theological difficulties arising from their contents.⁹⁴

In the next chapter I will attempt to show that the longer gospel was read figuratively by orthodox Alexandrian gnostics in a non-cultic setting of deeper scriptural exegesis. This use was not far afield of the apparent purpose of the text, for the Markan literary techniques employed therein seem to indicate that the ritualistic initiation imagery in LGM 1 was originally intended to be taken as a figure of the reader's own induction into the essential teachings of Mark's gospel.

94. Cf. Bruce, *The "Secret" Gospel*, 3-4.

THE ORIGINAL PURPOSE AND LATER USE OF THE LONGER GOSPEL

The preceding chapter argued that the *Letter to Theodore* refers not to a secret, ritual text but to a gospel that developed the “spiritual” or concealed meanings of the Markan narrative; in Clement’s day it was being expounded anagogically to advanced Christians as a means of communicating the esoteric *theological* mysteries of the Alexandrian church. These conclusions necessitate that we reconsider the appropriateness of employing the form-critical paradigm as the basic tool for comprehending the setting in which this text was read and—just as important—what is being depicted in LGM 1b. Are LGM 1 and 2 communally-shaped traditions that functioned as the liturgy or as catechism for a rite which LGM 1b depicts?

That has been the dominant opinion. The cultic rite of baptism is what scholars normally perceive in connection with the return of the young man dressed only in a linen sheet (LGM 1:11–12).¹ This idea has the merit of a certain degree of intuitive

1. See, e.g., Scroggs and Groff, “Addendum,” 548; Scroggs, *Review*, 59, 60; Frend, *Review*, 34; Wink, “Jesus as Magician,” 6, 7, 8; Fuller, *LM*, 10; Hobbs, *LM*, 20; Koester, “History and Development,” 48–49; Crossan, *Four Other Gospels*, 114, 116–18, 119; idem, “Thoughts,” 164; and *Historical Jesus*, 329–32; Schenke, “Function and Background,” 121; Cameron, *Other Gospels*, 68 (reproduced in Barnstone, ed., *The Other Bible*, 340); Talley, “Liturgical Time,” 45–47; Kremer, *Lazarus: Die Geschichte einer Auferstehung*, 117; Meyer, “Youth,” 145–46, 148; Sellew, “History,” 256; S. R. Johnson, “Identity,” 133 n. 30, 136 n. 36; Hanhart, *Open Tomb*, 368, 749 n. 110. Without much elaboration, this interpretation is said to be accepted by M. D. Johnson, *Review*, 427; S. E. Johnson, *LM*, 26; Kee, *Review*, 328; Munro, “Women Disciples,” 54; Kaestli, “Évangile secret de Marc,” 65; idem, “Version longue,” 98–99. Morton Smith and Cyril C. Richardson are most strongly connected with the cultic/baptismal interpretation, but Smith did not connect the “secret” gospel material with *catechumen* baptism; he envisioned a second, gnostic baptism. After Smith published his scholarly book, Richardson abandoned the baptism theory for one more closely connected to the mystery religions. R. E. Brown (“Relation,” 477 and n. 24; 478 and n. 30; 480; 483) accepts a variation of Smith’s second baptism idea.

plausibility. We have little knowledge about how Christians performed baptisms prior to the middle of the second century. Some texts from about that period present this rite as performed at night or at dawn;² and some specify that the initiate is baptized nude.³ The description that the young man was naked except for a cloth wrapped about his body is generally acknowledged to be initiatory in character, and is consistent with the kind of clothing one might expect would be worn to facilitate disrobing for baptism. Moreover, initiates are people who have received catechetical instruction, and the story in longer Mark speaks of an interval of six days and then of Jesus teaching the youth throughout an evening. The whole scenario of Jesus entering the house of a person who has manifested his interest in “being with” Jesus (a display of faith) is very similar to the way pre-baptismal instruction was portrayed in some early Christian texts.⁴ It must be acknowledged, however, that though the elements of nighttime baptisms, nudity, and pre-baptismal instruction can be found in some texts, the combination of these elements produces only the illusion of a normative Christian practice, an institution which certainly could not be said to characterize baptismal practice in the first

2. For documentation, see Smith, *CA*, 175; Scroggs and Groff, “Baptism,” 544 and nn. 50 and 51. In the New Testament only one baptism occurs at night, and the timing is due to the unusual circumstances of the situation (Acts 16:33).

3. The earliest textual references to nude Christian baptism come from the middle of the second century. For discussions and documentation, see Leclercq, “Nudité baptismals,” 1801–805; Meeks, “The Image of the Androgyne,” 183–84 and n. 82; J. Z. Smith, “The Garments of Shame,” 217–38 (esp. 220 n. 12); Smith, *CA*, 175–76; Scroggs and Groff, “Baptism,” 537–39; Crossan, *Four Other Gospels*, 116–17.

4. In his article “Aux origines du Catéchuménat,” Turck has argued that there were two early patterns relating to the pre-baptismal instruction of converts in writings depicting earliest Christianity. One type, pictured a number of times in Acts, involved the sequence of kerygmatic proclamation, a response of faith from the hearer(s), and immediate baptism. There is no preliminary instruction that could by any stretch of the imagination be called catechetical (see Acts 2:37–41, 47; 8:12–16; 16:29–33). Another sort included a brief period of teaching (a few days, a week, a few months) before the baptism, sometimes in the convert’s own house. Turck points to Acts 20:20–21 and 28:30 (which are not good support) and finds a number of examples in the non-canonical Acts. Note the Acts of Paul and Thecla 39; Acts of John the Theologian 57; Acts of Philip 35–36; Acts of Peter 5.

decades of the second century and earlier.⁵

If it must be assumed that a particular ritual underlies the creation and use of this text, baptism seems a plausible option. With only a few exceptions, this is the only *Sitz im Leben* that has been seriously considered.⁶ Yet this perspective is not free from important problems. Indeed, there is good reason to question the very assumption that the initiation episode in LGM 1b emerged as an oral, community tradition within a particular *Sitz im Leben*, a reiterative situation in which it was rehearsed. When viewed against the “internal” evidence of the story of the longer gospel, the details concerning the young man unfold in a way that continually frustrates any attempts to read the ritualistic features of LGM 1 and Mark 14:51–52 literally. This problem makes it difficult to conclude that the author of the longer gospel desired LGM 1b to be read as a depiction of an actual ritual. Moreover, a baptismal context for the reading of LGM 1 cannot be substantiated by what the letter says about the use of this gospel in the Alexandrian church up to and including Clement’s day. When viewed against the external evidence of the letter and Clement’s other writings, a baptismal usage for this

5. Justin’s *First Apology*, chapters 61 and 65, is one of the earliest and lengthiest descriptions and is also from the middle of the second century; it offers a very different picture. Justin’s description says nothing consonant with the idea that baptism is done at night or on a special day of the year or even that a developed screening process or catechetical instruction were used, though fasting, prayer for forgiveness of sins, explanation of the significance of the rite (the *explanation* being the “illumination”), and the use of creeds were involved. The prerequisite for baptism is that the person accept Christianity as true (no indication is given of how much the initiates were taught), and the rite is performed on Sundays, prior to the weekly common meeting and eucharist (see 66–67). The apocryphal Acts likewise do not present baptism as if it were a nighttime ritual.

6. Most scholars attribute the story to baptismal practice or voice disagreement without offering alternatives. A few have walked the middle ground and have referred to the “rite”; e.g., Koester, *Introduction*, 2:223 (a few years later it is accepted as a baptism in “History and Development,” 48–49); Schenke, “Mystery,” 75 (he was more certain a few years earlier that the rite is a baptism; see “Function and Background,” 121 [composed in 1982, published in 1986]); Levin, “Early History,” 4276 (“read only to the initiates”), 4277, 88; Hooker, *St Mark*, 353 n. 1 (“an initiation ceremony”). Rejecting the cultic view altogether, Gundry (“Excursus,” 622–23) attempts to read this story as representing, instead, the young man’s abandonment of his wealth, the extent of which is symbolized by the linen sheet—the young man now possesses only the belongings of a corpse; his disposal of his wealth is proof of his sincerity and requisite to hearing the insider teaching on the mystery of the kingdom. Mellon (*Mark as a Recovery Story* 234–35) also rejects a baptismal interpretation in favour of reading this story as depicting an alcoholic recovery meeting led by Jesus, who teaches his own twelve-step program.

text in orthodox Alexandria is all but inconceivable through to the end of the second century. As we shall see in the final section, Clement's references to "those being initiated into the great mysteries" is an indication that the longer text was used in the context of gnostic exegesis of the deeper truths of scripture.

I. The "Internal" Evidence of the Story: Previous Discussions of an Original Community Function for LGM 1

Though baptism is almost unrivaled as an option to explain the function LGM 1 might have had at the time of its inclusion in the longer gospel, scholars are actually quite divided in their opinions on whether a baptism is depicted. There is no mention in LGM 1b either of the water for baptism or of an actual baptism occurring.⁷ And even should we opt to fill in the omitted baptism through our imagination, the wording of the story appears to preclude us from imagining anything happening between these characters besides teaching: *καὶ ἔμεινε σὺν αὐτῷ τὴν νύκτα ἐκείνην· ἐδίδασκε γὰρ αὐτον ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸ μυστήριον τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ· ἐκεῖθεν δὲ ἀναστὰς ἐπέστρεψεν εἰς τὸ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου* (LGM 1:12–13). The explanatory *γάρ* combined with the imperfect of *διδάσκειν* explains why the young man remained that evening, and would imply that only teaching occurred.⁸ Nothing else is said to occur prior to Jesus' "getting up" (from the seated posture of one teaching) to depart; where we might expect a reference to some sort of initiation, we read instead that Jesus went away to

7. Usually one or both facts are mentioned by those who are not convinced there is a baptism. In the reviews of Smith's books see Achtemeier, 626; Gibbs, 424; Hanson, 515–16 (his position is not quite clear); Richardson, 575; Skehan, 452. Also, Beskow, *Strange Tales*, 100–101; Gundry, "Excursus," 618. The Jordan is mentioned in LGM 1:13, but as a topographical feature in relation to which Jesus' subsequent movement is to be situated; he returns to the *region* on the other side of this river. However, the mention of *this* particular feature, the river in which Jesus himself was baptized (Mark 1:9), though in no way encouraging the inference that Jesus baptized the young man either before or after crossing this river, may not simply be coincidental, especially in light of 10:38–39, in which he speaks of his baptism (of death).

8. Noted by Gundry in "Excursus," 622.

the other side of the Jordan.⁹ If the ritualistic imagery of the six days (of preparation?) and the linen cloth lead us to expect a baptism, this only means that the contravention of our expectation is emphasized, for the detail of Jesus leaving is itself peculiar. One gets the impression that Jesus leaves to cross the Jordan before sunrise, without rest or food.¹⁰

Lastly, the episode leads up to Jesus' discussion with James and John concerning who may receive places of honour when Jesus enters his glory. In the course of this dialogue Jesus speaks of his baptism, yet not as a rite he offers to others but rather as a metaphor for his martyrdom. Anyone who would seek glory must likewise be baptized with this "baptism." In itself the metaphorical use of baptism in this passage (six times) does not rule out a literal baptism by Jesus as well, but the preceding reference to the Jordan river at the end of LGM 1 may remind the reader of Jesus' baptism in that river and of John the Baptist's words beforehand excluding the expectation that Jesus would do the same: "I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with holy spirit"

9. The phrase *ἐκεῖθεν δὲ ἀναστὰς* exactly parallels the first three words in Mark 7:24, and LGM 1:13 closely parallels the whole of Mark 10:1. In a Markan context, a description of getting up and leaving is not merely an idiomatic formula for concluding a story. Mark's references to getting up are always literal, and frequently occur in connection with instances of Jesus giving instruction in the seated pose of a teacher. The occurrence of *ἐκεῖθεν* and *ἀναστὰς* in the very similar sentence of Mark 10:1 denotes the conclusion of a teaching episode that likewise occurred in a house (9:33) and in which he was explicitly said to be sitting (9:35; *καὶ καθίσας ἐφώνησεν τοὺς δώδεκα...*). The occurrence of *ἐκεῖθεν δὲ ἀναστὰς* in 7:24 also concludes a situation of private teaching in a house (7:17), though sitting is not explicitly stated. Sitting is a posture requisite of a teacher, and is used this way in Mark 4:1, 12:41, and 13:3 (Gundry, *Mark*, 372). The reference, at the close of the parable discourse, to the disciples taking Jesus as he was (i.e. sitting in the boat) extends the image of a seated teacher through the entire discourse (despite the esoteric teaching away from the crowds, beginning in 4:10). An indication of rising (*ἀναστὰς*) after an explicit reference to sitting also occurs in 2:14, which reads, "And as he passed on, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting [*καθήμενον*] at the tax office, and he said to him 'Follow me.' And he rose and followed him [*καὶ ἀναστὰς ἠκολούθησεν αὐτῷ*]." See also *ἀναστάντες* in 14:57 and *ἀναστὰς* in 14:60 in reference to *συγκαθήμενος* in 14:54. Thus, within the larger context of the Markan gospel, LGM 1:11–13 would naturally seem to depict a teaching situation (with ritualistic overtones) that concluded when Jesus got up and went somewhere else: the author tells us that Jesus *was teaching* the young man throughout the night. There is nothing to promote the thought that at some point during this teaching Jesus got up to conduct a ritual, then sat down again in the posture of a teacher to continue teaching. On Mark's use of *ἀνίστημι*, see Gundry, *Mark*, 372, 876.

10. The indirect commentary of these last two sentences is as if to say, emphatically, You expected a ritual, but one did not happen.

(Mark 1:8). It may not be a mere coincidence, then, that while wondering why Jesus simply got up and left, the reader encounters first a reference to the river in which Jesus was baptized by John and then a passage defining Jesus' baptism as his death in Jerusalem. There is perhaps baptism imagery here, but much reason not to imagine a literal baptism occurring.

1.1. Smith's Arguments For A Baptismal Reading of LGM 1

Smith was aware of certain of these difficulties, and his analysis of the passage attempts to solve some of them. Having noted the basically initiatory character of the pericope, its nocturnal setting, the linen material covering the man's nude body, and the indication of a period of preparation, he proceeded to define the meaning of the phrase "the mystery of the kingdom of God." For this meaning he turned to Mark 4:11–12, though not because these verses appear in the same gospel. Rather, he viewed them as a tradition-critically distinct unit which originally designated the rite of baptism.

This argument is rather complicated. He first appealed to Jeremias for evidence that 4:11–12 was a distinct logion before it was incorporated into the parable chapter, and concluded that the original meaning of *μυστήριον* in this saying cannot therefore be inferred from the textual context.¹¹ When the logion is taken in isolation, the phrase in v. 11b in relation to which the mystery stands as an antithesis may be read as, "but to those outside, everything [i.e. not just the parables] is puzzling," as Jeremias read it. Isolated from its context, the indeterminate scope of the referent of v. 11b cannot tell us anything about the meaning of the mystery which was given to insiders: "The

11. CA, 178, citing Jeremias, *Die Gleichnisse Jesu*, 7–12.

μυστήριον, therefore, must be defined—if at all—from the general sense of the verse and the similar usages elsewhere in the NT and in related works.”¹²

Having separated these words from their existing context in Mark he went on to discuss what this mystery might be. He began with the observation that 4:11a uses the perfect tense, and thereby indicates that this mystery is something that has *previously* been given to the disciples: “Now that ‘mystery’ which ‘was given’ to members of the Church, which distinguished them from nonmembers, and which enabled them to be given secret teachings of the Church, was baptism.”¹³ Following an attempt to show that *μυστήριον* *could have* been used by Paul (in either of two Hebrew equivalents!) and by Jewish writers in reference to baptism, for it is sometimes used to refer to processes rather than secrets, he concluded that the single problem that might prevent us from understanding the mystery of the kingdom of God as the rite of baptism in the longer text—namely that Jesus is said to *teach* this mystery rather than to *give* it—is overcome if we emend *ἐδίδασκε* in LGM 1:12 to *ἔδωκεν*: “for Jesus *gave* him the mystery of the kingdom of God.”¹⁴

I.1.1. *An Evaluation of Smith’s Arguments*

Smith’s argument that *μυστήριον* itself refers to a ritual has not impressed many scholars, and Smith has been especially chastised for the final move in which he changed the evidence to fit the theory.¹⁵ Koester is perhaps most sympathetic toward

12. CA, 178.

13. CA, 178.

14. Smith, CA, 183; SG, 79.

15. Smith’s move to label *ἐδίδασκε* a corruption of *ἔδωκεν* was widely criticized. In the reviews of his books, see, for instance, Achtemeier, 626; Fitzmyer, 572 (implicitly); Hanson, 516 (“as there is only one copy, guessing is free...”); George MacRae, 419 (“...such an unsupported emendation is made to carry a huge superstructure”); Skehan, 452. After pointing to this as an illegitimate move, Kümmel (“Jahrzehnt,” 303 and n. 1) observed further that by this logic “der Casus des Objekts auch verdorben sein muß....” Merkel (“Appendix,” 109 n. 15) recognized that “The libertine interpretation of Jesus rests strongly on [an]...act of violence....” Also, Wink, “Jesus as Magician,” 12: “But it is simply inadmissible to make emendations in order to salvage pet hypotheses.”

this argument, but he rejects Smith's equation of baptism with mystery in the genuine Pauline epistles, and would not follow him in reading this meaning into the "secret" gospel until Smith later offered evidence from the magical papyri, Herodotus, Dionysius, and Porphyry that "*didaskhein* and cognates are used of communicating mysteries and magical rites."¹⁶ This still brings us far afield of an argument that began with the synoptic text.

Considering how easily a case can be made for this story representing a baptism on the basis of its initiatory character and the description of the dress alone, one wonders why Smith felt compelled to argue the unacceptable point that the longer text needed emending; after all, other proponents of the theory of a baptismal *Sitz im Leben* have not felt the need to make the words "mystery of the kingdom of God" themselves a title for the rite of baptism.

The reason would seem to derive from a prior decision on his part that the mystery must be of a ritualistic rather than a conceptual nature. If we can trust his recollection in *The Secret Gospel*, he began to think this way because the letter led him to ask what the secret was.¹⁷ Reading *μυστικός* as secret, Smith presumed that this gospel was somehow of a secret nature; yet he recognized that Clement said Mark did not put the secret material in writing. He therefore inferred that these secrets must be so profound that they could only be hinted at even in a secret gospel.¹⁸ His eventual conclusion was that they must be on the licentious side and directly related to the secrecy surrounding the scene depicted in LGM 1b.¹⁹ Putting all this together he concluded that the initiation story relates only the speakable parts of a secret ritual: "For historical purposes,

16. Smith's evidence is mentioned in Smith, "Authenticity," 199 n. 12; *Magician*, 207; and "Two Ascended," 69 n. 5. It is still not clear how the actual *administration* of the (mystery) rite of baptism can be conveyed by the word "taught." For Koester's remarks, see Koester, Review, 620, 621; idem, *LM*, 30–31; and "History and Development," 48–49 and n. 41.

17. *SG*, 71.

18. *SG*, 73.

19. Cf. "Two Ascended," 68–69.

the important question was the nature of the tradition they ['the secret gospel passages'] represented. Why the secrecy? Why should baptism have been a secret rite? What did this shady tradition have to do with Jesus?"²⁰ Having inferred from the private, initiation-type scene that the longer text was kept secret in order to preserve the secret of a scandalous rite, it was not difficult for Smith to make the move from the New Testament sense of mystery as a previously undisclosed aspect of God's will to mystery as a rite, as he does almost imperceptibly in his description of how he came to view the mystery as a ritual:

What, then, was the mystery? The secret Gospel now gives us a glimpse of it. It was something that *was "taught"* by night to a disciple who came "after six days," "wearing a linen cloth over his naked body." The six days' preparation, the linen sheet and the nudity, but most of all the context of this story in secret Mark, indicate that the mystery was a baptism. If so, the word "taught" is strange. In the ancient world *mystery rites* like baptism were generally said to be "given" to the initiates....²¹

Once he decided that the secret hidden by the gospel was a "shady" rite, the proper framework for understanding the word mystery automatically shifted to the mystery religions; but having concluded this, it was obvious that this shift in framework

20. *SG*, 71; cf. *SG*, 75; *CA*, 93; and these comments from his response to Fuller's essay (*LM*, 13): "The story is clearly of the same sort as the transfiguration, the visit of Nicodemus, the footwashing and the institution of the eucharist, with this exception, that here the report of just what was said or seen or done is replaced by an abstract phrase 'he taught him the mystery of the Kingdom of God,' presumably to avoid description of what was secret." Notice that he assumes the story is a "report" based on something which happened though the secret teaching and (unmentioned) things that were "done" were omitted. Who was there to report what was said, seen, or done? Smith mistakenly believed that the story "goes on to report that Jesus *and the disciples* went to the house of the young man...and stayed with him for six days..." ("Two Ascended," 68; italics added), but the story does not give this impression: the disciples are not again mentioned after they are abandoned in the garden. Thus, by Smith's logic, the young man himself would have to be the source.

21. *SG*, 79. Italics mine. In *Magician*, 135, the mystery of the kingdom is described as "a magical rite." In his 1992 article "Two Ascended," he chose "mystery cult" (not *religion*) as the more appropriate designation of what Jesus himself offered through this rite, specifying that the means of producing the effects of this mystery initiation were derived from "contemporary magic" (69-70, 77). Smith saw little reason to distinguish between mystery cult and magic, though he came to see a need to mention that Jesus' rite was not an attempt at producing a religion. At one point Smith appeared to imply, indirectly, that Jesus' mystery was a business, something people paid to be initiated into (70). He might have noted there that LGM 1:9 says that Jesus and the young man went into his house "because he was rich."

required a word other than “taught” to make it fit, for taught is too appropriate to the New Testament usage.²² Smith therefore most likely began with the assumption of a mistranslation, then sought evidence for this sort of secret ritual elsewhere in the New Testament. From this vantage we can comprehend his exegesis of Mark 4:11 as well as his strained attempts to show that, even though Paul never explicitly uses *μυστήριον* in this way, his use is compatible with the notion that he might have used some such word in reference to a rite.

The end product is a very precarious argument. In the context of longer Mark, the initial occurrence of the phrase “mystery of the kingdom of God” (Mark 4:11) has a meaning which does not fit with the one Smith wished to demonstrate it once had.²³ Thus Smith offered a tradition-critical study of the Markan *μυστήριον* that divorced it from its context. But while ostensibly abandoning the secondary context of the parable discourse, Smith continued to appeal to this context where it served his purpose, as when he assumed that “to you” must still refer to persons who could be called “disciples” and when he claimed that prior reception of the mystery is what allowed insiders to receive such things as special interpretations. If Mark was mistaken in relating *τὰ πάντα* to the teachings in a parable discourse, how then can it still be reasonable to relate the insider discourse beginning with the interpretation of the parable of the Sower to the benefits of having been given the mystery of the kingdom?

In addition to dismissing the literary context where it did not suit him, Smith also ignored the implications of the opposition between vv. 11a and 11b–12, and so

22. Without his substituted word “gave,” no rite is explicitly conveyed in the passage, for these descriptions may all be deemed preparation. Hence apart from this change Smith could never have argued that his discovery points to, or at least leaves room for, the sort of strange ritualistic elements he ascribed to a baptismal practice of the historical Jesus (e.g. hallucination, physical manipulation).

23. Compare his previous interpretation in “Comments,” 29–31. There he argued that 4:11–12 explains the Jewish rejection of Jesus as messiah. *Μυστήριον* is taken in this article to refer to a secret doctrine that only disciples received; the Jews, by contrast, heard everything in the deliberately obscure teaching form of parables, so though hearing the truth they would neither see it nor turn to be saved. See the similar discussion in *Tannaitic Parallels*, 155–56.

abandoned “the general sense of the verse” as well. Even (or especially) when viewed as an isolated logion, the antithesis between 11a and 11b–12 must have a common basis for comparison. Knowledge of the basis of the comparison should indicate the nature of the mystery—at least whether it relates to ritual or to comprehension. Since 4:11b–12 refer to having eyes and ears but misunderstanding (as riddles) what is seen and heard, the mystery of the kingdom of God involves *comprehension*.²⁴ Unless the mystery involves understanding something, there is no common point of comparison, and the saying becomes unintelligible. One only has to insert “baptism” or “entrance rite into the Church/kingdom of God” in place of “the mystery of the kingdom of God” in 4:11–12 to see that this is the case: “To you baptism (into the community of the elect) has been given; to those outside everything is puzzling (or parabolic), so that they might see but not perceive, and hear but not comprehend, lest they should turn and be forgiven.” Regardless of whether 4:11–12 is read in its literary context or as an isolated logion, this saying offers no support for the possibility that *μυστήριον* once referred to a ritual in the Markan tradition.

Mark 4:11 represents a previous occurrence of the phrase “mystery of the kingdom of God” in longer Mark, possibly the only other occurrence. Smith’s inability to show that it means a baptism here, in context, or even at some earlier point in the Markan trajectory that produced this passage, makes his further attempts to find a connection between baptism and the word *μυστήριον* in other literature irrelevant. Still, there is significance in the fact that Smith failed to find a single instance in the New Testament and contemporary Jewish literature where baptism is called a mystery. His final verdict on the Pauline corpus (he did not discuss the occurrences in Revelation) is that “the supposition that ἱε and/or ἱδ [sic; not *μυστήριον*] could have been used by Paul to

24. Cf. Cuvillier, *Le Concept de ΠΑΡΑΒΟΛΗ*, 108.

refer to the rite of baptism as a ‘mystery’ is not unsupported.”²⁵ This is hardly a compelling rebuttal of what he calls the “dogmatic” studies of *μυστήριον* in the New Testament, which treat it as referring to a secret.²⁶ A more accurate picture of the situation was given by H. G. Marsh, who wrote, “*Μυστήριον* is found in the New Testament and, following the Septuagint usage of the few passages in Daniel and the Apocrypha in which it occurs, is there employed, mostly with verbs of revelation, in describing the secret plans and purposes of God which are being revealed.”²⁷ This is probably also the use in Mark 4:11, where the parables of the kingdom depict the *mysterious* (unanticipated, incomprehensible) manner of its coming—the paradoxical reality that what begins with failure ends in triumph, what initially appears trivial or insignificant ends up being dominant.²⁸

Like many tradition critics, Smith assumed that the broader textual context within which redaction occurs is transmuted by the redaction.²⁹ He might have come to very different conclusions, however, had he considered how the textual context may be a determinant of meaning. Note, for instance, that Smith’s preferred verb, “to give,” is what occurs in Mark 4:11, where the context of teaching is evident in the setting of the

25. CA, 181.

26. Smith’s belief that we should be impressed in finding the element of process in the New Testament usages of “mystery” reflects a limited knowledge of the state of the question, based mainly on studies that normally translated *μυστήριον* as “secret,” e.g. those of his mentor Nock (see chapter 3 n. 20).

27. Marsh, “*Μυστήριον*,” 64. See R. E. Brown’s book, *Semitic Background*; this study makes it evident that in each New Testament occurrence, when the meaning of *μυστήριον* is discernible from the context and when it does not mean “incomprehensible,” the word is used in connection with God’s will. I would add that *μυστήριον* normally refers to a strange (i.e. in terms of human logic) facet of God’s will concerning salvation. Cf. Prümm, “*Mysterion* von Paulus bis Origenes,” 392–98 (esp. 396); Bouyer, “*Mysterion*,” 400: “...le secret du plan de Dieu pour le déroulement de l’histoire du monde.” More recently, Hamilton, “Language of Mystery,” 482: “The emphasis on the disclosure of divine secrets is a theme of later Jewish apocalyptic, and such a usage involving the eschatological plan of God will appear in the New Testament literature, especially in Paul.” See also Caragounis, *The Ephesian Mysterion*, 34: “The NT *μυστήριον*...is the mysterious purpose (*πρόθεσις*) or counsel (*βουλή*) of God in His saving plan...”; and Marcus, “*Marcan Epistemology*,” 564–65.

28. Cf. Marcus, *Mystery*, 59 and n. 167. Marcus rejects Smith’s ritualistic interpretation of this phrase in longer Mark for these reasons (87 n 41).

29. Cf. Koester’s treatment of this phrase in “History and Development,” 47–49.

narrative (Jesus is seated as a teacher, in a boat before a crowd gathered on the shore; 4:1, 35–36). In keeping with this *context*, rather than the exact wording, LGM 1:12 uses “was teaching” in conjunction with “the mystery of the kingdom of God” and afterward implies the seated posture of a teacher through its reference to Jesus “rising” to leave. Deviations from the wording of parallel Markan passages are exceptional in the extant material of the longer text, but this is not reason to emend them, for here, as in the following verse, the word change actually brings LGM 1:12 into closer conformity with the *broader scenario* defined by the previous occurrence of the phrase.³⁰ What is more, as a teaching incident, the episode is in keeping with the Markan motif of Jesus returning with his disciples to a house in order to give private instruction (7:17; 9:28, 33; 10:10). And the story appears within Mark 8:22–10:52, a section of narrative concentrating primarily on private discipleship teaching. As an element within a story, LGM 1b therefore is consonant with the motif in Mark 4 of private *teaching* to the disciples concerning the mystery of the kingdom of God and is con-

30. In LGM 1:13, the parallels we find with Mark 10:1—*ἔρχεται εἰς τὰ ὄρια τῆς Ἰουδαίας [καὶ] πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου*—include significant if not purposeful variations: *ἐπέστρεψεν εἰς τὸ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου*. The addition of *τό* prevents the prepositional phrase from functioning as a synonym for the indeclinable anarthrous phrase designating Peraea (e.g. Mark 3:8; 10:1; Matthew 4:15 [?], 4:25); the phrase now has a substantive meaning: “the [region on the] other side of the Jordan.” Compare the two step expression in Mark 5:1: *Καὶ ἦλθον εἰς τὸ πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης [the other side of the sea] εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν Γερασηνῶν*. Whenever Mark uses *εἰς τὸ πέραν* in connection with the sea of Galilee, it is always used to refer to the other side of this boundary *relative to* where the action begins: west to east: 4:35; 5:1; 6:45; 8:13; east to west: 5:21 (cf. John 6:24–25). See Schneek, *Isaiah*, 197; Fowler, *Loaves*, 59, 204 n. 47. The effect of adding the article *and* of using a verb meaning *to return* is to recall 10:1 *and* bring the new passage into harmony with the itinerary established by that verse, which had placed Jesus east of the Jordan prior to his trip to Jerusalem. Having crossed the Jordan into Peraea (to Bethany beyond the Jordan, as in John 1:28; cf. John 3:26; 10:40), Jesus now *returns* to the other (the west) side of the Jordan, a detail only presumed in canonical Mark 10:46. Thus R. E. Brown (“Relation,” 475 n. 19), Smith (*SG*, 55), and Talley (*Origins*, 208) were incorrect in believing that the geographical detail in LGM 1:13 is confused. It seems that a location east of the junction of Galilee and Transjordan mentioned in Mark 10:1 is a reasonable location for the Bethany otherwise only mentioned in John, which that author places very near Galilee (cf. 1:28–29 with 1:43 and 2:1) and at a distance of about three or four day’s walk from Bethany in Judea (11:17). See Riesner, “Bethany beyond Jordan,” 43–48, who, however, prefers a location *north* of the Sea of Galilee and east of the Jordan (60).

sistent with a Markan-style private teaching pericope.³¹ When interpreted in its literary context as an instance of private teaching about an eschatological mystery, this encounter is quite at home.

I.2. Was LGM 1 Originally Part of a Baptismal Lection?

Though the idiosyncrasies of Smith's baptismal interpretation have not been adopted by other scholars, the more basic idea of a baptismal *Sitz im Leben* has certainly taken hold. Smith's conclusions were founded upon a more congenial suggestion offered by Cyril C. Richardson about the purpose behind the preservation of the initiation story and its insertion into the text of Mark. It was Richardson who suggested that this story depicts a baptism and was added to a section of Mark that was being used as a baptismal lection, 10:13–45.³² The text of the "secret" gospel would have been inserted only for readings of this passage on the paschal vigil, the occasion for baptisms.

In order to assess whether LGM 1 was intended as a baptism pericope, it is necessary also to evaluate the reasons Smith and Richardson have given for reading the larger context as part of a lection, particularly since a sizable number of commentators have registered their approval of this form-critical explanation of the function of LGM 1 in its textual context.³³ Omitting many improbable arguments and suggestions made

31. See also Skehan's criticism of Smith in his Review, 452: "No matter that 'teach' and 'teacher' are recurrent enough in the context in Mark to be seen as thematic (Mk. 9:31, 38; 10:1, 17, 20, 35), and that the new patch on the old garment matches this coloration"; likewise, Wink, "Jesus as Magician," 12.

32. See chapter 1 n. 9.

33. Richardson's theory of a baptismal lection is treated favorably in the following studies: Scroggs and Groff, "Addendum," 547; Wink, "Jesus as Magician," 6, 7 (he also accepts Richardson's revised position—to be discussed later—seeing them as compatible; p. 5); Koester, Review, 620 (he calls it "very suggestive"); Kee, Review, 328 ("highly likely"); S. E. Johnson, *LM*, 26 ("very plausible"); Crossan, *Four Other Gospels*, 114 ("probably correct"), 117–18; idem, "Thoughts," 164; *Historical Jesus*, 329–30; Talley, "Liturgical Time," 45; idem, *Origins*, 210; Hanhart, *Open Tomb*, 749 n. 110; and Kaestli, "Version longue," 92, 98–100. Apart from a few comments by Kee (e.g. "do not hinder them" in Mark 10:14 is reminiscent of similar phrases connected with baptism in Acts 8:36 and 10:47—though the latter two are hardly "formulaic"), these scholars do not supply additional arguments in defense of reading Mark 10:13–45 as a baptismal lection.

by Smith,³⁴ the main points of the theory that Mark 10:13–45 were used in conjunction with LGM 1 (he says nothing about LGM 2) as a baptismal lection can be summarized in five arguments.³⁵

To begin with, Smith claimed that *εἰς τὴν τῶν τελειουμένων χρήσιν* (I.22) and *πρὸς αὐτοὺς μόνους τοὺς μνουμένους τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια* (II.2) are “proof of [LGM 1’s] liturgical use in the church.”³⁶ We have already seen in the previous chapter that when Clement referred to the great mysteries he had in view an advanced stage of instruction in the secret gnostic tradition, oriented to direct contemplation of God. Perfection in gnosis is also what unqualified references to the process of becoming perfect mean in Clement, as Smith himself acknowledged.³⁷ That Clement seemed to be indicating that the longer text was read only to Christian gnostics is itself a very significant problem for the lection theory, which, as formulated in Richardson’s suggestions, assumes that the audience consists of catechumens.³⁸ Nevertheless, Smith has at least four other arguments worth addressing.

Next is the claim that Clement’s two quotations in II.17–20 have baptismal associations:³⁹

But we are “children of light,” having been illuminated by “the dayspring” of the spirit of the Lord “from on high,” and “Where the Spirit of the Lord is,” it says, “is liberty,” for “All things are pure to the pure.” To you, therefore, I shall not hesitate to answer the questions you have asked, refuting the falsifications by the very words of the Gospel.

I can agree that Clement’s reference to illumination could be taken as an allusion to

34. E.g. that the gospel “closes with a hint of the *disciplina arcani* in 16:8” (CA, 169).

35. See SG, 64–69; CA, 167–88. Smith went so far as to argue that this section of *canonical* Mark was “put together” for this purpose (SG, 68, 69; CA, 168, 193).

36. CA, 168.

37. CA, 34–35.

38. At this point Smith (CA, 168) felt compelled to claim that this is a higher initiation beyond ordinary baptism. But his subsequent arguments in the commentary section, adapted from Richardson’s letter, all assume that the audience consists of unbaptized Christians.

39. CA, 168.

baptism, for baptism is described as producing illumination in *Paedagogus* I.6.26.1. The repeated phrase “spirit of the Lord” is less persuasive. Smith seemed to be implying that since this spirit is received in baptism, there is an allusion to baptism here. I see no *clear* grounds for inferring this, but I think Smith was correct inasmuch as he detected a general reference in these sentences to persons properly initiated into the church. Clement’s point seems to be that *we* (himself and Theodore) are real Christians (“children of light”), initiated into the true church and illuminated in the process, and therefore *we* may be privy to things not meant to be available to the likes of the Carpocratians. Thus Clement can quote these additional Markan passages to Theodore. Any allusion to baptism in this would concern the foundation (proper initiation into the proper church) which allows one to be privy to the contents of the longer text, and this is strange if those contents are, as Smith here assumes, supposed to be made available to people who are only *about to be* baptized.

Smith’s third point is that Mark 10:14–15 is a saying which in John 3:3–5 has been reinterpreted with a baptismal connection.⁴⁰ This appeal to evidence for a baptismal connection *in John* only highlights the fact that this connection is not apparent in Mark. Smith’s reasoning was likewise strained when he noted that baptism is metaphorically “rebirth,” and its candidates are therefore to become “childlike.”⁴¹ Though little children might be taken to represent childlikeness as a conceivable quality of baptismal rebirth, there is no apparent reason to infer this association in the text of Mark 10:14–15. A more plausible assumption would be that they are meant to symbolize persons of negligible status. Presumably, the disciples are keeping the children from seeing Jesus because they think Jesus is too important to bother with mere children. So Jesus, in

40. *CA*, 169–70.

41. Richardson suggested that the pericope in Mark 10:13–16 justified infant baptism. On this Smith was unsure, but noted that infants were baptized first before other family members and this pericope “stands first” in the lection. Other scholars have read an interest in infant baptism out of this passage; their arguments are rebutted by Best in “Child as Model Recipient,” esp. 93–94.

keeping with his analogies of servanthood and slavery, offers children as model nobodies, the last that shall be first.

As a fourth point of note, Smith claimed that “the pericope in Mk. goes on to more specific requirements for baptism (verses 17–22): monotheism, observance of the Ten Commandments, renunciation of property.”⁴² That *τί με λέγεις ἀγαθός; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἶς ὁ θεός* is a straightforward confession of monotheism is certainly debatable. Jesus questions being called good teacher because “no one is good but God alone” (or “...but one, God”; or “but the one God”). One certainly could argue that a belief in one God is the basis for Jesus’ objection to being called good, but the wording of this interchange is at best a roundabout way of formulating a monotheistic confession.

Concerning the ten commandments, they do appear in the Didache as part of ten chapters which, at 7:1–2, are represented as catechetical. However, Ernest Best has pointed out that the man whose dialogue with Jesus is supposed to represent these elementary creedal confessions of faith is himself rather hesitant about following Jesus and therefore an unbecoming model for the catechumen.⁴³ Smith himself had to admit that “abandonment of property as a requirement for baptism was evidently a peculiarity of that church from which this material originally derived.”⁴⁴ Best also criticized Smith’s suggestion that the passion prediction in 10:33–34 “is the essential of the specifically Christian creed.”⁴⁵ He noted that these verses are not well tailored to the needs of a creed, for, of all the passion predictions, 10:33–34 includes the most details

42. CA, 169–70.

43. “Child as Model Recipient,” 85.

44. CA, 173. It certainly would not have this function in Alexandria, where the greater church must have included many well-to-do members. Clement’s *Quis dives salvetur?* assures them that these verses in Mark do not require them to sell their wealth, for without wealth there can be no charity. Clement’s exposition of Mark 10:17–31 reveals no indication that Clement knew this was part of the baptismal liturgy.

45. CA, 173.

particular to the way the passion unfolds in Mark. That the Son of man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes and condemned by them to death and handed over to the gentiles and mocked and spat upon and flogged—all of this is extraneous to a creedal profession.⁴⁶ But this dramatic script does have a purpose. It is intimately related to the discipleship motif. Gundry more adequately describes the function of 10:33–34 this way: “The passion-and-resurrection prediction defines in advance Jesus’ baptism, not as a rite—he has already undergone the rite of baptism (1:9–11)—but as his suffering, to be shared by James and John....”⁴⁷

And that observation sets up our critique of Smith’s final point. He noted that this story is followed by Mark 10:35–45, which alludes to the sacraments of baptism and eucharist. In his view, this pericope “is best understood as postbaptismal instruction.”⁴⁸ Here is the message Smith derived from the discussion between Jesus and James and John and the ten:

The newly baptized should not feel themselves at a disadvantage vis à vis Christians of longer standing, for not even the original disciples were assured the highest places in the kingdom. All who enter must drink of Jesus’ cup (communion—the commemoration of the passion—will follow) and be baptized (as the initiates just have been) with his baptism (his death and resurrection), but for the future he who would be greatest should follow the example of the Son of Man who made himself servant of all and gave his life for us. So practice humility, make yourselves useful in the church, and give what you can.⁴⁹

This is a prime example of the little attention Smith paid to how these Markan passages function in the context of the gospel as a narrative. In context, the sacramental images of baptism and the cup are in the service of the discipleship theme. Whatever the origin of this narrative, *in Mark* it has nothing to do with the charming, liturgically

46. “Child as Model Recipient,” 85–86. Best complains that it is arbitrary to treat this one passion prediction as a creedal affirmation. Most of Best’s points that I have mentioned are repeated by Gundry in “Excursus,” 619, in a summary of Best’s arguments.

47. “Excursus,” 619.

48. *CA*, 188. Smith also argued that LGM 1b depicts a baptism. But since this claim is for us the matter at issue, no specific response will be made now.

49. *CA*, 186; accepted by Koester in “History and Development,” 49.

eviscerated message Smith read out of it. James and John are being told that they must be prepared to follow Jesus in his death if they are to have any thought of holding places of honour in the future. Though this material makes clear allusion to the sacraments marking entrance into the church, it is the non-sacramental, metaphorical dimensions to these images which are essential to the point being made. Apart from their specifically Christian connections, drinking the cup is a symbol of a martyr's death, and baptism an image of drowning.⁵⁰ As symbols of undergoing suffering and death, the cup and baptism, together with the image of taking up one's cross and following Jesus (8:34), put forward the image of readiness for martyrdom as an emblem for the Markan discipleship ideal.

When the section of the gospel in which Smith perceived a lection is examined from a more literary vantage point, Smith's grouping of materials seems to miss more obvious themes and structures. Mark 10:32–45 is now usually viewed in relation to Mark 8:27–9:1 and 9:30–37 as the final unit in a cycle of teachings that follow the pattern of passion prediction, discipleship misunderstanding, and discipleship teaching.⁵¹ That is, Mark 10:32 is usually seen as the beginning of a new unit that extends to 10:45 rather than as part of a larger structure that began at 10:13.

50. On the cup, see Mack, *Myth of Innocence*, 302; and Seeley, *Deconstructing*, 64–65 (and the authors he cites in nn. 53–55). Concerning baptism, see Schweizer, *The Good News According to Mark*, 220. On both, Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium*, 2:156–58. Because the cup appears in connection with baptism in 10:38–39 and again in the scene of the last supper, it is clear that the connection of baptism and cup with the sacraments is the basis for their use in 10:38–39. This implies that Jesus' death rather than merely his sufferings is the focal point of the metaphors. According to Schweizer, βαπτίζω means "to drown" in the active voice though in the passive means "to go under." He notes, further, that in the Old Testament both the cup and baptism sometimes have connotations of being overwhelmed by suffering (or undergoing God's wrath). These scriptural associations have been taken to permit a certain ambiguity concerning whether a transforming death (a metaphorical use of Christian baptism) or merely suffering is the focus (e.g. Barclay, *Gospels and Acts*, 2:38–40). However, the first discipleship teaching section had already indicated that it is by taking up one's cross and losing one's life that one saves it. The need for total abandonment of self seems to be the point, and this may or may not involve death.

51. See chapter 6, n. 21.

As a unit, Mark 10:32–45 is a lesson about discipleship that reiterates the themes made in the previous two occurrences of this structure in the central section. The point made in all three of the discipleship teachings that come after the examples of disciple misunderstanding (8:34–9:1; 9:35–37; 10:42–45) is that those who wish to be first must make themselves last. In these discipleship teaching sections the metaphors of childlikeness, slavery, and servanthood each make this point. The images of cup and baptism also contribute to this theme, but only when viewed metaphorically. The focus is not on the sacraments themselves, and there is no attempt in 10:35–45 to explain how they came to be or what they signify. Mark has merely alluded to the symbols of cup and baptism in order to elaborate a theological point about discipleship and to offer an oblique suggestion of the redemptive significance of Jesus' death. It is this patently metaphorical dimension that Smith overlooked so that the purpose in mentioning the cup and baptism might seem to be a lesson to newly baptized Christians about the reason for their having partaken in the first of these sacraments and the future responsibilities incumbent on them as church members.

1.3. Later Refinements of the Baptism Interpretation

Smith's arguments that Mark 10:13–45 form a baptismal lection are unconvincing in themselves and inconsistent with the usual ways of understanding how and why Mark has arranged his material in his central section. Nevertheless, a few scholars who have accepted this basic framework—R. Scroggs and K. Groff, and M. Meyer—have attempted to develop better rationales for understanding LGM 1 as a baptism pericope.⁵² These scholars have done much to demonstrate that there is baptism imagery involved in this story, and much of what they have said will be explored at

52. Meyer does not endorse Smith's lection theory, though he makes some comments in keeping with certain aspects of it, and cites approvingly Talley's argument that the whole passage was read in connection with baptism. See, e.g., "Youth," 141, 143.

greater length later on in the literary-critical part of this dissertation. At this point, however, I will address only those suggestions that treat LGM 1 as having been designed to be used in connection with baptismal practice, for at issue right now is the likelihood that this imagery was used to create a text that would be read in conjunction with baptism.

I.3.1 *Robin Scroggs and Kent I. Groff*

In an addendum to an influential article published in the same year as Smith's books, Scroggs and Groff joined in arguing for a baptismal *Sitz im Leben* to this newly discovered story. They also suggested alternative ways of solving some of the difficulties with Smith's position. Most important, the statement that Jesus was *teaching* the *νεανίσκος* is accepted at face value, but interpreted as pre-baptismal catechism.⁵³ In the body of their article they had argued that the references to a *νεανίσκος* in Mark 14:51–52 and 16:5–7 denote the same person, for both descriptions are so similar and distinctive as to be evocative of each other.⁵⁴ These two appearances respectively represent two stages of the baptismal ritual: his dressing in a linen garment, disrobing, and nakedness in 14:51–52 represent the baptismal symbolism of “dying with Christ,” and his reappearance in a white robe in 16:5–7 “symbolizes rising with Christ” or the emergence from baptism as a new person.⁵⁵

53. “Addendum,” 548.

54. For discussion of this point, see chapter 6 n. 44.

55. Scroggs and Groff, “Baptism,” 540. According to Neiryck (“Fuite,” 216), a similar interpretation of this passage was offered five years later by B. Standaert in *L'Évangile selon Marc. Composition et genre littéraire* (Diss. Nijmegen, Brugge, 1978), 496–618. Waetjen later incorporated this theory into his own (*Reordering*, 218). S. R. Johnson (“Identity,” 123–39) also follows the interpretation of Scroggs and Groff concerning the *νεανίσκος* as a symbol of Jesus' death and resurrection and of a disciple's participation in this (note, e.g., 133 and 137). His discussion of longer Mark is confined to two long footnotes. In the first (133 n. 30) he proposes that “the Secret Mark redactor felt the need to make the ritual [i.e. baptismal] element in the Markan text more explicit, and saw the Lazarus story and the obscure Markan youth as the vehicles to this end”; in the second (136 n. 36) he suggests that this redaction “also makes explicit a theme of Jesus' power of resurrection that has been subtly developed through the narrative events of Mark (cf. esp. [1:29–31]; 4:35–5:43; 9:14–27; 14:51–52; and 16:1–8).” Scroggs and Groff's interpretation can also be compared with the interesting explanation of LGM 1 offered by

The initiate is stripped of his garment and is now ready for baptism. He is baptized into the death, but only Jesus actually dies, and the substitution is symbolized by the linen which the young man leaves but with which Jesus is actually shrouded in burial....

...Such evidence as exists (it is conclusive but late) points explicitly to the Paschal night vigil as the preferred time for the baptismal ceremonies, with the actual moment of baptism coming at dawn on Easter day. This coincides with the time of the story in Mark 16:2 ("very early, just as the sun had risen") and might suggest that the *neaniskos* was actually a person just baptized, chosen to represent Christ and to announce his own initiation-resurrection at the same time.⁵⁶

Viewed this way, the earlier appearance of this young man in LGM 1 being taught the mystery of the kingdom of God may be viewed as catechesis in preparation for his baptism in chapters 14 and 16. There is much in this scenario that sounds plausible and intriguing. Because Scroggs and Groff formulated their baptismal interpretation of 14:51–52 (combined with 16:5) independently of Smith's find, the basic concurrence in interpretation reached through different evidence and difference approaches is striking. Some of its main elements may be questioned, though, as these relate to the issue of whether the teaching of the *νεανίσκος* in LGM 1 may be conceived of as preparatory to his baptism. To begin with, can there be a connection between the appearance in Jesus' tomb of the young man in a white robe (signifying completed baptism) and the timing of the baptisms at the end of the Paschal vigil? This is a fascinating connection, which, if historically feasible, makes the suggestion that there is at least baptism *imagery* in LGM 1 quite compelling. In terms of the reading of this text in the Alexandrian church on the evening of the Paschal vigil, though, there is a problem. Thomas Talley has noted that several sources, including Origen's tenth homily on Leviticus, the fourth-century Canons of Hippolytus, and a variety of medieval and later sources, either indicate or support the view that the practice in Alexandria prior to

Hobbs (*LM*, 20): "Following Paul's lead (Romans 6:1–11), some Christians in Alexandria (Carpocratians, apparently, and others) interpreted baptism as resurrection. Someone among them felt the need of an account in the Gospels to illustrate this, and set out to fill the need."

56. Scroggs and Groff, "Baptism," 542, 544.

Nicaea was not to baptize on Pascha, but rather on the sixth day of the sixth week of the quadragesima fast when this fast immediately followed Epiphany.⁵⁷ If this evidence may be trusted, then a *literal* association between the resurrection of Jesus just before Easter morning and the completion of baptisms performed at that same time during the Paschal vigil is not likely for the Alexandrian church of Clement's day, and probably not before then, either.

Nevertheless, the question of whether Mark 14:51–52 and 16:1–8 were understood by the author of the longer text to have a baptismal referent for which LGM 1 is preparatory may still be considered a separate matter, to be decided in part on the merits of the argument Scroggs and Groff have made. Assuming that the baptism occurs in chapters 14 and 16 rather than in LGM 1, and that this baptism does not occur literally but only in the symbolism of what the young man does (e.g. wearing only a linen cloth then losing it) and says (proclaiming the resurrection to the women), a few questions emerge. Why is the young man in LGM 1 dressed to be baptized if that night is reserved only for prior instruction? Why would we see in this scene a literal preparation for baptism when a literal baptism never occurs? And, assuming the imagery in chapters 14 and 16 is symbolic, should not the imagery in LGM 1 be taken less literally as well?

More to the point is the question whether a baptism “occurs” symbolically in Mark 14 and 16. Does it make sense to interpret the flight of the νεανίσκος from Gethsemane as the first step (disrobing) in a symbolic baptism? Smith himself responded to this notion in typically memorable fashion, saying “This interpretation neglects only the

57. For documentation see “Liturgical Time,” 43–47. He offers this as a critique of Richardson's earlier theory, but faults him essentially for viewing the Paschal vigil as the night of the reading of this text. See also *Origins*, 210. He has no evidence to show that baptism was practiced only on this one day as early as Clement's time, but his evidence does make it unlikely that baptism was at that time performed on Pascha.

main facts: this young man deserted Christ and saved himself.”⁵⁸ For Smith this is historical reminiscence of an interrupted initiation involving another disciple. Still, the thrust of his objection is correct. Though the young man may be dressed (symbolically or otherwise) for baptism, the removal of his robe cannot be viewed positively as a facet of his baptism, for it is, within the ideological framework of the story, a negative action implying the absence of the kind of loyalty that undergoing baptism would convey.⁵⁹ As Fleddermann and Gourgues point out, his flight is a refrain of that of the disciples in the previous verse. “The pericope of the flight of a naked young man is a commentary on 14:50; it is a dramatization [and concretization] of the universal flight of the disciples.”⁶⁰

58. “Score,” 457 n. 19. Meyer could not resist citing this comment as well (“Youth,” 145; cf. 147); nor could R. E. Brown (*The Death of the Messiah*, 1:302 n. 11) and Jackson (“Cloak,” 276 n. 9).

59. There is a similar problem with S. R. Johnson’s refinement of this suggestion (“Identity,” 129), according to which the νεανίσκος “represents...a paradigmatic disciple who has been transformed through symbolic participation in, and identification with, the death and resurrection of Jesus.” If “identification” with Jesus’ death is a more correct description of what the νεανίσκος represents, it must be admitted that he opts out of *participation* in it. The element of desertion in 14:51–52 poses even more substantial problems for the (necessarily positive) christological interpretations that view this flight as a symbolization of Jesus’ escape from death (e.g. Knox, “A Note,” 29; Vanhoye, “La fuite,” 406; Waetjen, *Reordering*, 218; Gundry, *Mark*, 861–63) or of the notion that Jesus and the ideal disciple “cannot be taken prisoner and kept in custody by the powers of this world. Whatever they are able to seize is only his corporeal cover” (Schenke, “Mystery,” 78–79). Vanhoye and Knox both suggested that Jesus’ escape from the tomb is symbolized by the linen burial cloth being left behind, but, as is often noted, that motif appears in John 20:5–7, not in Mark. Gundry’s explanation (862) sounds desperate: “To be sure, Mark will write nothing about Jesus abandoning the linen burial cloth in the empty tomb, but presumably only because none of Jesus’ enemies will be there to clutch the cloth when he leaves it behind....”

60. Fleddermann, “Flight,” 415, adding words from the repetition in 417. Cf. Gourgues. “À propos du symbolisme christologique et baptismal.” 675: “Interpréter la fuite du jeune homme comme symbole de la participation à la mort du Christ ne tient pas compte du contexte. Cette fuite, que Marc situe après celle des disciples (14. 50), loin d’avoir une signification positive, vient au contraire accentuer le caractère universel de la désertion et de l’incompréhension des hommes.” Fleddermann notes that 14:52 ends with the verb ἔφυγεν and 14:50 concludes similarly with the words ἔφυγον πάντες. What the disciples all did was fall away like sheep lost without a shepherd (14:27), something they *all* swore they would never do (14:31b). See also his criticisms of Scroggs and Groff on p. 417, as well as those of Gourgues on pp. 674–77. Farrer (e.g. *A Study in St Mark*, 141) was one of the earliest commentators to make the point that the young man is a dramatic symbolization of the falling away of the disciples. His insight was accepted by the literary critics Kermode (*Genesis*, 62) and Tannehill (“The Disciples in Mark,” 188). Kermode has influenced Williams (*Gospel Against Parable*, 71–72, 84–86, 134), who states “...Mark intended the *neaniskos* as a narrative embodiment of both desertion and fear and accompaniment (or participation) and joy” (86). See also Neiryneck, “Fuite,” 215–38, esp. 237–38; Boomershine, “Apostolic Commission,” 236; idem, *Story Journey*, 184; Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 369; Lincoln, “Promise,” 288, 293 (“The figure who failed abysmally in the face of death...”);

And there is a logistical problem to the hypothesis that 14:51–52 was added to facilitate the use of the gospel as a baptismal lection. “N’est-il-pas gênant...que la scène de Mc 14,17–25 ne correspond pas au moment de la célébration de l’eucharistie qui, dans la liturgie pascale, a lieu après le baptême?”⁶¹ If either the canonical or the longer text is conceived as a lection, it becomes evident that the proper order of initiation in the sacraments is reversed, for the eucharist pericope occurs *before* the baptism passages.

I.3.2. Marvin Meyer

That a symbolic baptism occurs in chapter 14 cannot be accepted. If there is imagery of readiness for baptism in the young man’s appearance here (and I believe there is), his running away naked destroys the thought that this loyalty was carried through to the point of dying with Christ. Marvin Meyer has dealt with this problem in an attempt to offer a slightly different argument for reading LGM 1b as a pericope whose *Sitz im Leben* is baptism. He concurs with Scroggs and Groff in perceiving a “baptismal significance” in the three passages under discussion, but rejects the idea that the young man’s baptism can somehow be thought to occur *after* LGM 1. For Meyer, as for Smith, it occurs in LGM 1:

Scroggs and Groff rightly recognize the baptismal significance of the Markan passages under discussion, but seem to locate the baptism itself in the wrong pericope! In 14:51–52 the point of the passage is not the baptizing of the νεανίσκος but rather the forsaking of baptismal loyalties: the paradigmatic disciple is scandalized by the suffering of Jesus no less than the other disciples, and even abandons his sacramental clothes symbolizing

Collins, *The Beginning of the Gospel*, 108; Gundry, *Mark*, 861–62, 881; R. E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah*, 1:297–98, 303 (“The flight of this young man has to be parallel to the flight of the disciples and therefore ignominious”; p. 303). Rhoads and Michie (*Mark as Story*, 157 n. 46) add that “the episode about the arrest and flight of a naked young man reinforces the shame of the disciples’ flight....”; cf. Jackson (“Cloak”), who points to the panic implied by the naked flight but denies any symbolism.

61. Neiryneck, “Fuite,” 219.

his participation in Jesus' passion and death. ...The νεανίσκος of Mark 16 has reaffirmed his baptismal loyalties....⁶²

Meyer's is a somewhat more satisfying interpretation of what is happening with respect to the νεανίσκος in 14:51–52 and 16:1–8. His reading permits the baptism to occur more logically *before* the last supper pericope (though only for this one disciple). Nevertheless, it remains to be asked why this man is walking around in Gethsemane still wearing the garment that symbolizes the old self abandoned in baptism if he was actually baptized in the passage added in the longer gospel.⁶³ And, again, the solution to read a baptism back into LGM 1 does not forestall the problems mentioned at the outset of this chapter, that make it difficult for a reader to perceive an actual baptism taking place in that pericope.

I.3.3. *Could LGM 1:12 Represent Catechetical Teaching?*

Meyer and Scroggs and Groff rightly rejected Smith's attempt to read "was teaching him" as if it said "gave him," and "the mystery of the kingdom of God" as if it referred to a mystery rite. But their decision to treat this teaching as catechetical does not eliminate the problems which the language of LGM 1:12 poses for a baptismal reading. Would catechetical teaching be called "the mystery of the kingdom of God"? Let us consider this question with respect both to the larger context of LGM 1:12 in Mark/longer Mark and our knowledge of the practice of catechetical instruction in Clement's time.

62. "Youth," 145–46. Following Koester (and Crossan), Meyer considers longer Mark to be an earlier version of Mark, and 14:51–52 to be a remnant of the excision of LGM 1. For the time being I will set aside Meyer's comments about the symbolism of the young man in the (otherwise) empty tomb, much of which I accept. At this point I am interested in his view that Jesus does baptize the νεανίσκος in the longer Mark excerpt, which he makes explicit on p. 148.

63. Gundry, "Excursus," 619.

I.3.3.1. *The Nature of the Instruction in Mark 4 and Early Catechetical Instruction*

Any theory about the content of Jesus' instruction to the young man must also make sense of Jesus' teaching on this subject in the parable discourse. One may agree that there is a similarity between the audience of "*those about him* with the twelve" and the category of catechumens, who are on the border between being inside (those who have turned and been forgiven; 4:12) and being outside. Similarly, like a neophyte, the young man is undergoing a transition in LGM 1b, becoming an insider.⁶⁴ The "form" of initiatory instruction exists in LGM 1b, and the imagery of the young man's outfit may suggest baptism. But if pre-baptismal catechesis is the content of the mystery of the kingdom of God, then such catechism must also be what Jesus was teaching the crowds in Mark 4, where Jesus' parables conceal this mystery (4:10–12). That notion in itself makes little sense. As Gundry reminds us, "Baptismal catechism is not even addressed to outsiders."⁶⁵ Consider, further, the contents of this teaching. In Mark/longer Mark 4:10–12, the mystery of the kingdom of God is a theological riddle that separates insiders from outsiders; the mystery which outsiders cannot perceive and insiders seem not yet ready to penetrate concerns a single theological truth about the reign of God.⁶⁶ Is theological instruction compatible with what we know of the contents of early catechetical instruction?

The evidence we have about early catechetical instruction suggests otherwise:

At first, i.e., in the second century, the instruction of the catechumens was more practical

64. Cf. Waetjen, *Reordering*, 217: "The young man is an unnamed follower who belongs to the larger circle, 'the ones around him with the twelve.'"

65. Gundry, "Excursus," 619.

66. *Βασιλεία* literally means kingdom but is often used synecdochically for the reign or dominion of a particular ruler. Chilton ("Recent Discussion," 274–79) points out that both senses are found in Daniel (e.g. kingdom means place ruled by a king in 2:39–41, 44, reign in 2:1, regime in 2:39, 44, and, more abstractly, power to rule in 2:37; 3:33; 4:26, 27, 28, 31). Mark prefers the sense of reign or dominion. Thus the singular *μυστήριον* and the subject of the mystery (*ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ* or reign of God) indicate that a single, eschatological mystery lies behind all the kingdom parables, "one particular insight into the nature of the Kingdom" (Kelber, *Kingdom*, 32; cf. p. 36).

than doctrinal. The *Didache*, for example, devotes the first six chapters to Christian conduct and life. The *Apostolic Constitutions* dwells on the character and practices of the believers. Justin Martyr enjoins the catechumen to enter into a life of prayer and fasting in order that he may receive the remission of sins. The inference is not that the matters of doctrine were ignored but rather that the fullest development of dogmatic instruction came later.⁶⁷

Pre-baptismal catechism during this early period was strongly ethical. “The purpose of the catechumenate was literally to ‘reform’ the candidate. Formation rather than information was its thrust (‘resocialization,’ as the social scientist might call it).”⁶⁸ The candidate was fashioned into the kind of person who could, at some point following baptism, be worthy of theological instruction and benefit from it.⁶⁹ Practically speaking, the catechumenate was a probationary period intended to examine the character of the candidate; it functioned to prevent the baptizing of those who were not entirely sincere or worthy. This is the kind of situation reflected in Clement’s reference to the Logos as one who instructs by stages in the three modes of *προτρεπτικός*, *παιδαγωγός*, and *διδασκαλικός* (*Paedagogus* I.1.3.1), the division reflected in Clement’s three most important books. Clement’s *Paedagogus* is representative of the sort of instruction directed to both catechumens and ordinary Christians in Alexandria during the latter decades of the second century.⁷⁰ At the outset of that work, Clement

67. Folkemer, “A Study of the Catechumenate,” 244–45. He notes that the deeper meanings of the rituals of baptism and eucharist were not taught to candidates until after they were initiated (pp. 257–58). Finn (*Catechumenate*, 5) considers this delayed instruction to be in keeping with the attitude of mystery religions that only initiated persons may learn the secrets of the rites.

68. Finn, *Catechumenate*, 5.

69. This is especially clear in Clement’s writings, and so was probably true of the Alexandrian church in general in his day. At the opening of his *Paedagogus*, Clement described at great length the nature of the instruction involved at this stage, noting that it is *not* meant to impart knowledge to individuals but to “cure” them of the “sickness” endemic to pagan living; only when they are “healthy” will they be ready to learn. See especially I.1.3.1–3. The *Paedagogus* is not a “teacher” but, literally, a leader of little children. The motif that the passions must be mastered by discipline before a Christian is ready to be taught by the Teacher dominates the *Paedagogus*. On this theme, see de Faye, *Clément d’Alexandrie*, 54–55. Clement’s outlook is rather typical of early catechumenates in this regard. See Finn’s “General Introduction” in *Catechumenate*, esp. 1–7.

70. There are places where Clement seemed to allude to his reader’s baptism as a past event, so this work is most clearly directed at ordinary, initiated Christians.

wrote,

The Instructor being practical, not theoretical, his aim is thus to improve the soul, not to teach, and to train it up to a virtuous, not to an intellectual life. Although the same word (*λόγος*) is didactic, but not in the present instance. For the word which, in matters of doctrine, explains and reveals, is that whose province it is to teach. But our Educator being practical, first exhorts to the attainment of right dispositions and character, and then persuades us to the energetic practice of our duties, enjoining on us pure commandments, and exhibiting to such as come after representations of those who formerly wandered in error. ...Eagerly desiring, then, to perfect us by a gradation conducive to salvation, suited for efficacious discipline, a beautiful arrangement is observed by the all-benignant Word, who first exhorts, then trains, and finally teaches.⁷¹

The same outlook is reflected in Clement's comment implying that baptism is a preliminary initiation compared to the small and great mysteries (*Stromateis* V.11.70.9–71.1). The evidence we have from the first two centuries does not favour a connection between baptism and private, theological instruction in a mystery.⁷²

71. I.1.1.4–1.3.3 (Wilson's translation). In addition to this passage, one should not overlook the excerpt commonly known as "Exhortation to Endurance" or "To the Newly Baptized." Though apparently post-baptismal, and thus not catechetical in a strict sense, this selection, titled "Precepts of Clement" in the manuscript, is generally believed to come from a work of Clement mentioned by Eusebius under the former titles. We cannot know whether it is this work of Clement's, and whether it was intended to be read to the newly baptized: there are no internal references to either the author or to baptism. Nevertheless, a brief quotation from the beginning will provide a sense of what kinds of exhortations were typical in this setting: "Cultivate quietness in word, quietness in deed, likewise in speech and gait; and avoid impetuous eagerness. For then the mind will remain steady, and will not be agitated by your eagerness and so become weak and of narrow discernment and see darkly; nor will it be worsted by gluttony, worsted by boiling rage, worsted by the other passions, lying a ready prey to them. For the mind, seated on high on a quiet throne looking intently towards God, must control the passions." We are in a different world from instruction in a mystery. For a translation and discussion of this passage, see Ferguson, *Clement of Alexandria*, 183–87.

72. Davies ("Thomas and First Corinthians") has recently proposed that the gospel of Thomas was composed as a baptismal lection and that in Corinth baptism was an initiation by a mystagogue involving hierophantic exposition of wise sayings from a similar collection (cf. Koester, *Introduction*, 2.121–22). I can agree that wise sayings were important to the Christians in Corinth with whom Paul was in conflict, but it remains to be shown that the four persons to whom various Corinthians claim to "belong" (1 Cor. 1:12) acted as mystagogues while baptizing and used sayings collections made for that purpose. An obvious problem is that two of those named are Paul and Christ. How can Paul have engaged in mystagogical baptism if he is also censuring the eloquent wisdom that is supposed to accompany the act? And how can Jesus have baptized Corinthian believers?

I.4. *The “Internal” Evidence for an Original Community Function for LGM 1: Conclusions*

LGM 1 is a peculiar text. It presents an encounter that is arguably full of ritualistic imagery suggestive of initiation. The tenets of form criticism would naturally lead us to read this ritual-looking episode as a ritual text depicting the ritual it validates; and the ritual that comes most readily to mind is baptism. Yet the story’s initiatory elements are remarkably ambiguous about their reference, and the text frustrates every attempt to read into these indeterminacies a story about Jesus baptizing a young man: No water is mentioned nor is an actual rite depicted. Teaching is the only activity said, or even implied, to occur, yet the subject matter of this teaching is not evidently ethical, like catechism, but theological and, presumably, eschatological, as it was in Mark 4:11. At the moment when the depiction of a ritual might seem appropriate, something remarkably unexpected happens: Jesus is said to leave for the other side of the Jordan. The young man does reappear in Gethsemane, but is once again wearing this linen outfit, which, presumably, must represent *readiness for* initiation. Lest we imagine that he showed up at this moment in expectation of being baptized by Jesus in some nearby water, we are told only that he followed with (*συνηκολούθει*—probably meaning relatively close behind) Jesus as Jesus was being arrested—a peculiar time to seek baptism. He does disrobe, but only in a struggle to avoid his own arrest. His nudity is not a sublime symbol of new birth or of a power that death could not conquer, but an incriminating detail that intensifies the shame of his cowardice and particularizes the tragedy of the flight of the disciples as a whole.

There is, in other words, hardly any detail pertaining to the *νεανίσκος* in longer Mark that does not to some degree encumber the utility of LGM 1 as part of a lection for baptism. The unimpressive case Smith put forth for reading the immediate context

of LGM 1 as a baptismal lection underscores how incongruous a ritual text would be in a context that is clearly devoted to illustrating this gospel's deeper truths about christology and discipleship. Indeed, the references to baptism in Mark 10:35–45 point in an altogether different direction, for they develop this word into a metaphor for preparedness for martyrdom. The broader context of LGM 1 is better described as the third member in a cycle of discipleship teaching passages, each of which begins with a passion prediction; thus 10:32 marks the beginning of a distinct unit—not 10:13. In this context, Jesus' baptism means, quite simply, his death in Jerusalem. His baptism and cup function as yet another *metaphor* for the way of the cross, taking their place in a sequence of vivid symbolic illustrations of selflessness that dominate the three discipleship teaching sections; its usage here is no more literal than the images of servanthood, slavery, childlikeness, and carrying one's cross. It would make more sense to ask whether the initiatory imagery of LGM 1 itself adds to this motif by extending the comparison between baptism and the discipleship process of following Jesus in his way to life through death. But before we consider this possibility, let us first explore the evidence of the letter.

II. The “External” Evidence of the Letter and Clement’s Writings: Previous Discussions of the Use of LGM 1 and 2 within the Alexandrian Church

Having argued enough to indicate that the story itself is not tailored to fill the requirements of a baptism pericope, it is time to turn our attention to what can be learned about the actual use of the text in Alexandria in the time of Clement, for which the letter gives ample, direct evidence.

We are entering a sorely neglected area in the study of longer Mark. In general, when the utilization of the new material by the orthodox Alexandrian community has been considered, little use has been made of the “external” evidence available in the letter and in Clement’s undisputed writings. This is surprising, considering that

scholars normally can only dream of finding synoptic-type pericopae that come replete with a discussion of their use within a particular community.

Part of the reason for this neglect would be that the baptismal interpretation has simply seemed so intuitively plausible in light of the initiatory character of the gospel extract and the sacramental-sounding language the letter employs to describe the longer text's use.⁷³ Moreover, no viable alternatives have been offered to offset Richardson's first suggestion. The opinion that this text was used in the baptism of catechumens has been reiterated so often and so facilely that some investigators seem to think that Clement plainly said this himself.⁷⁴ The canonical status of this view has perhaps prevented most scholars from noticing (or noting) that it is in basic contradiction with the other predominant assumption about this gospel—namely, that it was a secret writing, known only to a spiritual elite.⁷⁵ Note the boldly contradictory assertions (e.g.

73. E.g. Smith, *CA*, 168 (cf. 187): "...τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια would most easily be referred to the pascha, the annual occasion for baptism"; cf. Richardson's comment, cited in *SG*, 65. MacRae was quick to voice his agreement in his review (p. 418). Hanhart (*Open Tomb*, 749 n. 110) displays the same confidence: "Of course, these [great] mysteries refer to the annual Christian paschal celebrations." Likewise, Kaestli ("Version longue," 99): "Une section de cet Evangile vénéré, le ch. 10, a sans doute été utilisée très tôt comme lecture lors de la liturgie de baptême."

74. Cf. Crossan, *Historical Jesus*, 412: "According to Clement's own explanation...*Secret Mark*, intended as 'a more spiritual Gospel for the use of those who were being perfected' by baptism, was the later version" (cf. *Four Other Gospels*, 114). And Sellev, "History," 256: "Clement explains that access to this version of Mark's Gospel is limited to those (being?) initiated into the church (πνευματικώτερον εὐαγγέλιον εἰς τὴν τῶν τελειουμένων χρῆσιν [1st 21–22]). Because of the fragment's baptismal elements, it seems quite plausible that this and related *Secret Mark* materials were introduced into the Markan story deliberately by the Alexandrian church early in the second century for use by catechumens or baptized believers." The problems with his statement are that τῶν τελειουμένων means "being perfected," not "initiated" (note, a present participle; he reads it as if it could be a past participle); no mention of "into the church" appears ("into the use of those being perfected," does, though); and catechumens and baptized believers are different categories. The first version of Mark is said to be for catechumens.

75. Usually those who propose a baptismal use habitually refer to it as a secret gospel but do not attempt to explain how that could be so. Lest one decide that the contradiction is eliminated by considering it secret in the weaker sense of the *disciplina arcani*, it should be noted that this practice is first attested later than Clement (see Richardson, *Review*, 574; Hanson, *Review*, 516; Shepherd, *LM*, 68; Hamilton, "Language of Mystery," 487 and the authors mentioned in n. 23). As Koester initially indicated, if secrecy concerning Christian sacraments is offered as the reason for not including a baptism pericope in the canonical Mark, then one is at a loss to explain the inclusion (or else retention) of the words of the eucharist in the canonical gospel (*Review*, 620, in response to Smith's suggestion in *CA*, 187, that the omission of this text is comparable to John's omission of "the 'words of institution'"). Cf. Wink, "Jesus as Magician," 9.

secret gospel used for ordinary baptism) and basic misconceptions about Clement's mystery language in Thomas Talley's discussion of the question of its use:

It is against this introductory material that Clement will cite two passages from what is here translated as "the secret Gospel." There is no doubt that this correctly renders the Greek *mystikon evangelion*, but given the richness of Clement's use of "mystical" language, we should not allow that phrase to be deprived of other, more cultic nuance. Particularly important for our purpose is his indication that this special material is to be "read only to those who are being initiated into the great mysteries." While Clement's words have been subjected to less obvious interpretations, the clear meaning is that this special material in the *mystikon evangelion* was read in connection with the conferment of baptism. Such information regarding a liturgical pericope at such a central rite at such an early period is precious indeed.⁷⁶

II.1. *A Gospel not for Catechumens*

The knowledge that the work was not a *secret* gospel does not, however, resolve the problems posed by the letter for the catechetical baptismal interpretation. Another contradiction exists that should have been at least as obvious: the *Letter to Theodore* itself disassociates catechumens from the audience for which the longer gospel was written. According to the tradition Clement relates, what we call canonical Mark was written for "catechumens," in order to strengthen their faith (πρὸς αὐξήσιν τῆς τῶν κατηχουμένων πίστεως; I.18). The additional passages of τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον, on the other hand, were added for the use of "those being perfected" (εἰς τὴν τῶν τελειουμένων χρῆσιν; I.22) as felicitous for increasing "gnosis" (τὰ τοῖς προκόπτουσι περὶ τὴν γνῶσιν κατάλληλα; I.20–21); this amplified text was read only to persons who were far enough advanced in this pursuit that they were learning the great (theological) mysteries.⁷⁷ That is, those to whom it was read were already baptized,

76. *Origins*, 207.

77. For the meaning of προκόπτουσι here as a transitive meaning "the elements suitable to those things that make for progress [towards gnosis]," see Smith, "Rare Sense." Christians are said to have been made perfect by their baptisms in *Paedagogus* 1.6.26.1. This is exceptional in Clement, a contradiction of his usual practice of representing perfection as a process continuing through a Christian's lifetime and coming to completion only after death. See Stealy, *Gnosis*, 125–26; and Smith, *CA*, 34.

and those who were undergoing instruction prior to being baptized (*οἱ κατηχουμένοι*) were still a long way off from being exposed to readings from it. This much we could have presumed from our examination of Clement's references to the great mysteries, which are gnostic truths withheld from catechumens and explicitly dissociated with the preliminary rite of baptism; the fact that the letter itself makes this distinction between catechumens and the audience of the longer text can only cause one to wonder how the baptism hypothesis ever became so stable. In spite of the existence of baptism imagery in LGM 1, then, the assumption of a baptismal *Sitz im Leben* in the second century is not only difficult to reconcile with the unfolding of the story about the young man, but is in stark tension with the letter itself.

II.1.1. *Talley's Theory of the Reading of LGM 1 within a Liturgical Cycle*

Though Talley was inattentive to the incongruities posed by the letter, he did try to deal with some additional external evidence, which must be addressed before I deal with the few early attempts to come to terms with these contradictions. He recognized that late traditions indicated that anti-Nicene Alexandrian Christianity was peculiar in that it baptized on the sixth day of the sixth week of the fast in imitation of Jesus' fast of forty days after his baptism, which concluded with "the Feast of Palms, a celebration of Christ's entry into Jerusalem some weeks before the beginning of the paschal fast of six days and the Pascha of the Resurrection."⁷⁸ This practice was associated with a Coptic tradition that Jesus baptized the disciples on that day. The basis of that tradition is not known, but Talley believes that it was provided by the story in LGM 1, for it depicts, he thinks, Jesus baptizing a disciple "after six days." This conclusion is worked into a hypothesis that the gospel of Mark was read in Alexandria according to a

78. "Liturgical Time," 44. For his documentation and the specifics of his theory, see 43–48.

liturgical cycle, “beginning on January 6”:

the Baptism of Jesus on that day, the beginning of the imitation of Jesus’ fast on the following day with the continued reading of the gospel during the weeks of the fast so as to arrive at chapter 10 by the sixth week, the reading of the secret gospel inserted into chapter 10 in close conjunction with the conferment of baptism in that sixth week, and the celebration of the entry into Jerusalem with chapter 11 of Mark on the following Sunday.⁷⁹

That this text *is* a baptismal lection he deduced from his interpretation that τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια referred in Clement’s time to baptism:

That this initiatory encounter is of a baptismal character is not stated in the text, but the use of this pericope in connection with baptism must have established such an understanding. It is true that the subject of the narrative is but a single individual in the Mar Saba fragment, and that the text does not even say that Jesus baptized him. Yet it was this text that was read, Clement says, “only to those who are being initiated into the great mysteries,” and it is virtually certain that those disciples of Christ were being baptized.⁸⁰

Even if the pericope did not originally depict a baptism, its use in this rite, he suggests, made the matter of what was originally depicted inconsequential. The only difficulty he perceives is the fact that only one person is baptized, but, again, perhaps an existing story was pressed into the service of the baptism ceremony.

This explanation is not adequate. Since Clement did not associate τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια with baptism or cultic things, appeal to him will not show that this is a baptism. There is a superficial similarity between the one disciple being instructed in a linen cloth after six days and Jesus baptizing his disciples on the sixth day of the week,⁸¹ but if this story ever came to be connected with this practice we already have

79. Talley offers no evidence or rationale for his basic presupposition that Mark was read in second-century Alexandria according to a liturgical cycle. He also gives no reason for thinking that in Clement’s day and earlier, baptisms were already being performed on this one particular day.

80. *Origins*, 208–209.

81. *After six days* might, in Markan terms, be synonymous with *on the sixth day* (“after three days” in the passion predictions seems to mean *on the third day*, but then again only a day and a half—less than two days—had gone by). But the phrase might just as readily mean “a week later” (= *on the seventh day*) or “about eight days later” (e.g. Luke 9:28, his parallel to Mark 9:2), if the starting date is the next day, i.e. the first complete one (“after two days” in Mark 14:1 seems to have three days in view; cf.

reason to assume that the connection was not drawn as early as the time of Clement.⁸² As for the lectionary theory, it must also presuppose that τὸ μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον was not, or, at a later point, no longer, restricted to gnostics, for otherwise catechumens would not hear the relevant passages. Of course, if this gospel did later become a work that was read to the whole church in Alexandria, that fact would only make its total disappearance harder to account for.

There is still the question of how a tradition that Jesus baptized his disciples could be represented by a story involving one disciple, who was not even one of the twelve. Some additional information about Clement's understanding of baptism is of relevance here. In a fragment of Clement preserved by John Moschus, a Palestinian monk of the seventh century, Clement interprets 1 Cor. 1:14 to imply that Jesus baptized one person, a disciple. This disciple, however, was Peter:

Yes, truly the apostles were baptized, as Clement the Stromatist relates in the fifth book of the *Hypotyposes*. For in explaining the saying of the Apostle, "I give thanks that I baptized no one of you," he says that Christ is said to have baptized Peter alone, and Peter, Andrew, and Andrew, James and John, and they the rest.⁸³

LXX Hosea 6:2). (In this discussion I am drawing on a useful discussion of the alternatives in *CA*, 163–64 n. 8.) In any case there is no reason why it should mean the sixth day of the week (Friday), for the phrase is used relative to an occurrence in the story (entering the house), not relative to the first day of the week. There is no mention of a sabbath here, though one *might* speculate that the phrase presupposes that the next day was a sabbath; in Mark 9:2, the parallel to this verse, the phrase may have Exodus 24:16 in view, which iterates the importance of the sabbath. But *for Mark* the comparison with the reception of the Law on Sinai which these words produce concerns the sacredness of a divine epiphany (God appearing on a mountain), not the sanctity of the sabbath, which he would question anyway (2:23–28, 3:1–6). But even if the point is that the next day was the sabbath, a meaning of on the seventh day (a week later) makes more sense than does on the sixth day, or Friday.

82. Talley's external evidence for the existence of longer Mark is therefore not as substantial as he thought. A better suggestion of a connection between a tradition cited in another text and LGM 1 is noted by Smith in *CA*, 175. In the *Iohannis Evangelium Apocryphum Arabice* LIII.8 there is reference to "the disciple whom Jesus loved and whom he instructed in his mysteries." That tradition, however, might simply be a logical extension of the development of the "disciple whom Jesus loved" in John, who is the source of that spiritual gospel.

83. *Pratum spirituale (Spiritual Meadow)*, V.176. The translation is from Echle, "The Baptism of the Apostles," 367. The Greek text (Stählin, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, 3:196) reads, Ναὶ ἀληθῶς ἐβαπτίσθησαν, καθὼς Κλήμης ὁ Στρωματεὺς ἐν τῷ πέμπτῳ τόμῳ τῶν Ἑποτυπώσεων μῆμνηται. φησὶ γάρ, τὸ ἀποστολικὸν ῥητὸν ἐξηγούμενος τὸ λέγον "εὐχαριστῶ, ὅτι οὐδένα ὑμῶν ἐβάπτισα"· ὁ Χριστὸς λέγεται Πέτρον μόνον βεβαπτικέναι, Πέτρος δὲ Ἀνδρέαν, Ἀνδρέας Ἰάκωβον, καὶ Ἰωάννην, ἐκεῖνοι δὲ τοὺς λοιπούς.

Clement therefore did not think that Jesus baptized his disciples (plural) on a particular day, as the Coptic tradition has it.

Does the coincidence of one disciple perhaps reflect consideration of the longer gospel and a baptismal interpretation? The opposite conclusion seems more likely. We do not know why Clement thought it important to believe that Jesus baptized one disciple. He may have been confronting the same problem in relation to which this quotation is offered in Moschus's story of Abba Andrew; namely, that no scripture relates that the apostles were baptized in water, and so, according to John 3:5, they are excluded from the kingdom.⁸⁴ Whatever the motive, Clement finds grounds in 1 Cor. 1:14 for a single exception.⁸⁵ Clement's basis for believing Jesus baptized once comes from Paul, and the recipient of baptism is Peter. Had Clement thought that the longer gospel of Mark contained a story in which Jesus *baptized* an unnamed νεανίσκος, whom he had first raised from the dead, he could not very well conclude that Jesus baptized *only* Peter.⁸⁶

84. Note that John 4:1–2 claims that Jesus did not baptize. An English translation of the whole story may be found in Wortley, trans., *The Spiritual Meadow of John Moschos*, 144–46.

85. I do not understand the logic of Clement's reading. Perhaps he reasoned that if Paul is thankful for baptizing "not one of you" (οὐδένα ὑμῶν), his words could be read as evidence for a practice of baptizing only one person. Since the references in 1 Cor. 1:12 to persons claiming to belong to Cephas or to Christ were baptized by them, Christ must have baptized one person. Since Peter is mentioned, he may be that person. In any event, he would also be one of those who baptized only one person, and that person could be Andrew, his brother. Andrew is not mentioned in this context, so is not necessarily involved in this practice of baptizing one person. He could thus have baptized more than one person, etc. On the other hand, perhaps Clement knew a tradition that Jesus did baptize just Peter, and found occasion to introduce it here.

86. I am assuming, of course, that Clement did not interpret this young man to be Peter, as R. E. Brown supposed ("Relation," 478). That possibility is excluded by a variety of details. This figure appears as the dead brother of a woman who apparently lived in either Bethany or Jericho. The young man probably lived in Bethany, since he is buried there. One would therefore think of the young man as a Judean or Perean, depending on which Bethany this is taken to be, but the gospel of John 1:44 gives Bethsaida as the home of Peter and Andrew. Had Peter died, one would expect some comment to that effect rather than what we find in LGM 1:1. Moreover, Mark 14:51–52, 53–54 distinguishes Peter and the unnamed νεανίσκος: though the two *are* associated, they follow separately, one near, the other at a distance; Peter is still following after the other figure has run away naked. An identification of this figure as Peter is thus difficult even for Clement to make.

The basic conclusion that can be drawn at this point is that there is no good reason to think that LGM 1 was ever intended to have a baptismal *Sitz im Leben* or was ever given one in Alexandria, at least through to the end of the second century.⁸⁷ And the letter itself indicates, indirectly but unambiguously, that this amplified edition was reserved for Christians who were already baptized, persons who had advanced significantly toward the goal of gnosis. Catechumens heard the shorter gospel.

II.1.2. *Smith's Libertine Interpretation*

Of the many scholars who have discussed the “secret” gospel initiation story as a rationale for Christian baptism, it appears to me that only Smith, C. C. Richardson, and R. E. Brown have confronted the problem this explanation encounters in Clement’s reference to the exclusion of catechumens. Both Richardson and Smith recognized, further, that “There are passages in Clement where he views baptism as very preliminary to both the lesser and greater mysteries.”⁸⁸ Unperturbed by the con-

87. Little of value can be inferred about the Carpocratian use from the letter. Clement’s comment that the descriptions Theodore had mentioned “both seem to be and are falsifications” may imply that Theodore was himself vague about the specifics, and also that what Clement knew about the actual contents of these Carpocratian additions he was learning from Theodore, even though he already knew the story of the addition of these “utterly shameless lies” (II.8–9) from Alexandrian tradition. That is, his knowledge of the Carpocratian gospel may have been entirely second-hand. The only specific Carpocratian addition that Clement mentioned in the letter is “naked man with naked man”; Theodore apparently mentioned “other things” (III.13) in connection with LGM 1, and “many other things” in connection with LGM 2, but these details are not related to us. We are not told where in LGM 1 *γυμνός γυμνῶ* appeared; it is possible that Theodore was unsure, and so Clement did not know. As to the nature of the Carpocratian additions to LGM 1 and 2, Clement probably considered them to be of a libertine sort, since he referred to Carpocrates’s “blasphemous and carnal doctrine” (II.7). The words “naked man with naked man” could be taken as consonant with a baptismal interpretation (see *CA*, 186, 282), but some sort of sexual rite unrelated to baptism could also be implied. Considering that Theodore is the source of the little knowledge we have of the Carpocratian additions, it is worth mentioning that we have no sure evidence that the two quoted words, *γυμνός γυμνῶ*, were in that gospel, for we do not know whether Theodore’s informant was quoting verbatim or paraphrasing the incident in terms of the significance he or she inferred from the Carpocratian use of this story.

88. Richardson, *Review*, 574. He refers to *Stromateis* V.11.71.1 (his reference erroneously says V.11.7.1); that passage was quoted on p. 162 above. Smith and Richardson apparently discussed this problem together. In *CA* (168; cf. 283) Smith had already acknowledged that “Clement sharply distinguishes ordinary baptism—*τὸ λουτρόν*—as the lowest stage of the Christian initiation, from *τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια*....”

sequence that “the great mysteries” cannot therefore refer to catechumen baptism, each offered alternative cultic referents.⁸⁹

Study of the phrase “the great mysteries” in Clement was a logical point to begin seeking an alternate interpretation, but an awareness of the essentially cognitive nature of Clement’s application of mystery language to aspects of “orthodox” Christianity forced Smith and Richardson to imagine some sort of cultic activity that might at least be compatible with this language. Smith ultimately postulated “a second baptism for the true gnostics, distinct from the rank and file.”⁹⁰

Smith appears to have developed his baptismal interpretation in two phases, the first in response to Richardson’s suggestion of a baptismal lection and the second in response to problems posed by his comprehension of the incongruous information conveyed by the letter. Initially he argued that the quotations from the “secret” gospel were expansions in a passage of Mark (10:13–45) used in Alexandria as a lection for the baptism of catechumens. Within this perspective he attempted to reconcile Clement’s indication that the gospel was for the use τῶν τελειουμένων as opposed to catechumens by arguing that the former category refers to a special sort of catechetical preparation reserved for those ready to undergo the rite of baptism. They are really “those in the process of being baptized” and are not therefore catechumens in the strict

89. Brown did not develop an alternative as fully as Richardson and Smith. His comments are more tentative, and are spread throughout his article “Relation” (477 and n. 24; 478 and n. 30; 480; 483) and his discussion of the νεανίσκος in *The Death of the Messiah*, 1:294–97 (mainly p. 297), 302. Because his alternative is a variant of Smith’s position, I will not discuss it separately. Brown agreed with Smith in inferring “the secret initiatory purpose of the SGM passage”; he added, “...almost every line of SGM resembles canonical Gospel material. The recasting of this material was almost certainly for cultic purposes. ...One may think of an initiation rite into the mystery of the kingdom, i.e., either a (second) baptism, or, more likely, a secret rite phrased in imagery borrowed from baptismal theology: entrance into the kingdom, dying/rising, new man, white [*sic*] garment, paschal setting” (“Relation,” 477 and n. 24). In *The Death of the Messiah*, 1:297, he added “SGM may have served Christians of an esoteric mindset as accompaniment to a ritual that was thought of as more advanced than baptism and eucharist—or, as Clement puts it, initiation into the great mysteries.”

90. *CA*, 283.

sense.⁹¹ This solution supplied him with an explanation for whatever other additions existed in the longer text: they were added for this more advanced catechetical preparation. Those sections were read to those in the process of being perfected, prior to the day of their baptism. Mark 10:13–45, with the additions of LGM 1 and 2, was read during the ceremony itself.

This distinction between two kinds of catechumens is not implausible, and its existence has been argued by, for example, Lawrence Folkemer.⁹² Smith's argument became unnecessary, however, when he attempted to reconcile a baptismal interpretation with the observation that Clement sharply distinguished baptism from the great mysteries and with his own belief that the rite was secret and unseemly. These discrepancies led Smith to assume this was a second baptism of a different sort. Those involved in a *second* baptism would by definition no longer be unbaptized catechumens. He had little reason to argue in the commentary, therefore, that "those being perfected" are not already baptized Christians but rather "those in the process of being baptized" or a higher grade of catechumens who would no longer be referred to by that term; his prior view had forced him to acknowledge but discount evidence to the contrary in *Paedagogus* I.6.26.1, where being made perfect is listed as one of "the immediate consequences of baptism: βαπτιζόμενοι φωτιζόμεθα, φωτιζόμενοι υιοποιούμεθα, υιοποιούμενοι τελειούμεθα, τελειούμενοι ἀπαθανατιζόμεθα."⁹³

What this second initiation is supposed to have involved is not entirely clear.

Smith had inferred from the letter that Mark's reticence about conveying the secret

91. CA, 33.

92. "A Study of the Catechumenate," 244–301. Folkemer mixes evidence from different places and periods in order to produce a general picture that is not very helpful for our purposes. The problem with assenting to Smith's suggestion, again, is the need to postulate something unknown when Clement's other writings supply an adequate meaning.

93. Smith, CA, 33. "Being baptized, we are illuminated; illuminated, we become sons; being made sons, we are made perfect; being made perfect, we are made immortal." Smith's idea of a second, gnostic baptism appears to have developed very shortly after receiving Richardson's letter, for "gnostic baptism" is mentioned in a letter he wrote to Nock a month later (SG, 66).

material even in a secret gospel was a reflection on the nature of the ritual involved and, therefore, that the rite was something unseemly. In a few places Smith suggested that the second baptism was derived from, and to a large extent preserved, the baptismal practice he ascribed to the historical Jesus, involving a spiritual ascent into the heavens and the resultant libertine conviction of freedom from the law.⁹⁴

The supposition of a second, gnostic baptism into a libertine consciousness led in turn to the supposition of two distinct communities in Clement's church: a "well-to-do" esoterically-inclined congregation which became an "inner circle"⁹⁵ and the larger community of lesser educated, more orthodox Christians. But the tolerance of secret libertine rites in the orthodox Alexandrian church itself required an explanation; Smith offered two theories to account for this:

Such a practice might have resulted from the coming together—perhaps under the pressure of persecution—of congregations originally distinct. A more hellenized congregation, holding to a philosophical interpretation of the religion and familiar with the practices of the mysteries, might have tried to maintain its individuality as an *ecclesiola in ecclesia* and have admitted candidates from the larger church only after a special course of training, and administration of its peculiarly significant sacraments.⁹⁶ Another possibility is that we have here a later explanation of the way many Christian churches first quarantined and then eliminated the libertine tradition. The dangerous secrets of realizable eschatology—of the immediate accessibility of the kingdom and the liberty of those who entered it—were limited to a few, shut away from the rest by special requirements, and at last quietly forgotten.⁹⁷

What are we to make of this reconstruction? Smith seems to have been imagining something comparable to, though less extreme than, the alleged Carpocratian use of the

94. *CA*, 254: "...the developments which Jesus had added to the Baptist's baptism fell into disuse or were preserved as 'great mysteries' for more advanced candidates." Presumably this comment alludes to the great mysteries in the *Letter to Theodore* II.2, and so would imply libertinism in that baptism as well. Cf. *CA*, 283, 284.

95. As Smith refers to them in *SG*, 66 and *CA*, 94.

96. In this he is following Richardson's suggestions, as he notes in *SG*, 65–66, where he adds, "These latter groups accepted the beliefs and rites of the simple as permissible and sufficient for a sort of salvation, but held to their own theories privately as the explanation of the higher truth and kept their own rites—baptism and eucharist—as higher mysteries into which properly prepared Christians might be initiated."

97. *CA*, 283.

text. How can we conceive of such a thing in view of Clement's disdain for libertinism, especially in view of the fact that he condemns the Carpocratians in the *Letter to Theodore* for their use of the gospel? Are we being asked to imagine that during the Paschal Vigil⁹⁸ an inner circle went off somewhere by itself to perform their secret, libertine initiation rituals while the rank and file attended the orthodox service unaware of this fundamental contradiction in the faith of the church?

Smith's postulate of a libertine clique with special, hidden rites that were archaic enough to ensure Clement's grudging approval was necessary in order to reconcile a libertine, cultic interpretation of the gospel passage with Clement's acceptance of the longer gospel.⁹⁹ But the notion that Clement had a negative attitude toward the great mysteries and those who would participate in them sets Clement on his head. Clement's discussions of those who are being perfected and of participation in the great mysteries relate to his general conception of gnosis as the further perfection of faith and ultimate goal of any Christian: "both bond and free must equally philosophize, whether male or female" (*Stromateis* IV.1.1.1-2). Considering that the letter firmly places the longer gospel within the realm of "orthodox" gnostic instruction and that such instruction inculcates a prudish ethic intended to rarefy all human passion to a state of ἀπάθεια and ὁμοίωσις θεῷ, Smith's hypothesis can only appear extraneous and incredible.

II.1.3. Richardson's Cultic Alternative to Baptism

Richardson rightly criticized Smith's solution for various incompatibilities with what we know of Clement. Notably, he pointed out that

...the *disciplina arcani* regarding baptism (first known in Tertullian, *Apol.* 7) really does

98. Recall Talley's evidence against this day as the time for baptism in Alexandria.

99. Cf. CA, 36-37, 81, where Smith presents Clement as reluctantly esoteric.

not apply to Clement. For the latter, secrets are gnostic secrets. Again, the highest form of mystery initiation (*epopteuseis*) can be applied to the gnostic (*Quis dives salvetur?* 36–37).... The contrast between *katêchoumenoi* and *teleioumenoi* in the letter would thus...not [be] between catechumens and those being baptized, but *simpliciores* (as [in] *Strom.* [VI.15.124.1]) and the true gnostics.¹⁰⁰

After noting such problems, Richardson went on to pursue what he believed were “definite hints of a secret initiation and a secret doctrine” in “a passage on the advanced gnostic.” This led him to explore Clement’s words on “the mysteries of love” for hints of a possible mystery initiation.¹⁰¹ But the cultic alternative Richardson invented proved even more extreme. In order to find external (situation in life) correspondents for each detail related in the passages cited in the letter, he turned to gnosticism and the mystery religions, and concluded that “the raising of the young man is a *mors voluntaria* followed by a sacred kiss in the nude, a form of the ‘bridal chamber’ (cf. *Gospel of Philip*).” “The sacred kiss in the nude seals the kingdom’s mystery of love.” The linen cloth is interpreted in terms of the mythology of “a return to Paradise.” “It is a loincloth to hide the genitals.” He added that the mention of the three women perhaps “reflects an Encratite group which *did* reject women....”¹⁰²

His extraordinary interpretation deserves to be quoted at length, for it illustrates how difficult it is to find a consistent cultic reference for LGM 1 once the baptismal

100. Review, 574–75. I am quoting selectively from the criticisms with which I agree. In *CA*, Smith noted briefly that Richardson did not accept his compromise solution of a second baptism, saying “he would explain τὸ λουτρόν as baptism administered alone and τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια as the entire paschal ceremony, including baptism.” In the 1974 review quoted from above, however, Richardson abandoned the baptismal interpretation altogether. To my knowledge Smith never mentioned in his other writings on the topic of longer Mark that Richardson completely abandoned his original “possible thesis” (as Richardson called it; *SG*, 64) or had elaborated his reasons for not being convinced by Smith’s adaptation of his original suggestion. He continued to speak of “Richardson’s discovery” (e.g. Smith, “Merkel,” 136 n. 13). On the other hand, Richardson’s alternative was not exactly compelling.

101. Review, 574–75. The passage he has in mind seems to be *Quis dives salvetur?* 36–37.

102. Review, 575. On the last point about the rejection of the women, cf. Brown, “Relation,” 480.

Sitz im Leben is abandoned.¹⁰³ As a clincher for his argument, Richardson wrote,

One curious point in favor of the raising of the young man as a *mors voluntaria* is that the shriek (*megalē phōnē*) comes from the tomb, whereas in John it comes from Jesus. The phrase generally signifies a prophetic-magical utterance.... But here it echoes the shriek of Legion among the tombs (Mk 5:7) and suggests the terror of an actual *mors voluntaria*. Who, for instance, being initiated in the cult of Isis, would not scream as he was led into the dark room to meet the terrible Osiris, god of the dead, and behold his penis which the industrious and loving Isis had failed to recover?¹⁰⁴

Richardson's explanation of the loud cry from the tomb as pointing to a rite of simulated death and rebirth is intriguing, but makes for a rather implausible explanation for what is happening to the young man in LGM 1.¹⁰⁵ There is no basis in our text for supposing either that the oddly timed shriek represents an initiate being frightened into an experience of death (he *is* dead—that is why he was *really* buried) or that the part of the story which *does* have an initiatory character, LGM 1b, involved a kiss or anything homosexual.¹⁰⁶ The text only says that the young man loved Jesus (LGM 1:8), as in Mark 10:21, and that Jesus loved him (LGM 2:1).¹⁰⁷ Nor is anything said about

103. Cf. Mellon's secret sobriety fellowship theory, cited in n. 108 below. To his credit, Mellon did not offer a cultic explanation, and his proposition has greater internal consistency than Richardson's melange, but, unlike the various other alternatives, is *entirely* arbitrary, in addition to being mainly anachronistic.

104. Richardson, Review, 576.

105. The little evidence we have about these voluntary deaths suggest that death was simulated by evoking the initiate's fear of dying; this was accomplished through a ritual enactment of death, which may have included a simulated burial or descent into the underworld. For some discussion, see Wedderburn, *Baptism and Resurrection*, 371–77, 300–10; and Morton Smith, "Transformation by Burial," esp. 107–12.

106. By referring to Osiris's penis, Richardson seems to be imagining that the young man is being exposed to a representation of some element of a mystery myth. But what mystery-like myth would be involved in a hypothetical Christian ritual of a voluntary death? It would probably be based on Jesus' passion—in which case, what would the frightening element be? A centurion's spear? A mock crucifixion?

107. The young man's love leads him to want to "be with" Jesus, which, in a Markan context, means to become a disciple (Mark 3:14, 5:18). We are not yet involved in mystery or initiation. The bridal chamber is depicted as the climatic initiation in the gospel of Philip (e.g. 67:27–30; 69:11–37), which would agree with LGM 1b if we could accept that LGM 1a is actually initiatory. However, in the gospel of Philip the earlier rites are "baptism and a chrism and a eucharist and a redemption," not some form of a voluntary death.

anyone being nude—the linen cloth is only said to come off at Mark 14:52. Γυμνός γυμνῶ is an element pertaining to the Carpocratian version.

And what about the story line? How does this haphazard melange of gnostic, Encratite, and Isis-cult parallels make sense in terms of the unfolding of a story? Literally the young man is in a tomb, not an initiation chamber; he is there because he is dead, not because he is voluntarily undergoing a rite of transformation. There is nothing about Jesus' walk to the garden that could put the fear of death in a person—even one who is living. Rather, as Mark 1:23–24 and 5:6–7 suggest, Jesus' approach evokes such cries from representatives *of death itself*, particularly demons, because Jesus has come to plunder Satan's house (i.e. liberate persons possessed by demons; 3:27). Richardson's interpretation has abandoned the story line in favour of disparate and abstruse allegorical connections, which essentially obscure the fact that LGM 1a is a typical resurrection story.¹⁰⁸

108. At least one other scholar has been impressed by Richardson's alternative. Walter Wink states in "Jesus as Magician," 5, that he finds Richardson's suggestion of a *mors voluntaria* "more appealing" as an explanation of the loud voice. This might be the best place to introduce John C. Mellon's alcoholic recovery meeting explanation, which I mention for the sake of completeness. In his book *Mark as Recovery Story*, Mellon presents a theory that Mark's story is the product of an ancient sobriety fellowship; on pp. 233–35 he applies his "recovery criticism" to longer Mark, claiming in passing that this text is the earlier form of the canonical gospel. Together with my own commentary and explanations in brackets, this is his interpretation: "Mark's original manuscript (Secret Mark) contained this fuller version of the evangelist's autobiographical account [i.e. the author is the young man] not of a baptism but of his entrance into Jesus' recovery fellowship on the night of the Jerusalem seder [wrong night—this incident occurs more than a week before the Passover]. ...In the passage, death symbolizes the walking death of addiction, the tomb its encrypting prison cell. The house may be the same house mentioned in Acts 12:12 [most scholars assume that house is in Jerusalem, not Bethany] as belonging to Mary, the mother of John surnamed Mark. The teaching of 'the mystery of the rule of God' would have occurred in meetings of Jesus' fellowship that, like recovery meetings today, generally took place in the evening or at night, because it is then that the newly sober are most vulnerable to drink. The linen cloth and naked body could symbolize the youth's completion of a process similar to the inventory and admission of wrongs featured in today's recovery programs, a process involving divestiture of all signs of wealth and station and a stripping of pride and ego as precursor to membership in the egalitarian Markôs [a cryptic transliteration of a Hebrew term meaning master of the 'cup,' i.e. of alcohol addiction; p. 26] fellowship. The mystery of the rule of God would have been the Twelve, the semisecret sobriety principles formulated by Jesus (Mk 3.14–15 and 4.10–11) [i.e. not the twelve disciples but 'the twelve precepts formulated by Jesus and constitutive of their alcoholism program,' which 'prefigured the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous'; p. 195]. Finally, what some see as homoeroticism is language reflecting the youth's desire for sobriety. ...Mark excised them [these erotic phrases?] when, probably to his surprise, he found that nonalcoholic outsiders were reading them as homoeroticism."

II.2. *The Cultic Interpretation and the Letter*

The letter tells us a great deal about how this gospel was used in Alexandria, provided we examine Clement's discussions elsewhere of baptism, the (small and great) mysteries, perfection, gnosis, and so on. As was demonstrated in chapter 3, the orthodox Alexandrian mysteries are theological teachings—the deeper, esoteric truths of that community's Christian philosophy. A person was symbolically initiated into them through education in the unwritten gnostic tradition, which involved, among other trainings, practice in “perceiving” the hidden, allegorical meanings of the scriptures. In Clement's writings, initiation into these mysteries is consistently depicted as intellectual, philosophical, experiential, ethical, and religious. On a few occasions actual cultic associations *might* also appear, but through the entirety of Clement's application of mystery language to Christian training, the conception of mystery as hidden *knowledge* (gnosis) about God, the scriptures, and the true faith is presupposed. This framework for comprehending the mysteries is the one for which we have good evidence, and the totality of Clement's comments about the use of the longer text make sense within this framework. The longer text was a *μυστικὸν εὐαγγέλιον*, a gospel especially useful for revealing the deeper truths in scripture. Considering the attention given to this function in the letter, it is surprising that the element of gnostic instruction by exegesis is absent in the interpretations of Smith, Richardson, and Brown.¹⁰⁹

109. Of the three, Brown's suggestions are the most plausible, though they still completely overlook the aspect of deeper comprehension of scripture. He mentions the idea of “a (second) baptism” but preferred the idea of “a secret rite phrased in imagery borrowed from baptismal theology: entrance into the kingdom, dying/rising, new man, white garment, paschal setting” (“Relation,” 477 and n. 24). While it is always *conceivable* that some such imagery accompanied readings of this gospel, the suggestion is unnecessary (for an Alexandrian reading of a more spiritual gospel, it treats LGM 1b too literally); Clement's proclivity to use ritual and initiation language symbolically makes it difficult to find a solid basis in his writings for proposing the existence of rites or ceremonies that go beyond the conventional ones. In any case Brown's complete concentration on “cultic” imagery and inference of such a setting misses the basic point that reading the gospel involved interpretation (I.25) and had increase in gnosis as its goal (I.20–21). In a few sentences dispersed throughout *CA* Smith did allude to the element of instruction through interpretation (see esp. p. 137); but even though he imagined a gnostic baptism, he

If the conception of the origin of LGM 1 as a form-critical issue is abandoned, there no longer is any reason to read the letter's initiation imagery literally or to propose new hypotheses that take us beyond, and away from, what we already know about Clement and the Alexandrian church. It becomes apparent that Clement's descriptions of the use of the longer text present the same picture of deeper exposition of scripture presented in the undisputed works. The longer text was a work reserved for those Christians who had demonstrated their worthiness to receive the gnostic teachings and were considered sufficiently mature to profit from exposition of a more spiritual gospel. However, before we are in a position to see how LGM 1b makes sense within this perspective, it is necessary to say something about the presuppositions which have led scholars to seek a cultic *Sitz im Leben* behind the quoted material.

II.3. *A Too Literalistic Form Criticism?*

For most scholars who have studied LGM 1b, the validity of the form-critical presupposition that the episode represents an actual community ritual has seemed self-evident. It has therefore not seemed necessary to begin with the "external" evidence in the letter and in Clement's other writings, along with the existing scholarship pertaining

gave no place to the cognitive aspect of gnosis in his interpretation of the use of the text, which is conceived strictly in a cultic framework based on magic and the mystery religions. Smith's understanding of the use of this text makes no reference to Clement's "true" (Christian) gnosis. That Smith wanted to see everything in a non-cognitive way is apparent in his almost belligerent response to Fuller's passing reference to the text's congruence with "the gnosis-mystery proclivities of [the Alexandrian] church as evidenced in his [Clement's] own writings" (*LM*, 9 n. 17): "The talk about gnosis...is wholly unjustified. There is nothing specifically gnostic either in the longer text or [NB] in the explanation I have proposed. To start talking of 'gnosticism' whenever one encounters secrecy, magic, initiatory practices, or libertinism, is a symptom of the *religionsgeschichtliche* muddle current in New Testament criticism" (*LM*, 14). Smith wished to dismiss Fuller's insight into the relevance of Clement's gnosis simply by (correctly) pointing out that the text itself need not belong to a late point on the trajectory Fuller drew from eschatology through mystery to Alexandrian gnosticism. To Fuller, LGM 1b is "an account of an instruction in a gnostic-like revelation, followed by a nocturnal initiation...evidently meant to serve as a pattern for the baptismal rite at Easter in Alexandria."

to this evidence. Two scholars who did consider this evidence, however, needed to postulate practices not otherwise attested in the “orthodox” Alexandrian church (e.g. a second baptism) and treat Clement’s mystery-religion terminology too literally. When this problem was addressed by Richardson, he was unable to produce an alternate interpretation that could do justice to the literal level of LGM 1b. Instead, he drew together discrete ritualistic elements from the mystery religions into an uncoordinated melange of referents. A more internally-consistent interpretation was offered by Mellon, whose anachronistic “sobriety society” reading of LGM 1b was based on gratuitously arbitrary equations. What has gone wrong?

Evident especially in Richardson’s strained explanation is a compulsion to identify, if not a single ritual, then one conglomerate of practices that can best account for all the strange details of LGM 1 and 2. The common notion that gospel materials were shaped within particular *Sitz im Leben* inclines scholars to distinguish, in as transparent a way as possible, whatever community practice might be served by a particular pericope. Certainly the story in LGM 1b would constitute excellent support for this form-critical presupposition, *should that community practice ever be figured out*. For most commentators so far, the conviction that we should be looking for the right rite is self-evident. Schenke’s remarks on this matter may be taken as typical:

How may it be explained that in Alexandria the Secret Gospel gained such great importance and functioned as a ritual text used in the initiation of the Perfect [*sic*]? Indeed, the rite connected with the Secret Gospel of Mark is so strange that many scholars refuse to acknowledge it as real. But provided that the letter of Clement is genuine and, accordingly, that this rite was really practiced in Alexandria, then the rite must have been something that was never *introduced* to that place but rather was simply there.¹¹⁰

110. “Mystery,” 75. Cf. his comments in “Function and Background,” 121: “The context of the resurrected youth in the Secret Gospel of Mark is cultic—a sacrament is involved, probably the baptism and higher initiation of the youth. The resurrected youth is thus a symbolic portrayal of the validity of a secret initiation, since it projects the initiation back into the life of Christ.” (Again, I would ask, why is *baptism* a *secret* initiation? And what sort of higher initiation follows baptism but precedes the eucharist?)

Scholars have shared the basic assumption that whatever LGM 1 referred to would have been patently obvious to those ancient Alexandrians acquainted with the actual practice depicted; if we only knew the rite ourselves, every detail that seems strange to us now would fall into place. It needs to be asked whether the truth of that assumption is really self-evident.

II.3.1. *The Problem of LGM 2*

The fact that there is no obvious communal correlate to the non-acceptance of three women by Jesus in LGM 2 has done nothing to modify this expectation, though indeed it is hard to picture some real-world applicability that could account for why the purported tradition that stands behind those two sentences was passed on long enough to be written down. The questions Smith asked of the similarly brief and enigmatic “story” in Mark 14:51–52 may be repeated with respect to LGM 2. “What purpose of what group of which early church led to its invention? And why did Mark include it?”¹¹¹ LGM 2 is inexplicable when viewed as a unit of tradition that was transmitted orally for a generation or more because it had some illustrative value. Like 14:51–52, it does not answer any questions; it only creates them. Nor does it make sense to imagine that it is an historically factual remnant of a recollection, preserved and recorded in the “more spiritual” gospel (of all places!) simply because it happened. So many really important details about Jesus were completely lost, but *this* one, the bare fact that he did not receive three women one day in Jericho, was remembered. Why? Because it was peculiar? Smith himself, as we would expect, resorted to the theory of partially suppressed historical reminiscence to explain both stories.¹¹² Among scholars who have

111. *LM*, 14.

112. Smith, *CA*, 121–22, 188–92; *SG*, 69–70; idem, “Merkel,” 143.

tried to account for LGM 2, appeal to a bowdlerized tradition has been the most common solution;¹¹³ most scholars conveniently ignore it.¹¹⁴ But theories of suppression simply displace the problem of didactic irrelevance with the more awkward question of why a tradition deprived of any function was ever put into a gospel, especially when the purpose behind redrafting it as a vague and enigmatically distorted recollection was

113. E.g. Fuller, *LM*, 10 (he accepted Smith's claim that LGM 2 "has no clear form," but did not commit to Smith's position); Wink, "Jesus as Magician," 7; Koester, "History and Development," 42; Crossan, *Four Other Gospels*, 109–10; Cameron, *Other Gospels*, 68. Scholars who suggest that LGM 2 has been stripped of its original contents normally suggest that a dialogue between Jesus and Salome originally stood at this point in the longer text, but that Clement or someone before him removed it, supplying the gloss "and he did not receive them." Something of the original tradition is sometimes thought to exist in the "many other things" found in the Carpocratian version at this point (III.17). As support it is noted that Salome is on friendly terms with Jesus in some texts that came to be designated as apocryphal (e.g. gospel of Thomas 61; see *CA*, 189–92). However, Clement himself quoted dialogues between Jesus and Salome from the gospel of the Egyptians (*Stromateis* III.9.63.1–66.3). He took these discourses to be historically reliable, and supplied edifying interpretations in line with his own views. Indeed, he complained that his ascetic opponents ignored parts of one such discourse (66.1)! W. Munro argued that the text is a gloss suppressing an historical recollection of positive female influence on Jesus, but considered that the author himself suppressed the tradition, replacing it with a comment that put women in their place ("Women Disciples," 54–61). Other scholars accept the text as a complete tradition. Levin inferred that the point was "to discountenance any tradition of Jesus being on good terms with certain women" ("Early History," 4287). As I indicated, Clement seemed to have no problem with Salome, but Levin's point is also hard to argue with respect to the young man's sister and mother, who are given no names to identify them (cf. Bauckham, "Salome," 271–72). The sister is presented in a positive light in LGM 1a. In a similar vein, C. C. Richardson argued that LGM 2 reflects "an Encratite group which *did* reject women" (Review, 575; cf. Brown, "Relation," 480). R. M. Grant (Review, 61) wondered if it is because they had not been initiated into the mysteries (pl. *sic*). But why would Jesus start rejecting people because he has not initiated them? In the story he accepts practically everyone who comes to him. D. Schmidt (*LM*, 42–43) suggested that LGM 2 exists to create connections between the resurrected young man in longer Mark and Lazarus in John by reproducing certain relationships presumed to have existed between Lazarus and Mary Magdalene (his sister) and Jesus' mother; this possibility would require an explanation for why the man and his sister are not just named Lazarus and Mary. And M. Meyer ("Youth," 147; cf. 145) seemed to suggest that the theme of rejection in LGM 2 exists as a reflection of the women's failure to proclaim the resurrection when challenged by the young man at the tomb. His suggestion violates narrative logic. One of the better explanations for LGM 2 is offered by Bauckham ("Salome," 272–73), who suggests that its purpose simply is to justify the insertion of LGM 1 by referring to it within a statement that could appear to be an earlier form of 10:46. That is, if LGM 2 seems more original, then LGM 1 must be authentic too. This explanation, though, treats the contents of LGM 2 as irrelevant, including the parallels he notes with 15:40, 16:1.

114. The frequent mistakes one finds in references to LGM 2 are symptomatic of the little attention it gets. Koester rarely mentions it, and on one occasion refers to "the remnant of a report of an encounter in Jericho, that is, the meeting with the youth [*sic*] and his mother Salome [*sic*]...." Cf. Crossan's (one mistaken) reference to "the post-baptismal encounter between Jesus and the resurrected youth at Jericho" (*Four Other Gospels*, 119) and H. C. Kee's strange comment about "an account of the disapproval of Jesus by the boy's mother and a friend of hers. The implication of the latter tale is that they resented the homosexual relations Jesus was having with his male associates" (*What Can We Know About Jesus?*, 36).

to *detract* attention from it. This dilemma is not resolved by assuming that the passage was doctored only after it was incorporated into the text, for, as always, the simplest solution is to remove the offending tradition completely so that nothing remains to draw attention to its suppression.

One answer to the question of why LGM 2 is in the longer gospel becomes plain once we set aside theories of suppressed traditions and consider how LGM 2 affects its context. Whatever its *meaning*, it has a literary function with respect to LGM 1: it creates an intercalation. As we will see in chapter 5, comparison of the first sentence of LGM 2 with the opening of LGM 1 reveals an extensive parallelism. Both begin with *καί* + a present tense indicative of *ἔρχομαι* + *εἰς* + a city name + another *καί* + an imperfect of *εἶμι* combined with *ἐκεῖ* (“there was there”), and then mention the same woman, identify her with respect to her brother, and use the Semitism of a redundant possessive in relation to the brother—in all, nine points of contact in sequence. The reference to the three women in LGM 2 was shaped in such a way that it calls to mind the preceding resurrection story, thereby bracketing the intervening story of the question of James and John. A point of comparison is the way Mark recalls Jesus’ cursing of the fig tree in 11:20–21 after relating the clearing of the temple. The resurrection story is recollected long enough to indicate to the reader that the dialogue involving James and John and the story of the resurrected man are connected, perhaps mutually interpretive. The use of this standard and distinctive Markan literary technique indicates that the sequential repetition of the structure of the opening of LGM 1 in the words of LGM 2:1a is a “redactional” construct; the *structure* of 2:1a was fashioned by the author of the longer gospel. The remaining words of LGM 2:1—“and his mother and Salome”—likewise do not derive their *form* from some “oral text” passed on in a community. Whether there is an element of factual knowledge about persons (not events) to the content is another matter; in conjunction with the “editorial”

mention of the young man's sister, what the words "and his mother and Salome" *do in the story* is create a group of three women which anticipates the groups of three women mentioned in connection with Jesus' crucifixion (15:40) and resurrection (16:1). The literary implications of this device will be discussed later (e.g. that LGM 1 and 2 create a very strong *inclusio* with the empty tomb story, an interpretive bracket around the passion narrative). The point I am making now is that LGM 2:1 is a literary construct which was unlikely to have "existed" independently of the textual context of the longer gospel. Its form was not shaped by a history of transmission and community use, and its contents have no relevance apart from the present literary context. The remark in LGM 2:2 that Jesus did not receive them, on the other hand, is not so readily accounted for even from a literary vantage. But its intimate association with the "editorially" shaped verse that precedes it should cause us to pause before falling back on the notion of preservation of an oral tradition.

II.3.2. *Narrative Gaps in LGM 1 and 2*

If LGM 2 cannot be understood from the vantage of traditional form-critical analysis but has much relevance from the vantage of the fictive rhetoric or discourse of the longer text, then perhaps a more literary-oriented perspective could help us make more sense of LGM 1. In keeping with other instances of intercalation in Mark/longer Mark, its mode of reference may be more intratextual than has thus far been presumed. Our first clue that the broader narrative may hold the key to what is occurring in this scene comes from the way we ourselves have been reading it. For as long as modern readers have been considering the "secret" gospel excerpts they have been doing one thing fairly compulsively: searching for a referent that can make sense of all the details of LGM 1b. Smith's own search is eloquently detailed in *SG*. He was driven to determine what the secret was, and spent years thinking about it, turning the field of

Christian origins on its head in order to resolve the enigma. During those same years, Cyril C. Richardson thought about the matter, too, and in the end resorted to a solution just as improbable as Smith's. Koester mulled over the text for twenty years before coming to a solution—but the point is clear.¹¹⁵ People are fascinated by the riddle of LGM 1b. These four sentences have the same effect on their readers that Kermode documented with respect to Mark 14:51–52 and the references to the Man in the Macintosh in Joyce's *Ulysses*. To use Kermode's language, LGM 1b and 2 produce fractures in the surface of the narrative; their "narrative elements" are difficult to construe "as part of a larger organization," so the human penchant "to prefer fulfillment to disappointment, the closed to the open" has impelled readers to find an explanation.¹¹⁶

The strength of this desire is related to the degree of uncertainty encountered by the reader of this story. The resurrection and initiation narratives are packed with unexplained details that goad the reader to wonder what is going on. What produced the loud voice from the tomb? Why does it occur before the resurrection? (Is the young man not really dead?) What happened to the disciples after Jesus left them in the garden? Why does Jesus wait six days? What did he command the young man? Did Jesus' instruction or instructions concern the period of those six days or just the ensuing evening? What is the significance of the linen cloth and the manner in which it is put on (thrown about) the young man's body? Why is this meeting private? Why at night? What exactly is the setting? (Are they still in the house? Did they ever leave it?) What is the mystery of the kingdom of God? Why is it taught to *this* anonymous young man? Why indeed are none of the new characters introduced in this story named,

115. "Seminar Dialogue with Helmut Koester," 60, 61. He remarks that had pondered the text since Smith reported it in 1960.

116. Kermode, *Genesis*, 64.

except Salome, who, though named, is even more obscure than the others?¹¹⁷ And why does Jesus leave at night without an actual ritual being depicted? When we come to consider LGM 2 we wonder why the three women are in Jericho, why they approached Jesus (assuming they initiated the encounter—if “encounter” is the right word), and, most peculiar, why he did not receive them (and where, specifically, and in what sense).

Despite receiving a description of what happened, we must contend with numerous gaps or blanks that encumber our understanding of what this all means. We are forced to fill in all the missing connections through a dialectical process of considering the details, constructing tentative hypotheses of what in essence is going on in the story, and then evaluating how well our hypotheses can account for all the details we do know; each failure to make sense of all the details in the whole conglomerate requires us to try again with a new theory.¹¹⁸ The fact that we do this, and often keep doing this until we are satisfied with an explanation, might lead one to suppose that the author was either especially careless or was writing for such a specific audience that he did not need to bother spelling out what everyone knew. These are in fact the usual assumptions. But we may also ask whether our inability to comprehend a sequence of details which of themselves are quite intelligible might not be the *intended effect* of the way the author chose to narrate this passage. This effect is the response we have come to

117. That is, unless she was introduced earlier in the longer text. We do not know. Salome is more obscure than the other characters because, though we know the familial relationships of the sister, mother, and young man, we are told nothing about Salome except her name.

118. Cf. Bassler's discussion of Iser's theory, in "Parable of the Loaves," 160: "At all these points ('gaps') the text acquires a degree of indeterminacy, and tension or disorientation arises within the reader. This reader, engaged in a constant search for consistency in the text, is thus forced to *create* consistency and resolve the tension by supplying the missing links. In doing so, however, the reader is drawn into the text as he or she creatively participates in the production of meaning: 'We look forward, we look back, we decide, we change our decisions, we form expectations, we are shocked by their non-fulfillment, we question, we muse, we accept, we reject.' Through this dynamic response to the text, the reader fills in the textual blanks and works out a consistent pattern." (Bassler is citing Iser, *The Implied Reader*, 288.)

associate with a distinctly Markan literary technique:

The experience of reading Mark's Gospel is regularly the experience of being enticed to fill in the gaps and places of indeterminacy that the narrative presents to us. ...Like lace, which is characterized as much by its open spaces as by the tangible threads that outline them, Mark's fabric is so full of gaps that we could look almost anywhere for salient examples.¹¹⁹

Lacuna of different sorts exist in all narrative. Yet the kind of gaps we find in LGM 1 and 2 are Markan in a specific sense that can be contrasted with types more typically encountered. Most gaps in narrative are easily filled by readers through logical inference and a preconscious decoding of generic conventions—that is, through the reader's acquired literary competence. If, for example, Jesus is in a house at one moment then teaching by the sea the next, the reader knows to infer that Jesus left the house and travelled to the sea (Mark 4:1). This constant process of traversing narrative gaps is vital to following the “stream” of the story; without it the individual happenings can still be imagined, but the sequence of events is unintelligible as a narrative.¹²⁰ There are also gaps in information which cannot readily be filled, but which are, nonetheless, inconsequential. Thomas Shepherd offers the example of Peter's entrance into the courtyard of the high priest (Mark 14:54). We do not learn how he managed to do this without drawing attention to himself, but evidently that knowledge is not relevant.¹²¹ Such “gaps” are called “blanks” by Meir Sternberg, in order to distinguish

119. Fowler, *Reader*, 135, 136. Only occasionally does the canonical text reach the level of uncertainty produced by the extant longer gospel insertions. The transfiguration episode comes close, as does the sequence of events in the prologue and, of course, the description of the young man in Gethsemane. Fowler describes this feature of Markan style with special reference to the chain of events in the prologue (pp. 14–24). Bassler (“Parable of the Loaves”) discusses the use of gaps in Mark 6–8, esp. 8:14–21. George Aichele demonstrates that Mark requires his reader to decide whether Jesus really raised Jairus's daughter or merely knew that she was only sleeping (*Jesus Framed*, 64–71). Fowler, Aichele, and Kermode (in *Genesis*) like to point out how Matthew and Luke often rephrased indefinite Markan material using words that do not permit alternate readings (see, e.g., Fowler, *Reader*, 15–17, 136–37; idem, “Figuring,” 62–63).

120. See the discussion in Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 27–31.

121. Shepherd, *Definition*, 80–81. He offers a very useful discussion of gaps on pp. 79–83.

them from a different type of gap prominent in the Hebrew scriptures: gaps of some consequence to a reader's understanding of the narrative.¹²² Gaps of that sort may arise, for example, when the ambiguity of a narrative blank could indirectly imply the violation of some norm or expectation generated by the narrative. A gap like this may function to draw the reader's attention to the issue posed by the indeterminacy.¹²³ What is most distinctive about the gaps produced through Mark's composition, however, is that often the very sense of why details are being related—the intelligibility of the plot—hinges upon filling in gaps that logic and generic conventions are not sufficient to decide. Filling in the gaps then requires recourse to a hypothesis about the significance of what is going on. Sternberg describes the effect on the reader so:

The sequence devised for the reader...becomes discontinuous—with causal as well as merely temporal non sequiturs, since the gappy events follow rather than follow from each other—and gap-filling consists exactly in restoring the continuity that the narrator broke. For all our attempts at restoration, however, the breaches remain ambiguous—and hypotheses multiple—as long as the narrator has not authoritatively closed them. The storyteller's withholding of information opens gaps, gaps produce discontinuity, and discontinuity breeds ambiguity.¹²⁴

The story of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem may be cited as an example of this effect. In Mark, Jesus came to Jerusalem in a procession filled with messianic symbolism; then, we are told, "entered Jerusalem, and went into the temple; and when he had looked round at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve" (11:11). Hearing this, the reader immediately loses a sense of what is going

122. Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 236–37. He also distinguishes between temporary and permanent gaps. Temporary gaps are created through a temporal dislocation in a narrative: relevant information is told out of sequence with respect to how the event would have "actually" unfolded (i.e. story time), but its introduction at a different point allows for authoritative resolution. Permanent gaps are created not by dislocations but by fragmentary narration, narration that never discloses certain relevant information and thereby spawns ambiguity.

123. See Shepherd, *Definition*, 82. Jesus' non-acceptance of the three women is of this type, for the absence of an explanation for this unusual action is the very thing that raises the question of the morality of this action; the resultant "question mark" concerning a violation of the norm of Jesus' moral rectitude causes the reader to pay particular attention to this otherwise unmemorable incident.

124. *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 235–36.

on—loses the plot; the thread of the story-line combined with our generic expectations lead us to expect at this point an occurrence of significance to the story line. We have a gap that our preconceptions are not adequate to fill, and in consequence we do not know why Jesus went in the temple and then left the city. We have to hypothesize about what this seemingly anticlimactic perusal represents.¹²⁵

The gaps in LGM 1b and LGM 2 are of this sort. They forestall immediate comprehension of what is transpiring between both Jesus and the young man and Jesus and the women in Jericho. When scholars and other real readers have sought meanings that can resolve all the ambiguous details, they have been responding to a Markan literary device employed by the author of the longer gospel. Quite naturally, the hypotheses scholars have constructed have reflected their individual conceptions about the nature of the longer gospel and the history behind its traditions; the apparent aptness of the form-critical paradigm has led most scholars to look for a real-world ritual correlate for LGM 1b within the *Sitz im Leben* of Jesus or of a particular church. But if the informational gaps in LGM 1 and 2 represent a deliberate use of a Markan literary technique, then it would make sense to seek a solution that pays close attention to the

125. The responses of earlier scholars illustrate this expectation well. Nineham (*St. Mark*, 294) wrote, "As it is, this visit to the temple seems entirely pointless, for the idea of Jesus 'seeing the sights' like some provincial tourist is entirely at variance with the spirit of the Gospels." He suggests, I believe correctly, that Mark added this scene so that he could insert the cursing of the fig tree as the first half of an intercalation around the temple clearing, though this insight into Mark's composition does not explain what is going on in the temple when Jesus enters it and looks around. The incident still has to make sense in terms of the plot. Kelber (*Mark's Story of Jesus*, 58–59) notes how this incident makes it difficult to view the procession to Jerusalem as "a triumphal entry"; when Jesus enters the temple he is neither recognized nor installed as the messiah: "What begins to surface in this strange and uniquely Markan verse 11:11 is Jesus' strained relationship with the temple and the temple mount." Hooker (*St. Mark*, 260) makes the same inference that Nineham does about Mark's need to insert the first part of an intercalation, but makes some inferences about the plot as well, concluding that the anticlimactic quality of this activity implies that the "triumphant entry" was therefore "not a messianic demonstration." She interprets Jesus' action as preparing for the temple's condemnation; that is, it is an evaluation of how the temple is operating, parallel to Jesus' inspection of the fig tree and finding no fruit. Perceiving a double intercalation here, as Hooker does (e.g. p. 261; the cursing of the fig tree/clearing of the temple is itself sandwiched between two other trips to the temple, the first being 11:1–11), helps one comprehend the incident in 11:11 and thereby follow the plot.

fact that these ambiguous details often consist of phrases that appeared earlier in the gospel. In canonical Mark, verbal “echoes” function as a means of highlighting similarities among the story’s events. The interpretive relevance of longer Mark’s repetitions is *a priori* likely in view of LGM’s use of intercalation, another device that highlights similarities among stories, in this case by framing one story within another. It is only natural that a work considered to be “a more spiritual gospel” *would* encourage intratextual reflection. Thus it is to literary analysis that investigation of the longer gospel should now turn.

II.3.3. *An Intratextual Approach*

At this point in my study I do not intend to analyze every verbal connection for what light it sheds on the meaning of the initiation pericope. Here I need only to point out that the details which appear to be ritualistic in LGM 1 also have discipleship and christological overtones inasmuch as they are verbal echoes of phrases from preceding stories in the longer/Markan text. The phrase *καὶ ἤρξατο παρακαλεῖν αὐτὸν ἵνα μετ’ αὐτοῦ ᾗ* (LGM 1:8), for instance, has discipleship overtones within its Markan context (cf. Mark 3:14; 5:18), as does the return of Jesus with this “disciple” to a house for private teaching (cf. Mark 7:17–23; 9:28–29, 33–50). The words *καὶ μεθ’ ἡμέρας ἕξ* (LGM 1:10) introduced the transfiguration, a scene which portrayed the exalted state of Jesus’ resurrection but also emphasized the suffering which the Son of man must undergo to get there (9:1, 12). The phrase *ἐδίδασκε γὰρ* is the same formula that introduced the second passion prediction (9:30). Private teaching about “the mystery of the kingdom of God” has a discipleship dimension in the parable discourse, where Jesus explains to his disciples and those about him that discipleship entails struggles with malevolent forces that conspire to destroy “the word.” Indeed, the subplot of the young man is analogous to the seed sown on rocky ground (4:16–17), for the young

man's faith "springs up" immediately (LGM 1:8), endures a short while, then immediately falls away when persecution arises (Mark 14:51b–52).

What brings all of these discipleship and christological associations into a consistent whole is the intercalation of the discourse with James and John. There Jesus' baptism is offered as a metaphor for his death. The highlighting of contrasts and parallels produced by the juxtaposition of these two stories leads the reader to interpret the one story in light of the other. In view of the initiation imagery in Jesus' response to James and John, the reader is likely to infer that the young man's unusual apparel consisting only of a linen sheet is baptismal in nature, but that this instruction is not a rite. Presumably he is being taught what James and John were taught, that he must be baptized in this death in order to achieve exaltation. This is an initiation into a deeper truth, a mystery; but it is not a rite. In the dramatic situation of the story, Jesus' baptism means his arrest and death in Jerusalem; accepting this baptism means following him as he is "delivered up" to this fate. In more abstract terms, it means what all three discipleship passages convey, that in order to become great, one must become humble, to be saved one must take up one's cross and follow Jesus. And so, when we see this young man later in Gethsemane, he is *following with Jesus* when Jesus is being delivered up into the hands of men, dressed as if for baptism in what one might gather is his own burial shroud (cf. the use of *συνδῶν* in Mark 15:46). His costume is a symbol of his readiness to be *immersed* in Jesus' sufferings, a token of his commitment to "the way" to life through death.

Jesus' baptism is not in water. That is what Mark—hence also the longer text—tells us at the beginning (1:8). The ritual imagery is symbolic: so symbolic that a strange disjunction occurs in the narrative. The deeper meaning breaks through the surface, disturbing narrative logic: it hardly makes sense that young man should attempt to follow Jesus at such an unlikely time as his arrest, wrapped only in a linen

sheet despite the coolness of the night (note 14:54). But this is a more spiritual gospel, like John. It gets at the things beneath the “bodily” facts, bringing the deeper, metaphorical meanings to the surface, where they become symbols so overt as to be unreal. What more blatant way to convey discipleship as the path of the martyr than to have Jesus followed to his passion by a disciple dressed for the occasion?¹²⁶

III. New Theses Concerning the Original Purpose and Later Use of LGM 1 and 2

III.1. *The Intentions of the Author of Longer Mark*

The two additional passages Clement disclosed to Theodore have a significant impact on the meaning of at least two elusive themes in the canonical gospel. The mystery of the kingdom of God is now directly associated with the central section’s discipleship and christological teachings on the way to life through death. The incident of the young man’s naked flight now more clearly provides an indirect commentary on the significance of the disciples’ flight from the garden. He is a *disciple* intent on undergoing Jesus’ “baptism.” Both his resolve to follow and his failure particularize what is happening with the twelve; they desired to be loyal (14:29–31), but were still incapable of realizing Jesus’ teachings about the way to life through death. Put differently, the disciples, just like the young man, are like seed sown on rocky soil.¹²⁷

So in this instance the redactor of the longer gospel of Mark is elucidating perplexing themes that exist in the story. It appears that Clement was basically correct. Whoever supplemented the canonical gospel was producing a more spiritual gospel—a gospel that gets at the deeper meaning of what is going on at the surface of the story.

126. Cf. Lincoln, “Promise,” 288: “At least he [the young man] has recognized that following this man will lead to death and has come suitably dressed for the occasion.” I suspect that if Mark had not sought to portray Jesus’ utter abandonment by society, his disciples, and God at the time of his *paradosis*, he would have made more of the image of a person carrying Jesus’ cross, as Luke did (cf. Mark 15:21 with Luke 23:26).

127. See chapter 6 n. 90.

Much more will be said about how this redaction affects the story later, in the literary-critical part of the dissertation. At this point we need to ask an historical question.

Why did this redactor do this?

The redaction of the longer gospel is quite unlike what synoptic scholars have come to expect. Redactors are normally conceived to be intent on *changing* the meaning of source material in order to accommodate it to the needs of a different situation or to bring it in line with their own beliefs. It is now becoming common to suppose that Matthew and Luke, for instance, “were attempting not to clarify and extend Mark’s vision but to refute and undermine it”—effectively, “to supplant it.”¹²⁸ The redactor of the longer text, on the other hand, attempted to preserve the integrity of Mark’s gospel by expanding this story in a manner consistent with Markan theology and composition. To him, the gospel of Mark was not a “source” to be subsumed within a new literary venture but a valuable story needing only to be amplified.¹²⁹ But why did this redaction happen?

It may be expecting too much to know what motivated the author of this text, considering that we possess only fifteen sentences. Nevertheless, it is necessary to hypothesize about a purpose. I have postulated a redactor who revised a gospel using that gospel’s own style and literary techniques in order to elaborate certain obscurely conveyed themes. To make this inference defensible, a plausible rationale for such activity needs to be postulated, regardless of whether there is enough evidence to warrant accepting it as an historical conclusion.

128. Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 28, 29. It is interesting that both Matthew and Luke (presumably) eliminated Mark 14:51–52 and reworked Mark 4:11 into the a statement limiting the scope of the mystery of the kingdom of God to the specific interpretations of the parables.

129. The phrase “amplified Gospel” is an apt description used by F. F. Bruce (e.g., *The “Secret” Gospel*, 16).

The following inferences seem reasonable. To begin with, the author was likely either “Mark” himself (whoever that person was) or a “disciple” of Mark who had learned from the author (or from another “disciple”).¹³⁰ This conclusion is suggested by the congruence between the theologies of the longer and shorter texts, which will be demonstrated in Part Two of this dissertation. The author’s approach of extending Markan themes in ways compatible with the literary designs of the shorter version is what we would expect of a person schooled in Markan theology. Put differently, someone holding a different theology would have revised Mark much like Matthew and Luke did. This person’s impressive ability to use Markan vocabulary, style, syntax, and literary techniques to compose passages that seem as Markan as those in the canonical gospel also supports this conclusion, but is not as weighty a reason, for such qualities are subject to imitation, and imitation was a standard tool of ancient education. Five lines of evidence suggest that the longer gospel was either written in Egypt, most likely in Alexandria, or at least prepared for that environment: 1) the only evidence we have for the gospel is from an Alexandrian teacher; 2) it is only known to have been used in this church and by the followers of Carpocrates, another Alexandrian;¹³¹ 3) Clement’s tradition of this gospel’s origin claims it was written in Alexandria; 4) the mystery-religion overtones of the initiation-like story about the young man are suited to this environment; and 5), unless Theodore’s inquiry to Clement about this gospel was entirely fortuitous, it would seem that the Carpocratians either directed Theodore to inquire in Alexandria about the legitimacy of the longer gospel or had told him their own version of Mark’s creation of this text in that city.

130. Cf. Smith, *SG*, 42–43. I am reluctant to postulate the existence of a “Markan school” on the basis of one person’s redaction.

131. *Stromateis* III.2, cited by Griggs in *Early Egyptian Christianity*, 48.

For the longer gospel to have been instrumental to Carpocrates, it would probably have been written before 125.¹³²

We have little knowledge about Alexandrian Christianity before the third century, but it is reasonable to assume that mystical exegesis, or the search for concealed theological truths within scripture, was already an important interest in the late first and early second centuries. Even before Mark's time, a "mystical," mainly allegorical, method of exegesis was used in Alexandria by the Jewish writers Aristeas, Aristobulus, and Philo (ca. 20 BCE–50 CE).¹³³ The fact that this approach was also used by Clement in the late second century is significant, for the exceptionally large Jewish population in Alexandria would have provided a natural home for earliest Christianity in that city. Indeed, there is a "growing scholarly consensus regarding the Jewish character of earliest Christianity in Egypt."¹³⁴

Philo's description of the Jewish Therapeutae in his "On the Contemplative Life or on the Suppliants" offers a portrait of a form of Judaism which took a profound interest in the study of the figurative meanings of scripture:

The whole interval, from morning to evening, is for them a time of exercise. For they read the holy Scriptures, and explain the philosophy of their fathers in an allegorical manner, regarding the written words as symbols of hidden truth which is communicated in obscure figures. They have also writings of ancient men, who were the founders of their sect, and who left many monuments of the allegorical method. These they use as models, and imitate their principles. ...They expound the Sacred Scriptures figuratively by means of allegories. For the whole law seems to these men to resemble a living organism, of which the spoken words constitute the body, while the hidden sense stored up within the words constitutes the soul. This hidden meaning has first been particularly studied by this sect, which sees, revealed as in a mirror of names, the surpassing beauties

132. Smith, *CA*, 90. Koester suggested in his *Introduction* (2:222–23; cf. Cameron, *Other Gospels*, 69) that the "secret" gospel originated in Syria and was brought to Alexandria. A scenario of this sort is always possible, but since we currently have no evidence of the use of this gospel in Syria, and Clement and Theodore's Carpocratian opponents living outside Alexandria (we do not know where) apparently agreed that Alexandria was the city of origin, the simplest assumption is that the longer gospel was composed in Alexandria.

133. On the influence of Philo upon Clement, see van den Hoek, *Jewish Model*.

134. Pearson, "Earliest Christianity in Egypt," 154; cf. Klijn, "Jewish Christianity in Egypt," 161–65; Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 172 (and the scholars he cites on p. 285, nn. 55, 56).

of the thoughts. (Cited in Eusebius, *Church History* 17.10–12, 20)

It is likely that this community's *way of studying scripture* had parallels in some forms of early Alexandrian Christianity.¹³⁵ As is well-known, Eusebius was absolutely, albeit mistakenly, convinced that Philo was here talking specifically about the community of Mark's first converts in Alexandria, believing that these people were reading Christian writings (gospels and letters) and that their activities were distinctive of the Christian way of life (*Church History* II.16.2; 17.15).

The longer gospel seems to be an adaptation of the gospel of Mark to this environment, to the distinctive thought-world and historical circumstances of the Christian audience it received there. It plays upon the theme in Mark 4 of the need for instruction in an esoteric knowledge that is concealed in stories (i.e. parables) that are meant to be read metaphorically (e.g. 4:26–32) or allegorically (e.g. 4:14–20).¹³⁶ While developing the connection between knowledge and salvation in Mark 4:11–12, the longer text also reinforces the Markan theme that salvation does not come from deeper, spiritual insight itself but from what that insight leads one to *do*.¹³⁷ Once “initiated” into this philosophical truth, a disciple must, like the young man, attempt to follow Jesus in the way to life through death. Such a message would have been of particular relevance in the context of Alexandrian Judaism in the aftermath of the Palestinian Jewish revolt of 66–70. Tensions and conflicts between the Jews and Greeks of this city increased after 70 and continued until 115, when the Jewish population in Egypt

135. I am not intending to imply that other features of this community, such as its monasticism and extreme asceticism, were also paralleled in Alexandrian Christian communities.

136. Though allegory is the usual figurative approach associated with Jewish Alexandrian exegesis and was probably more often a reading strategy than a mode of composition, Clement's theory of literary communication encompassed much more than allegory. He was quite capable of symbolic reading. For his explanation of his literary theory, see *Stromateis* V. On his approach to scripture, see Méhat's “Les sens de l'Écriture.”

137. Cf. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*, 125–26.

was nearly annihilated.¹³⁸

III.2. *The Use of LGM 1 and 2 in the Alexandrian Church of Clement's Day*

Once it is perceived that the ritualistic imagery is not just symbolic in Clement's usage but in the longer text as well, a possibility for the use of longer Mark in the Alexandrian church of Clement's day also presents itself. In this case, less speculation is involved, for Clement actually comments on how the longer gospel as a whole was used. We know that the story of the young man's metaphorical initiation was read to those being taught the great *theological* mysteries of Alexandrian Christian philosophy. The Alexandrian "initiation" into deeper truths through study of the concealed meaning of the scriptures was a mystery initiation in metaphor alone, and the longer text's initiation symbolism is an apt means of expressing a similar notion. Like the young man who displayed his love for Jesus (LGM 1:8), received preliminary instruction (implied by the six day stay and reference to Jesus' command) and was given "insider" teaching about a mystery, those "being perfected" in the Alexandrian community (or at least in Clement's school) had demonstrated their faith through preparation (following the example of Christ the *Paedagogus*) and were now ready to learn the mysteries concealed in the scriptures. In the longer text, the mystery which the young man is being taught likewise concerns the hidden truths of a text—the deeper truths of Christianity as presented in this particular writing. For the (implied) reader, this figure appears as an ideal disciple with whom to identify, like his Johannine counterpart, the "disciple whom Jesus loved."¹³⁹ His initiation particularizes and symbolizes what Jesus is trying to do with respect to the inner group of disciples in the central section as a whole. The

138. For the history of this conflict, see Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 172-74.

139. Schenke, "Mystery," 77-78; idem, "Function and Background," 120. This insight is the subject of Marvin Meyer's essay "Beloved Disciple."

same is true for the reader or hearer, whose “initiation” into the essential truths about Christology and discipleship is reflected in the private instruction of the young man.

It cannot be said that there is complete harmony between the situation of the young man/implicit reader and that of the late second-century gnostic in Clement’s school. The preparation about which Clement wrote is basically a moral and intellectual education that might take years; initiation into the small and great mysteries does not occur in an evening but goes on throughout the remainder of the gnostic’s adult life. Thus the story in LGM 1 was probably not composed specifically for this kind of use. Its means of disclosing deeper meaning seem to be more metaphorical—more literary—than the process of scriptural explication practiced by Clement; his examples of exegesis are usually allegorical, though he did discuss a more sophisticated literary technique in connection with his descriptions of the true gnostic.

In any case, the basic affinity between the symbolic initiation LGM 1b, which might appear to involve preliminary instruction, and the two-stage process of perfection in gnosis reflected in Clement’s writings (including this letter) would make LGM 1b serviceable as a rationale for this practice.¹⁴⁰ Viewed against the background of our knowledge of Alexandrian instruction, LGM 1b “mirrors” initiation into the Christian mysteries and therefore was likely “used” (interpreted) to justify the practice of teaching esoteric truths privately, to a select few. Just as Jesus the hierophant explained the deeper meanings of the scriptures to a select few, a living teacher, such as Clement, passes on this teaching when reading the longer gospel to those being perfected in gnosis.¹⁴¹

140. On Clement’s conception of perfection as a path involving the two fundamental stages of faith and gnosis, see Steely, *Gnosis*, chapter 4. The *Letter to Theodore* supports Steely’s conclusions. Cf. Kaestli, “Version longue,” 90: “Cette même opposition entre la foi et la connaissance se retrouve dans notre *Lettre*.”

141. The proposed Alexandrian interpretation of LGM 1 as a justification for this practice would not, of course, exhaust the significance these Christians may have derived from this story. They would no doubt find specific theological and philosophical mysteries conveyed in LGM 1 as well. Some such interpretation likely began where the letter fragment ends.

This sort of usage is supported by the way Clement used various sayings from Mark's parable discourse, where the mystery of the kingdom is first introduced.¹⁴² And, interestingly enough, during his discussion of the veiled quality of scripture in his mystic exposition of the temple (*Stromateis* V.6.37.1), he did use the imagery of a Levite's ritual removal of a linen robe (not a linen sheet), water purification, and rero-bing as a *metaphor* (NB οὐκέτι ὕδατι; 39.4) for the gnostic life of contemplation as a perpetual sanctification requisite to entering the inner sanctuary and contemplating the divine (V.6.39.2–40.4). This figurative water purification of the gnostic was con-trasted with the literal baptism of “those bathed in water, and clothed in faith alone, and expecting their own individual abode” (39.4)—that is, of the simple faithful who think of salvation in terms of going to heaven.¹⁴³

IV. The Purpose and Use of the Longer Gospel: General Conclusions

In both the *Letter to Theodore* and the longer gospel, cultic initiation imagery is used figuratively to convey the process of receiving revelation into deeper theological truths of scripture, of crossing the boundary between an outsider, who possesses only the carnal sense, and an insider, who is given the key to the more real, though latent, spiritual meaning.¹⁴⁴ The text of LGM 1 and 2 does this by recourse to such Markan literary techniques as intercalation and narrative gaps, which function to indicate that

142. Clement cited the Matthean/Lukan parallel to Mark 4:11 together with the parable of the leaven to prove that “the truly sacred mystic word, respecting the unbegotten and his powers, ought to be concealed” (see *Stromateis* V.12). And he used “to him that hath shall be given” in *Stromateis* VII.10.55.7 to justify imparting gnosis to those worthy of it (cited earlier in chapter 2 n. 23).

143. On Clement's conception of salvation and its similarity to the Valentinian conception, see James E. Davison, “Structural Similarities,” 208–15.

144. To use Kermode's language. Kermode understood well the relevance of initiation imagery for the process of perceiving a literary meaning, and this appreciation is reflected in his comments on (canonical) Mark being an especially good example of what is his central preoccupation in his book *Genesis*, which is “the existence, among initiates, of a preference for spiritual over carnal readings—that is, for inter-pretations that are beyond the hearing of the outsiders” (p. 18).

the actual reference for its peculiar initiation-like details is to be found within the world of the story itself, especially within the intercalated episode; therein, the initiation imagery of cup and baptism are used as symbols which present Jesus' "way" as a process of dying to the self. The young man represents an ideal disciple, and thus stands as an image with which the reader can identify as he or she is being instructed in the deeper christological and discipleship truths of the central section. Within the "orthodox" Alexandrian church this material may have been used to validate a similar and equally metaphorical initiation process, by which a few, select Christians were taught the hidden theological and philosophical truths of orthodox Alexandrian Christianity through hierophantic expositions of the scriptures as disclosed through the secret gnostic tradition.

PART TWO

ANALYSIS OF MARKAN LITERARY TECHNIQUES

LGM 1 AND 2 AS A MARKAN-STYLE INTERCALATION

We are now ready to begin a detailed examination of the literary techniques employed in the verses Clement quoted from the longer gospel. The preceding chapters have prepared the way for this literary analysis by demonstrating 1) the reasonableness of accepting LGM 1 and 2 as remnants of an actual, longer version of Mark; 2) Clement's understanding that the distinguishing features of the longer gospel were oriented to the inner ("spiritual") meaning of the bodily "facts"; 3) the lack of substantiation for the view that these additional passages were only read annually and liturgically, in isolation from their narrative context; and 4) the likelihood that LGM 1 and 2 are related literarily to their narrative context by forming an intercalation around 10:35–45, with implications for the interpretation of the mystery of the kingdom and the unexpected appearance of the *νεανίσκος* in Gethsemane. The next three chapters, then, will attempt to demonstrate the use of well-known Markan literary techniques in these extant verses and elaborate the impact they have on the rest of the Markan gospel. Chapter 5 will examine the use of intercalation by LGM 1 and 2. Chapter 6 will argue that these additions, together with the story of the empty tomb, form a "matched pair" that function as an interpretive frame around the passion narrative. And chapter 7 will examine the effects of various brief repetitions within LGM 1 and 2 of language and themes from elsewhere in the gospel. In the course of these chapters it should become apparent that the known additions are as Markan in a literary sense as they are at the level of vocabulary and grammar and that they reinforce and elucidate the theology of the initial version.

I. The Formal Characteristics of Intercalation

To this point I have asserted with little argument that LGM 1 and 2 represent a Markan-style intercalation. This supposition might seem obvious once it is encountered, but, as we have seen in the previous chapters, nothing related to this gospel should be taken for granted. So it is important to begin this chapter by comparing LGM 1 and 2 with the prevailing wisdom about what constitutes a Markan-style intercalation.

Intercalation is the characteristically Markan narrative device of placing one episode (story or scene) within another, separate episode such that the completion of the first episode is forestalled by the narration of the second, and the first story is resumed and brought to its completion only after the intervening episode is finished. Markan commentators are accustomed to point out six “classic” examples of this procedure: Mark 3:20–35; 5:21–43; 6:7–30 (+ vv. 31–32?); 11:12–22 (+ vv. 23–25?); 14:1–11; 14:53–72.¹ This general agreement over these six passages does not, however, reflect general agreement about the nature and scope of this literary phenomenon. It is not uncommon, for example, for references to the device to include other passages as well.² Hence, a few scholars have attempted to explain the

1. This list is offered by Tom Shepherd in “Synoptic Problem,” 689; and by G. van Oyen in “Intercalation and Irony,” 949. Shepherd cites these disagreements over the boundaries of the literary units (689 n. 8).

2. Shepherd (*Definition and Function*, 388–92) listed twenty passages that have been cited as intercalations in the secondary literature and compared how various scholars label these. The classic six are the ones which scholars nearly always agree on. Variations in commentators’ delineations of additional instances usually result when intercalation is defined more broadly as including other, similar narrative techniques. Schneck (*Isaiah*, 199), for example, treats intercalations as larger instances of Markan “interpolations,” which are framed insertions into a story, of sayings or narrative material (though not a separate story) that *on form-critical grounds* was not originally part of the story (e.g. Mark 1:23–26 within 1:21–29; 2:5b–10a within 2:1–12; 4:31b within 4:31a, 32a). The repetitions function to permit the insertion by resuming the narrative where it left off, but at times they seem intended also to draw attention to the inserted material. In any case, interpolation—also called “the Markan insertion technique” (Donahue, *Are You the Christ?* 77–84, 241–43)—is more appropriately viewed as a redactional procedure than as a subcategory of this literary technique. Intercalation should also be distinguished from *inclusio* (the term preferred, e.g., by Beavis in *Mark’s Audience*, 46–47; and Wills in *Quest*, 132–33), a word more often used to refer to the bracketing of a section of related material (large or small, nar-

phenomenon traditionally described by the term “intercalation” by investigating the commonalities of these six examples and the dynamics of their functioning. There is still some disagreement over particular features and particular effects: most lists of defining characteristics seem actually to describe ideal features and effects that are not evident in all six instances.³ Yet certain general conclusions can be drawn from these studies. These conclusions will help us determine whether the addition of LGM 1 and 2 should be understood as an attempt to use this technique, and, if so, how these verses make sense within this perspective. To this end, James R. Edwards’s definition of intercalation is a useful starting point:

Each Markan interpolation [*sic*] concerns a larger (usually narrative) unit of material consisting of *two* episodes or stories which are narrated in *three* paragraphs or pericopae. The whole follows an A¹-B-A² schema, in which the B-episode forms an independent unit of material, whereas the flanking A-episodes require one another to complete their narrative. The B-episode consists of only one story; it is not a series of stories, nor itself so long that the reader fails to link A² with A¹. Finally, A² normally contains an allusion at its beginning which refers back to A¹, e.g. repetition of a theme, proper nouns, etc.⁴

LGM 1 and 2 fit this scheme very well. In this case the B-story is the question of James and John, which waxes into a discipleship teaching (10:35–40, 41–45). The

rative or sayings, or both) by a repetition of a word or phrase or theme. E.g. Mark’s prologue is often said to be bracketed by the word “gospel” in 1:1 and 1:14–15. When these repeated elements occur within two similar stories that have a bracketing function they are called framing stories. The central section, e.g., is said to be bracketed by the two stories of the healing of blind men (8:22–26; 10:46–52). The words “bracketing technique” and “parentheses,” however, are sometimes used as synonyms for *inclusio*. As with intercalation, such “brackets” are often considered to have relevance for the interpretation of the enclosed material (see, e.g., van Oyen, “Intercalation and Irony,” 964 and n. 67). The term framing technique (Rhodes and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 51) is better kept as a general description of what Mark does with all three devices (framed insertions, *inclusio* and framing stories, and intercalation). The term most commonly accepted as a valid synonym for intercalation is “sandwich technique.” This term tends to favour interpretations of the device that view the central story as being of more significance than the outer story.

3. Markan intercalation might be thought of as a syndrome. Though there are really no pure examples of the device displaying all of the distinctive characteristics, the convergence of most of these “symptoms” in the classic six makes them easy to “diagnose” as instances of the technique.

4. “Markan Sandwiches,” 197. He normally uses the words *intercalation* and *sandwich*.

known longer text passages are set immediately before and after this; LGM 1 is said to occur between Mark 10:34 and 10:35, and LGM 2 between 10:46a and 10:46b. The insertions have to be observed in context for the effect to become evident. In its literary context, the addition of LGM 2 between the two clauses of Mark 10:46 produces a strong repetition of the language introducing the opening scenario of LGM 1, thereby creating an allusion to that material. Compare the introductions to both stories:

καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς Βηθανίαν, καὶ ἦς ἐκεῖ μία γυνὴ ἧς ἄδελφος αὐτῆς ἀπέθανεν· καὶ...

καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς Ἰεριχώ. καὶ ἦσαν ἐκεῖ ἡ ἀδελφὴ τοῦ νεανίσκου ὃν ἠγάπα αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ...

These introductions follow the pattern of *καί* + the present tense indicative of *ἔρχομαι* + *εἰς* + a city + an imperfect of *εἰμί* combined with *ἐκεῖ*, and then mention the same woman, identify her with respect to her brother, and use the Semitism of a redundant possessive in relation to the brother—nine points of contact in sequence.⁵ The inevitable effect of LGM 2, therefore, is to recall LGM 1, an effect very similar to the recollection of the cursing of the fig tree after the intercalated cleansing of the temple (Mark 11:20-21). The parallels between those A-stories are not nearly as exact as between LGM 1 and 2, but a similarity in their basic structures exists there as well. Both stories begin with a reference to Jesus and his disciples (“they”) setting out (to Jerusalem) and an indication of when this takes place (the next day; in the morning); then the fig tree is spotted and its condition noted (in A¹ as in leaf, then, upon inspection, as barren; in A² as withered). The state of the tree is met with surprise and elicits a verbal response (Jesus realizes that it has no fruit and responds to it with a curse;

5. The *καί*s following each of the parallel phrases mentioning the brother are not themselves in parallel, since the conjunction connects two clauses in the first instance and two like phrases within a clause in the second, which does not create a similar effect.

Peter notices that it has withered and responds to Jesus with a recollection of the cursing, adding a reference to the result). Jesus' responses to the fig tree and to Peter are both introduced by *καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς*.⁶

LGM 2 therefore has a function similar to Mark 11:20–22. Both bracket an independent story by recollecting the beginning of the previous story. Like Mark 11:20–22, LGM 2 is only three sentences long, and quickly shades into something else (the healing of Bartimaeus in 10:46–52; a discussion of faith in Mark 11:22b–25).⁷ In view of Edwards's reference to the stories involving "three paragraphs or pericopae," LGM 2 might seem too brief; but Edwards has made an overstatement. Some A-stories are as short as one or two sentences (3:20–21; 6:30; 14:1–2, 10–11; 14:53–54). In this respect LGM 2 is also very similar to Mark 6:30, which gives way immediately to the story of the healing of the five thousand: "The apostles returned to Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest a while.' For many were coming and going...."⁸ LGM 1 is exceptional, though, in that it is long for an A¹-story.⁹

6. Barton (*Family Ties*, 71) believes that the repetition of *καὶ ἔρχεται* in 3:20a and 3:31a is intended to create the same kind of recollection of the introductory scene (A¹) where this story resumes (A²).

7. Both passages concentrate on faith, a topic of concern also in the stories of Jairus's daughter/the woman with the 12-year hemorrhage.

8. We see here that it is at times difficult to designate a point at which the A²-story ends and a new passage begins. The lesson on faith is integral to the A²-story in chapter 11, for Jesus' ability to cause the tree to wither by a curse alone is the example illustrating the theological point that with faith one can move a mountain (of course, with such faith one could cause fruit to appear on a barren fig tree; killing a tree because you had forgotten that it was not fig season is a peculiar example of great faith). LGM 2 may be considered to be part of Mark 10:46–52, but whether to include all this material together as one story is not clear. Most would agree that the feeding of the five thousand is not part of the intercalation in Mark 6.

9. 13 verses, compared to 2 in 3:20–21; 4 in 5:21–24; 7 in 6:7–13; 3 in 11:12–14; 2 in 4:1–2; and 2 in 14:53–53. Edwards also somewhat understates the length of the B-story. The intercalated story about the death of John the Baptist in 6:14–29 also includes Herod's and others' speculations about who Jesus is, in vv. 14–16, but these verses are closely related to the story about John himself, which describes something which takes place at a different time relative to Herod's speculations. He is quite right that an A-B-A pattern involving a longer sequence of stories in B would constitute something else (i.e. *inclusio* or a paired frame).

Edwards's remarks on the way that the start of an A²-story will allude "back to A¹, e.g. repetition of a theme, proper nouns, etc." may be supplemented with certain features that have been noticed by Tom Shepherd, whose doctoral thesis represents an attempt to delineate the definition and function of intercalation:

Upon reentry into the outer story some tie is made to the previous section of the outer story. Also, a previously unmentioned character is introduced, or a new name is given to a group previously introduced in the first part of the outer story. This new character or newly named group is the subject/actor of the first or second sentence of the reentered outer story.¹⁰

It is somewhat surprising to find that in intercalations it is typical for a new or newly named character to appear within the statement referring back to A¹, yet LGM 2:1b fits this criterion by introducing, in addition to the already mentioned sister, the young man's mother and Salome.¹¹ Shepherd, moreover, has observed the tendency that "active character crossover does not occur between the stories, except for Jesus."¹² More specifically, he noticed that "the only characters to cross between the two stories are Jesus and the disciples" and that "the disciples' appearance in *both* stories of an intercalation (Mark 5 and 11) is limited to minor roles."¹³ Here the fact that Clement's text of 10:46a reads "and *he* comes into Jericho" rather than the better attested "they come" is noteworthy, considering that it curtails the sense of character crossover by

10. Shepherd, *Definition*, 315. Cf. "Intercalation in Mark," 689.

11. Salome otherwise does not appear in Mark's narrative until 15:40. It should be noted, however, that we do not know whether she was previously mentioned in the longer gospel, for we do not possess all of it. Further, there is ambiguity about who ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ refers to, for it might refer to Jesus' mother, who was already mentioned in 3:31 (cf. 3:32, 33) and 6:3. I think the ambiguity is intentional in order to remind the reader of Jesus' mother, Mary, who was similarly introduced (as ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ) and rejected in 3:31 (another A²-story, where Jesus' mother and brothers are mentioned for the first time in the intercalation—and in the story). Compare the mentioning of unnamed persons coming from the ruler's house in 5:35, the renaming of the twelve as "the apostles" in 6:30, the mention of Peter in 11:20, of Judas in 14:10, of "one of the maids of the high priest" in 14:66. Considering that new characters are introduced frequently and old characters reintroduced, not much importance can be attached to this criterion.

12. "Intercalation in Mark," 689.

13. Shepherd, *Definition*, 317-18.

removing what otherwise would be an indication that the disciples (mentioned in 10:41, along with James and John, as participants in B) were involved in the A²-story. In Clement's copy of the longer gospel, the A²-story about the encounter with the three women reestablishes the sense of Jesus being apart from his disciples, which had characterized the A¹-story.¹⁴

The lack of character crossover between the A- and B-episodes of an intercalation reinforces the sense that the two stories are logically independent of each other, thus heightening the irony of the various discourse-level indications of their relatedness.¹⁵ This relatedness is an important point for understanding the effect of intercalation. Shepherd notes that, in general, "Parallel actions are done by contrasting groups or contrasting actions are done by parallel groups in the two stories."¹⁶ In this case, the parallel groups would be the unnamed would-be disciple, on the one hand, and James and John and the "ten," on the other. In keeping with the Markan proclivity to use anonymous characters as (mainly) positive examples, the unnamed *νεανίσκος* shows his love for Jesus and strives to follow his instruction, with the result that he receives teaching on the mystery of the kingdom of God.¹⁷ James and John, though, show their

14. The disciples immediately reappear in the next sentence: "and as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great multitude, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside." The disciples play a minor role in the A¹-story by rebuking the bereaved sister. This action results, however, in Jesus becoming angry and leaving the disciples behind, presumably remaining apart from them through the remainder of the episode. That is, their brief, foolish response to the woman provides an excuse for their remarkable absence during the subsequent week with the young man. Thus LGM 1 and 2 fit the pattern of minimal active character crossover very well.

15. Shepherd, "Intercalation in Mark," 690.

16. "Intercalation in Mark," 689; *Definition*, 320.

17. On minor characters, see Joel F. Williams, *Other Followers*. His comments about Bartimaeus being a transitional character in a developing presentation of minor characters would apply to the young man in the longer gospel. Before Bartimaeus, the minor characters are primarily suppliants, exemplars of faith in Jesus' ability to heal and save. With Bartimaeus, the minor characters begin to "exemplify a proper devotion to the values of Jesus. In this way the reader is encouraged to move beyond faith in Jesus to a more faithful following of Jesus" (170). "The reader, like the minor characters, must respond to the general call to follow Jesus through self-denial and a willingness to suffer (8.34)" (171). The story of the young man melds into that of Bartimaeus at 10:46b. By having the young man and Bartimaeus together in the longer gospel, the motifs associated with the latter are strengthened.

love for their own selves, and demonstrate a fundamental ignorance about the nature of this kingdom, expecting that if Jesus is about to enter his glory in Jerusalem (i.e. obtain his *political* kingdom; cf. 11:10) they might receive positions of honour therein. The indignant attitude of the ten likewise displays the self-preoccupation of the remaining disciples, for they consider the private negotiation for places of honour to be unfair competition, or at least that would seem to be implied by Jesus' teaching to the twelve about the requirement that those who wish to lead become servants.¹⁸

There is one notable area of difference between the defining characteristics discussed so far and the effect achieved by inserting LGM 1 and 2 into Mark's narrative. Whereas in the classic examples of intercalation "the flanking A-episodes require one another to complete their narrative," this is not really the case with the LGM additions. There is no clear reason why LGM 1 should not be considered complete in itself and LGM 2, unnecessary *as a conclusion* for LGM 1. This is very different from the raising of Jairus's daughter in Mark 5:35–43, for instance, which remained to be carried out after the healing of the woman with the hemorrhage.

The intercalation in Mark 5:21–43, however, could be called an ideal example of the point Edwards is conveying. When all the intercalations are considered, this difference between LGM 1 and 2 and the classic intercalations turns out to be one of degree rather than of kind. Some of the other A¹-stories offer only vague indications that something remains to occur for the A-story to be complete. Mark did not need to narrate the return of the disciples from their mission. That is, the return could have been left as a gap which the reader would fill in once the disciples are reintroduced as being with Jesus again.¹⁹ And the only thing that makes the A¹-story of the cursing of

18. Cf. Hooker, *Mark*, 247.

19. That is what Matthew did, though his reason seems to be to avoid the implication that this mission was a single event occurring in the life of Jesus; in Matthew, the disciples simply appear with Jesus in the grain fields at 12:1.

the fig tree incomplete in 11:12–14 is the comment which follows Jesus' curse: "And his disciples heard it." That comment indicates merely that more *might* come of this.²⁰

LGM 2 is also atypical inasmuch as it *resumes* the A¹-story but does not complete it; the young man's story is continued through his appearance in Gethsemane in 14:51–52 and by the motif of three women (including Salome) recurring at the crucifixion and empty tomb. The story begun in LGM 2 is not really complete until the young man announces the resurrection from the tomb. But again, this distinctive quality is not without parallel in the classic examples. In 14:1–2, the motif of the plotting of the chief priests leads only to Judas taking a first step toward betraying Jesus (negotiating with the chief priests). Moreover, the plotting of these religious leaders did not begin here. The theme is a carry-over from 12:12 (cf. 11:18) and began with the Pharisees and Herodians as early as 3:6. What we have in 14:10–11 is an immediate resumption of a theme reintroduced just before the intervening pericope about the anointing of Jesus by a woman, not the completion of a self-contained story. That theme does not end until Jesus is convicted. Likewise, the story of Peter's denial within which the trial is intercalated is part of a subplot that began in 14:26–31 with Jesus' prediction of this occurrence. Peter's rehabilitation as a disciple is indicated later, in 16:7.

It is inadequate, then, to say that the A¹-story is always obviously incomplete without the A²-story or that the A²-story always brings the A¹-story to completion. T. Shepherd supplies a more refined description of what Edwards is getting at in reference to completeness when he says that "There is a unique pattern of focalization and defocalization of the two stories which includes incomplete defocalization of the outer story at the point where break away occurs to the inner story. This creates a 'gap' for

20. Compare the comment in the B story, "And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and sought a way to destroy him; for they feared him..." (11:18). This comment functions to anticipate the questioning in 11:27–33 about Jesus' authority (cf. 12:12) and is a good indication that we are not dealing with a single intercalation in chapter 11 but at least a double or triple one.

the outer story across the inner story.”²¹ The defocalization of the A¹-story is “never complete.” “Something is ‘left hanging’ across the inner story’s telling.”²²

In a sense the defocalization at the close of LGM 1b is incomplete. For all the reader knows at the point of reading LGM 1:13, LGM 1 is complete in itself. Yet there is an element of anticipation that perhaps something more will be said. The ending brings no resolution to the many questions the narration has produced. By the end we do not know what really has gone on that evening. And the abruptness of Jesus getting up to go to the other side of the Jordan only aggravates our curiosity about what all those ritualistic details are about. Not knowing what has transpired between Jesus and this young man, one can only wonder about what is to come of the would-be disciple now that he has undergone this “ritual” initiation.

Be that as it may, there is still a real difference. The feature of incomplete defocalization of the A¹-story is intimately related to another commonly perceived feature of intercalation: a sense of the simultaneity of the two stories. Mark creates the impression that something which began in A¹ is still going on while B is being narrated. It is important to stress that by simultaneity—or what Shepherd calls “an ellipsis of the outer story [that] crosses the inner story”²³—it is not meant that the events narrated in the A- and B-stories are intended to be portrayed as happening at the same time. The *narrated* events are consecutive. In some of these stories Jesus appears in both the A- and B-stories, and he cannot be in two different places doing two different things at once.²⁴ It is only in the trial scene that the sense of simultaneity is such that

21. Shepherd, “Synoptic Problem,” 690.

22. Shepherd, *Definition*, 314, 316.

23. Shepherd, *Definition*, 324. Italics removed.

24. Jesus appears in the B and A² stories in 3:20–35, and in all three parts of 5:21–43 and 11:12–25. Similarly, the mission of the disciples mentioned in 6:13 is the cause of Herod’s and the others’ speculations about Jesus in 6:14–16, so the B episode does not begin simultaneously with the beginning of A¹ where Jesus calls the twelve and commissions them. I believe, therefore, that Fowler is wrong in stating that “The frame episode and the framed episode are...placed on a par with each other, with neither having priority, either logically or chronologically. ...In an intercalation neither episode has begun until both have begun, and neither is concluded until both are concluded” (*Reader*, 143–44). He says “this

one may feel that the two stories to some extent overlap in time, for there is no “carry over” of Jesus across into the story of Peter.²⁵ Thus we feel that Jesus’ fearless confession that he is the messiah is happening essentially at the same time as Peter’s cowardly disavowal of Jesus.

The impression that something mentioned in A¹ is still continuing or “going on” while the B-story is being narrated is produced in differing degrees in Mark’s intercalations. A reader will certainly perceive, for example, that Jesus’ journey to Jairus’s house, mentioned in 5:24, is going on while he becomes entangled with the woman who touches his garment. And in the story of Jesus’ family/the Beelzebub controversy, Jesus’ relatives²⁶ are said to be intent on seizing him, so when they arrive outside his door *after* the debate with the scribes from Jerusalem (the B-story) we infer that they had been on their way to his “home” while this discussion was going on.

The sense of simultaneity is not particularly strong in 3:20–35. It exists to an even lesser degree in the other examples. The appearance of simultaneity in 14:1–10 exists essentially in the sense that the chief priests and the scribes continued brooding over Jesus while Jesus was being anointed. Judas’ leaving to betray Jesus occurs directly after Jesus finishes speaking in 14:9. The death of John the Baptist is not presented as if it occurred while the disciples were on their mission,²⁷ though Herod’s reaction likening Jesus to John is simultaneous with this mission and to some extent a con-

simultaneity is clearest in the sixth intercalation,” but that one is the only one in which the simultaneity might be argued to be complete.

25. Shepherd disagrees on this point (*Definition*, 269–74), but see van Oyen, “Intercalation and Irony,” 965–77.

26. I.e. his mother and brothers, mentioned in 3:31. As Schuyler Brown points out, the device of intercalation establishes that *οἱ παρ’ αὐτοῦ* in 3:21 be the same characters who arrive in 3:31. See “Forgotten Controversy?” 99–108 (esp. 100–101).

27. Matthew jumbles the chronology of his stories by implying that the flashback of the death of John by Herod occurs at the time in the story when Mark, his source, narrates it. Thus after recounting the story about John (14:1–12) he has Jesus hear of it then withdraw with his disciples to a lonely place as if for safety (14:13).

sequence of it.²⁸ And the withering of the fig tree is made to *correlate* with the clearing of the temple, though *nothing* is said to indicate that any of the events narrated in 11:12–25 occurred at the same time that the tree was withering. The fact that withering occurred is only conveyed at the return to the A-story.²⁹ One might in retrospect imagine that the tree could possibly be withering while Jesus is in the temple, but Mark did not choose to reinforce that sense. When the withering happens is not clear; Mark is more interested in conveying the relatedness of the two A-stories through a similar structure than in creating a sense that something begun in the A¹-story is going on at the same time as the B-story. Hence the fig tree is discovered to be withered “in the morning” (11:20), in keeping with the morning start of A¹, rather than when they left the city in the evening (11:19).

Bearing in mind that the effect of simultaneity occurs only weakly in some of the intercalations, it is still noteworthy that this sense is only produced in the LGM intercalation retrospectively, when the reader realizes that the young man’s female relatives now wish to meet Jesus. The A¹-story did not prepare us to expect this, nor did the lack of resolution to our questions about what was going on that evening translate into a sense that the young man’s story is also still “going on” in addition to being unresolved.³⁰ Thus the LGM intercalation *does not* conform well to the criterion that a sense of simultaneity is produced by the implication that something relating to the A¹-story is still going on while the B-story is narrated. LGM 2 merely *resumes* the story line begun in LGM 1, much like the A-stories in 14:1–11, without providing any dis-

28. Note the difficulty with which Shepherd argues this point in *Definition*, 201–202.

29. As Shepherd acknowledges (*Definition*, 235).

30. The situation would be different if *ἐπέστρεψεν* in LGM 1:13 were a plural or referred to the young man. In what we know of longer Mark, there is no clear indication that the young man actually travelled with Jesus until Mark 14:51–52, though that notion would be implied if the appearance of his mother and sister in LGM 2 is interpreted as an effort to take control of their son, as in Mark 3:21, 31.

tinct indication that something that was begun earlier carried on through the B-narrative.

The lack of a sense that something that was begun in LGM 1 is still going on while the incident with James and John is being related is in part a result of the type of narrative involved: it offers a complete miracle story with an attached private teaching incident. With the exception of 6:7–13, which is a mission commissioning story, the A¹-stories in Mark are better classified as *introductions* to stories than as stories in themselves. The nearest point of comparison would be Mark 11:1–11, viewed as the initial outer story of a triple intercalation. 11:1–11 relates the messianic procession to Jerusalem (vv. 1–10) and the examination of the temple (v. 11). Together, these events are related in an almost allegorical fashion to the action in 11:12–13 of Jesus seeing the fig tree from a distance and going up to it looking for fruit. That is, the approach to the fig tree is a symbolization of what was happening in 11:1–10: the messiah arrived at Jerusalem and took note of the “barren” (“fruitless”) activities in the temple, which he then condemned in 11:15–17. 11:15–19 continues what was begun in 11:1–11, and from this perspective is both a B-story, in relation to the fig tree incident, *and* an A²-story completing an episode that focuses on Jesus’ concern over the use of the temple; as an A²-story, it shed light on the intercalated action of Jesus’ inspection of the fig tree. What is more, 11:15–19 is also the A¹-story of a third intercalation focusing on the plot of the Jewish leaders against Jesus. Their wish to “do away” with Jesus out of fear for his influence over the crowd is expressed in 11:18, in response to his demonstration in the temple, and their initial attempt to confront him occurs immediately after the original A²-story about the discovery of the withered fig tree (11:27–33). This controversy story is intimately connected with 12:1–12, which extends Jesus’ response to include a discourse “in parables.” The authorities’ fear for the opinion of the crowds is reiterated at the conclusion of this discourse, together with

their intention to detain (*κρατῆσαι*) him (12:12). The allegory resumes the theme of the messiah (the vineyard owner's son) seeking fruit from his father's vineyard.

When the intercalation in chapter 11 is viewed as a triple intercalation, we have two new A¹-stories. Like LGM 1, the first is in two parts (11:1–10, 11) and is basically complete in itself. The reader wonders what exactly is happening in 11:11, but 11:1–11 likewise lacks clear anticipation of the subsequent developments, including 11:15–18, and conveys no sense that something begun in the procession to Jerusalem and entrance into the temple is still going on during any of the bracketed material.³¹ I point these things out by way of showing that Mark's use of bracketing techniques in general defies strict classification, for there is a certain fluidity in his use of such devices. The triple sandwich in chapter 11 includes a classic intercalation in the middle, but the incorporation of additional outer stories relating to the temple transforms the whole into something which also resembles his use of *inclusio* and chiasmic structuring.³² Mark's interpretive devices can get complicated, and sometimes no one

31. Mark 11:1–11 ends anticlimactically with a sentence that does not convey the sort of conclusion the reader would be anticipating. LGM 1:13 likewise leaves the reader "hanging," though perplexity rather than suspense is the end result in both. The plot of the religious authorities that brackets the story of the discovery of the withered tree will again be the content of the A stories in 14:1–11.

32. It is sometimes noted that 3:20–35 is not just an intercalation but is also structured as a chiasm. E.g. Camery-Hoggatt, *Irony in Mark's Gospel*, 124. Below is an adaptation made from Barton's adaptation (*Family Ties*, 70–71) of the diagram in Schuyler Brown, "Forgotten Controversy?" 100:

(A ¹)	3:20	Introduction
	v. 21a	"His own" hear of his activity and set out to seize him. Their charge: "He is beside himself."
(B)	v. 22a	The first charge of the scribes: "He is possessed by Beelzebul."
	v. 22b	The second charge: "By the prince of demons he casts out demons."
	vv. 23–27	Jesus replies to the second charge of the scribes.
	vv. 28–30	Jesus replies to the first charge of the scribes.
(A ²)	vv. 31–35	Jesus' mother and brothers come and ask for him, resulting in the definition of who his family really is.

Vv. 35–41 of the B story in LGM (Mark 10:35–45) are chiasmically centred on the ironic words "We are able":

(A ¹)	LGM 1:1–13	And they come to Bethany. And there was there a certain woman.... (resurrection and private "initiation" stories)
(B)	10:35	James and John...came forward...and said to him...

term adequately delineates what he seems to be doing.³³

To summarize at this point, LGM 1 and 2, viewed against the criteria discussed so far, do seem to fit the definition of an intercalation at least as well as any of the usual six examples do. Its A²-story uses repetition to cause the reader to recollect A¹.³⁴ The B-story is basically a single, complete episode in itself (i.e. a “paragraph” or “pericope”), independent of the A-stories. There is minimal active character crossover between the stories (only the mention of the disciples in LGM 1:3), and parallel characters are contrasted by the juxtaposition of the outer story with the inner story.

The longer gospel intercalation differs from the norm most noticeably in the fact that the effect of simultaneous narration—that is, of the A¹-story continuing to go on while the B-story is related—is only poorly conveyed through the retrospective allusion to A¹ supplied by the elaborate repetitions in A². The reader does have a sense that not all has been said concerning the young man, and is likely still to be wondering about LGM 1 while reading Mark 10:35–45, but there is no impression that something which

v. 37	“Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left....”
v. 38	But Jesus said to them...“Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized....”
v. 39a	“We are able.”
v. 39b	“The cup that I drink you will drink, and the baptism....
v. 40	“But to sit at my right hand or my left is not mine to grant...”
v. 41	And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant....
vv. 42–45	Discipleship teaching.
(A ²) 10:46a	And he comes to Jericho.
LGM 2	And there were there the sister of the young man....
10:46b	And as he was leaving Jericho, with his disciples....

33. Shepherd (*Definition*, 9) refers to Mark 14:53–72 as having, put in Edwards’s terms, an A¹ - B¹ - A² - B² structure (he is citing Joel B. Green, *The Death of Jesus*, 126–27). Donahue (*Are You the Christ?* 59), following Best (*Temptation*, 91) sees a double intercalation in 14:10–11 (12–16) 17–21 (22–25)—a passage not normally considered an intercalation. Edwards (“Markan Sandwiches,” 207 n. 39) and Hooker (*St Mark*, 261) see a double intercalation in 11:1–21. Neiryneck notes the possibilities of seeing in 14:53–72 a very complicated “double, ou même triple *Verschachtelung*: 53 (54) 55–65; 54 (55–65) 66–72; 55–65 (66–72) 15,1” (*Evangelica*, 552–53) and of considering 11:12–25 and 14:1–11 (extending Best’s suggestion) as involved in double intercalations or as, with 14:43–72, involved in “alternating composition” (*Duality*, 244).

34. It does so more overtly than most other instances. The close pattern of repetition is closer to *inclusio* or bracketing, and in this respect it differs from the others.

began in the A⁵¹-story is still going on while the B-story is being related. The A⁵¹-story, moreover, is longer than usual because it is a complete (miracle) story, not merely an introduction. In this respect the LGM intercalation has affinities to paired frame stories, which use complete stories as interpretive brackets without creating a sense of simultaneity.³⁵ The outer intercalations in the triple intercalation of chapter 11 are a useful point of comparison (i.e. 11:1–11 [A¹], 12–14 [B], 15–19 [A²]; and 11:15–19 [A¹], 20–25 [B], 27–33 [A²]).

LGM 1 and 2 plus Mark 10:35–45 is not, therefore, a perfect example of intercalation, but considering that none of the classic examples perfectly manifests all of the ideal characteristics of an intercalation, this failure to match type in some important respects does not disqualify LGM 1 and 2 as an instance of this device, the more so since, as we have already seen, the whole arrangement does fulfill the most important function of an intercalation: the stories clearly reflect back upon each other as mutually interpretive.

II. The Hermeneutical Significance of Intercalation

We have arrived at the most important feature of the narrative device of intercalation: its mutually interpretive function.³⁶ Over the years a number of redaction critics have come to note that this narrative device is used to convey the author's theology.³⁷

35. This technique is discussed in chapter 6. Mark's central section is framed by one such pair, the two stories of the healing of blind men (8:22–26; 10:46–52).

36. Scholars referring to this function include Donahue, *Are You the Christ?* 42; Telford, *Barren Temple*, 35 n. 103 (citing Donahue), 48; Achtemeier, *Mark*, 23–25; Rhoads and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 51; Stock, *Call to Discipleship*, 164, 171; L. W. Hurtado, *Mark* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983), xxiv (cited in Beavis, *Mark's Audience*, 46–47); Marshall, *Faith*, 92, 93; Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 197; Broadhead, *Teaching with Authority*, 201; Anderson, "Dancing Daughter," 103; Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?" 39; Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus?* 101.

37. The thesis of Edwards's paper "Markan Sandwiches" is that "Mark sandwiches one passage into the middle of another with an intentional and discernible *theological purpose*" (196). Influential discussions of intercalation from this perspective are found in Best, *Temptation, passim*; Stein, *Proper Methodology*, 184; idem, "Temple," 128–30; Donahue, *Are You the Christ?* 60; Dewey, *Markan Public Debate*, 21. Crossan puts Edward's theory into practice in *Who Killed Jesus?* 100–105.

Scholars who have sought an explanation of how it functions to this end are apt to declare that “the two related stories illuminate and enrich each other, commenting on and clarifying the meaning, one of the other.”³⁸ Robert M. Fowler likes to compare the relation between the B-story and the A-story to a picture and its frame:

The intercalated episodes are sharply opposed to each other, but at the same time they frequently contain so many verbal echoes of each other that the reader can scarcely fail to take up the implicit invitation to read the framed episode in the light of the frame episode and vice versa.³⁹

With intercalations, the indication that the A- and B-stories reciprocally illuminate each other is found in their common and/or contrasting features, which include “*Leitwort* or motif interconnection.”⁴⁰ The two stories are logically independent, involving mainly different characters and taking place in different locations; nevertheless, the parallels highlighted by their formal juxtaposition imply that some sort of occult connection exists between them. The links themselves are mostly unapparent to the characters, for the interrelations emerge through the “selective” arrangement of details by the narrator and narratorial remarks known only to the reader;⁴¹ that is, they are a part of the dis-

38. Rhoads and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 51.

39. *Reader*, 143.

40. Shepherd, “Intercalation in Mark,” 690. In *Definition*, 326 n. 1 he summarizes these connections. Thematic connections are least tangible in Mark 3 and 11, and in greatest abundance in Mark 5 and 14:53–72. Either common or contrasting features may predominate. For instance, the fig tree/temple intercalation displays mainly parallels; contrasts predominate in Judas’s plot/Jesus’ anointing; both contrasts and parallels are found in Jairus’ daughter/woman with menstrual flow. See, further, Burkill, *Mysterious Revelation*, 121 n. 10; Rhoads and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 51. Scholars who usually speak of a contrast between the frame and the framed material overstate their case (e.g. Fowler’s comment above; Dewey, *Markan Public Debate*, 154, 241 n. 69). Sometimes the frame is basically the same “colour” and thus highlights the similarities more than the contrasts. (Dewey also acknowledges that there are frames which are consonant with the themes they enclose; e.g. 153–54.)

41. I put the word *selective* in quotation marks since the world from which the details are selected is only a *hypothetical* one in which the events could be said to have actually happened. That world does not exist anywhere—not even in the imagination of the author. The notion that fictional details are selected from a hypothetical world (what narrative critics call the story level) in which the events “happened” is just a useful way of discussing the discourse level. Put differently, there is no story, in any concrete sense, apart from discourse. Cf. Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 37: “Story, in my technical sense, exists only at an abstract level; any manifestation already entails the selection and arrangement performed by the discourse as actualized by a given medium. There is no privileged manifestation.”

course, and therefore only available to the narratee/reader. Because the reader perceives the connectedness of the stories in a way in which the characters cannot, the deeper meaning involves dramatic irony.⁴² The existence of a deeper significance is insinuated to the reader alone, who then tries to make coherent sense of these similar or contrasting elements by treating them metaphorically and seeking to discover a pattern of meaning or occult configuration beneath the “surface” of the stories.⁴³ The intercalated stories are treated as meaning “more and other than what they say”;⁴⁴ intercalations become “indications that more story is needed, as a supplement, if the story is to make sense;⁴⁵ the reader’s almost allegorical search for a coherent system of symbolic meaning will result in a new story to represent what the original really says.

That a deeper, coherent meaning can be produced by the device is clearest in the fig tree/temple stories. Both stories function on two levels. If we read these episodes without an eye to this indication of their relatedness, the fig tree story is essentially an illustration of the power of faith: the disciples are amazed that Jesus could cause a tree

42. Camery-Hoggatt offers a useful explanation of dramatic irony in *Irony in Mark's Gospel*, 2: “Simply put, dramatic irony occurs when the story-line itself plays upon the reader’s own repertoire of knowledge and conviction to produce a distinctive sub-text. Though the reactions of the *reader* are orchestrated against that repertoire, the reactions of the story’s characters cannot be. The characters are participants in the event, but they cannot know that the story about the event will be told in precisely this way.”

43. Aspects of a story which are capable of having a metaphorical quality involve some sort of incongruity with “real” life—at least as this is portrayed in the story. The incongruity arises from an implicit equation between one thing and another, essentially different (thus incongruous) thing, which is the basis of metaphor. As Fowler describes it, “In the encounter with metaphor, we confront an acknowledged or assumed incongruity or dissimilarity and are invited to explore previously unexplored congruities or similarities. ... Dealing with metaphor requires moving from an acknowledged incongruity to the realization of congruity” (*Reader*, 176). The impetus for this movement arises from the readers’ basic desire to naturalize incongruous and incoherent elements in stories. In a metaphorical reading, incongruities become congruous on a level different from the literal level (e.g. Kermode, *Genesis*, 64). The clothing on the young man in Gethsemane, e.g., is incongruous with the context of a chilly spring night. The fortuitous juxtaposition of words relating to blindness in 8:17–21 and 8:22–26 calls for this sort of reconciliation, as does the use of ἀνίστημι in 9:10 and again in 9:27 (with resurrection imagery). The fact that readers or hearers visualize the story as they read or hear it means that these metaphors are apprehended as symbols.

44. Kermode, *Genesis*, 26. Kermode is quoting his wife; he does not make this comment in connection with intercalation.

45. *Genesis*, 134.

to wither simply by cursing it, and Jesus responds that faith can allow one even to move mountains. The temple clearing story is a commentary on its corruption: the temple should be a house of prayer for all nations, but persons like the money changers and those selling pigeons have turned it into a den of thieves.

But if we read these stories figuratively, in view of the special interrelations pointed up through the discourse of this literary technique, the (deeper) meanings of these stories are very different. Both stories share a pattern whereby Jesus, quite unprovoked, takes aggressive measures to inhibit the “natural” functioning of something, first the fig tree, then the temple. The attempt to shut down the temple cultus is unexplained, but the similarity of this event to the equally peculiar cursing of the fig tree allows the significance of his action in the temple to be seen in terms of the actions that frame it.⁴⁶ Like the frame of a picture, the outer story highlights certain features or qualities in the material it surrounds. A deeper relatedness is sought through metaphorical interpretation, and a clue is found in the fact that in Hebrew scripture the fig tree can stand as a symbol for Israel and the temple cult.⁴⁷ The now usual conclu-

46. What Jesus is trying to accomplish in the temple by sending out buyers and sellers, overturning the tables of the money changers, and preventing the movement of vessels through the temple is not spelled out for us. I accept the interpretation that he is attempting to suspend the operation of the sacrificial cult by hindering various essential aspects of its operation. The vessels would then refer to sacred containers used to transport gifts and offerings. For this interpretation, see Telford, *Barren Temple*, 92–93 n. 102; Kelber, *Kingdom*, 101–102; idem, *Mark's Story of Jesus*, 60; Fowler, *Loaves and Fishes*, 217 n. 34; Edwards, “Markan Sandwiches,” 207–208. These scholars all note that “cleansing” is an inappropriate description for what Jesus does in Mark's gospel, for the attempt is not to purify the cult of secular corruption but rather, symbolically, to shut the cultus down. As Edwards puts it, “...Jesus is not restoring the temple; he is pronouncing its doom!” (208).

47. For the connection between Israel and fig trees, see Bird, “Some *γαρ* Clauses,” 177; Stein, “Temple,” 130; Telford, *Barren Temple*, 20–21, 132–37, 139–40. Telford's discussion is more complete and specific. He shows that the fig tree has a variety of metaphorical connotations in the Old Testament, not all of which are related to Israel in particular. However, he notes: “...the ravaged or withered fig-tree is a vivid emblem of God's active *punishment* of his people in Jer. 5.17; 8.13 Hos. 2.12; 9.10, 16 and Am. 4.9 (cf. also Ps. 105.33 Is. 28.4; 34.4 Na. 3:12). Within the context of a number of passages, indeed, the reason given for God's wrathful visitation particularly concerns cultic aberration on the part of Israel, her running after false gods, or her condemnation for a *corrupt Temple cultus and sacrificial system* (e.g. Jer. 5.17–18; 8.12–23 Hos. 2.11–13; 9.10–17 Am. 4.4–13). In Mi. 7.1 ff., God's search for an uncorrupt and righteous people is pictured in the express terms of a vain search for first-ripe figs!” (135).

sion is that Jesus' clearing of the temple represents God's assessment (i.e. the omniscient knowledge of the implied author, who has juxtaposed these events for the sake of ironic commentary) that the temple has not "produced fruit" and therefore deserves to be cursed and "wither up," to be of no service to anyone again (cf. the interest in its destruction in 13:1-4).⁴⁸ This insight gives additional significance to Jesus' objection that the temple is supposed to be a house of prayer for all nations, but is only a den of thieves. These two stories really provide a rationale for the real-world destruction of the Jerusalem temple by suggesting that its problems were so pervasive that the institution needed to be destroyed altogether. This meaning is apparent to the narratee (reader) more so than to any character in the story (except, presumably, Jesus), because only the reader is supplied with this vantage on the events.

But it is really only in this example that the mutually interpretive function of (canonical) Markan intercalation is patently evident. Scholars have attempted to read the other examples in light of what Mark has done here, with varied results.⁴⁹ The next

48. Cf. Best, *Temptation*, 83: "The incident about the fig-tree...has presumably been placed there in order to imply the judgement of God over the Temple, the city, or Israel—there are many leaves, but no fruit." In his preface to the second edition (1990), xxxvi-vii, this interpretation becomes more nuanced. Also Nineham, *St Mark*, 299-301; Burkill, *Mysterious Revelation*, 121; Stein, "Temple," 130 (and the authors he cites in n. 37); Kelber, *Mark's Story of Jesus*, 60; Edwards, "Markan Sandwiches," 206-208. Like many commentators (e.g. Hooker, *St Mark*, 260-70), Burkill and Stein focus more on Israel as the focus of the condemnation than on the temple itself and its leaders. I see no justification for this conclusion. *Israel* is not condemned; rather, its Jewish leadership ("tenants"; 12:9) are replaced with unspecified "others." By equating the tenants with Israel, Stein overlooks the comment that the Jewish leaders, here described as "the chief priests and the scribes and the elders" (cf. 12:12b with 11:27), perceived that the parable was told against them, and therefore feared that the multitude would side against them if they attempted to arrest Jesus. Mark does not present the opinion that Israel is replaced, but, rather, that the constitution of membership in God's people will be redefined (thus the new covenant in 14:24); it is only the temple that actually needs to be destroyed. Burkill points to Mark "8:38, 9:41-48; 10:28-31, etc." as "certain passages in which St. Mark betrays the conviction that Israel has already sealed its own doom by rejecting the Messiah" (120-21 and n. 9), but these verses do not focus on Israel at all (they speak of "anyone" and "whosoever"). On this subject, see Milavec, "Identity."

49. Skepticism about the universality of the mutually interpretive quality of intercalation is warranted. Cf. Aichele, *Jesus Framed*, 25: "However, no text (including that of the gospel of Mark) can successfully direct its own reading. While Mark's intercalations (such as the Temple 'cleansing' in 11:15-18) do resonate in provocative ways with the stories into which they are inserted..., they can hardly be said to explain them." Tate (*Outside*, 59-60) believes that Mark used intercalation to compel his reader to perceive interconnections, but acknowledges that the device often generates "a high level of ambiguity and plurivocality." "Rarely are the inferences demanded by such interconnectedness clear, much less

clearest example usually considered to demonstrate the mutually interpretive function of intercalation is the instance in 5:21–43, though even here scholars diverge widely in their interpretations. The assumption that this purpose must be in evidence is based on the strong parallels of similarities and contrasts.⁵⁰ Both recipients of healings are female, but the little girl with a rich family contrasts with the poor woman who spent all that she had on doctors; both females have become ritually unclean, but Jesus is not concerned with touching the dead girl or with the effects of being touched by the woman with the flow of blood. Both females are called “daughter” (*θυγάτριον* in 5:23; *θυγάτηρ* in 5:34). The number twelve is mentioned in both stories. Faith is a theme in both, as is “salvation.”

It is not surprising, therefore, that a number of scholars have now become convinced that the parallels are deliberate and involve an implicit commentary on an underlying (i.e. metaphorical) significance to these events. There is much to convince the reader *that* some deeper significance to these details might be discerned through effort, even if no viable solution seems forthcoming. The LGM intercalation, however, is about as striking an example of mutually interpretive stories as is the fig tree/temple intercalation. The intercalated stories in chapter 10 are thematically linked through the imagery of death and ritual initiation. The young man is at first dead, but after being raised and a period of six days, he reappears in the story dressed as if for a rite of initiation. James and John are taught that in order to receive positions of honour they must be prepared to drink Jesus’ cup and undergo his baptism. On the literal level, these words allude to the rites of initiation into the Christian community. This community itself is represented by the words *ἐν ὑμῖν* in the teachings in 10:43–44: “But

univocal. Most of the inferential gaps remain open-ended.”

50. Cf. Kermode, *Genesis*, 137; Fowler, *Reader*, 143; Berg, “Reading In/to Mark,” 199–200 (cited in chapter 7 n. 7); Marshall, *Faith*, 93; Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 168 and n. 58; Tate, *Outside*, 59, 123–24; and Aichele, *Jesus Framed*, 63.

it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all.” At a figurative level, these terms connote sharing in Jesus’ death. If the two stories interpret each other, then the linen cloth of the young man’s initiation is easily viewed as a baptismal garment or more generally as a symbol for his readiness to be initiated into this society of true disciples.

The B-story used the imagery of undergoing Jesus’ baptism as a metaphor for the adoption of an attitude of self-abnegation patterned after Jesus’ offering of his life in Jerusalem as a ransom for others (10:38–39, 45). Through his “baptism” of death and resurrection Jesus exemplifies the eschatological paradox that those who seek to save their lives lose them, and those who lose their lives for the gospel save them (cf. 8:35 with 15:29–32). Thus, when the stories are viewed as mutually interpretive, the mystery of the kingdom of God in the A¹-story is illuminated as a discipleship teaching about the way of death and resurrection. As in the Johannine Lazarus story, a new light is cast on the soteriological symbolism of this miracle of resurrection. It is not, as in John, used as a symbol for the present experience of “life” imparted by one who is “the resurrection and the life,” as expressed in the saying, “he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die” (John 11:25–26). Rather, the life Jesus gives is used as a metaphor for his way of life through death to the self. When the *νεανίσκος* reappears in Gethsemane at the very moment when Jesus is delivered up to the authorities it becomes clear that his costume and his “following with” Jesus (*συνηκολούθει αὐτῷ*) symbolize a readiness to put this teaching into effect. He seeks to enter Jesus’ glory (i.e. 10:37) by accepting persecution, and is therefore attempting to do what James and John said they were capable of doing—after the latter two have run away. The intelligibility of 14:51–52 as a symbolic expression of the metaphor developed in 10:35–45 of undergoing Jesus’

“baptism” of death in Jerusalem constitutes good reason to assume that the author of LGM 1 and 2 was aware of the mutually interpretive function of this Markan bracketing device.

Like Jesus’ cursing of the fig tree, the young man’s actions are overtly symbolic, an extended metaphor as stark as that in 8:34: “If any one would come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me.” Only, instead of showing up with a cross on his back, he arrives dressed for his own “funeral” (cf. the function of the *σινδών* in 15:46) or “baptism”. His naked flight represents a failure to follow through in this resolve (not a failure to be actually baptized or the disrobing phase in a two-part symbolic enactment of this rite), and since this flight also symbolizes the flight of the disciples as a whole, it points up the ideological framework within which the reader is to evaluate the abandonment of the twelve. The disciples lost their initial resolve to share in their master’s fate (cf. 14:31), abandoning him in the face of real danger to the self. Their desertion is a failure to enact the discipleship teachings of the central section. But this is part of the mystery of the kingdom, too. Like seed sown on rocky soil, their enthusiasm was short lived, and they fell away as soon as persecutions set in (4:16–17).

The issue for James and John and the ten is the abandonment of the values of this world for a life without concern for the self. They wish eschatological glory and status but are told they must become like servants and slaves in order to receive it. That the young man is confronted with the same issue is hinted at by the unexpected statement that he and Jesus went from the tomb into his house because (*γάρ*) “he was rich.” This peculiar *γάρ* clause, along with the words “looking at him loved him,” connects the young man’s situation with that of the rich man in 10:17–22 (cf. 10:21 with LGM 1:8) and with the ensuing teaching on abandoning riches and family in 10:23–31. The issue for the young man is whether he can abandon family and possessions and “follow” Jesus (10:21). The appearance of his mother and sister, in view of Jesus’ refusal to

receive them, probably represents an obstacle to this goal.⁵¹

III. Intercalation and the Conveyance of Markan Theology

III.1. Donahue's Suggestion

In 1972 John R. Donahue suggested that all of Mark's intercalations illustrate two main theological themes, which happen to be the ones that are the subject of this intercalation. He wrote:

...in Mark the framing sections and intercalated material make up a carefully articulated dialogue, where sections leading to the suffering and death of Jesus are framed by discipleship material. Thus, Mark uses the technique of intercalation to underscore two major themes of his gospel, the way of suffering of Jesus, and the necessity of the disciple to follow Jesus in this way.⁵²

This conclusion is arresting in view of the above interpretation of the intercalation created by LGM 1 and 2. Longer Mark's A-story concerns the instruction of a young man in the necessity to follow Jesus in his suffering, and the B-story concentrates on Jesus' suffering as the model to be followed. But Donahue's suggestion requires scrutiny, particularly since it has been met with reservations.⁵³

Viewed closely, Donahue's passing suggestion is abstruse and inadequately argued. It is not clear to me what "sections leading to the suffering and death of Jesus" means. This might refer to B-material highlighting the exemplary value of Jesus' death, which

51. The effect of the repetition "for he was rich" will be discussed at greater length in chapter 7. There it will be noted that peculiar *γάρ* clauses functioning as hints to a deeper significance may be found in the three intercalations that are most readily viewed as mutually interpretative: 5:21-43; 11:12-22; and LGM 1:1-Mark 10:46b.

52. Donahue, *Are You the Christ?* 62. Of the six, he believes that only the one in chapter 5 does not fit this pattern.

53. Especially Dewey, *Markan Public Debate*, 22, cited by van Oyen in "Intercalation and Irony," 953, n. 21; also by Barton in *Family Ties*, 76. Edwards ("Markan Sandwiches," 196) and Barton reject the idea that these are the only themes developed through this device; Edwards adds "faith, discipleship, bearing witness, and the dangers of apostasy."

is framed by A-material on discipleship. Or it might refer to incidents that culminate in a reference to a plot against Jesus, and include A-material. Some of his arguments seem to require the first meaning, others the second. Hence his point is not clearly formulated. When we examine the intercalations themselves, we see that the themes of Jesus' death and of discipleship as a following of Jesus in this way are only partly evident in 3:20–35 and cannot be plausibly argued for 5:21–43. But he is right that a focus on discipleship and the passion is *associated* with this device, and is evident to a certain extent within the remaining four intercalations.

Donahue argues for a focus on Jesus' death in 3:20–35 (family of Jesus/Beelzebub controversy) on the basis of the generally hostile representation of the scribes in Mark and the reference to their coming from Jerusalem—the place where Jesus dies. This interpretation seems to miss the point of the intercalation, however, for it makes nothing of the visit of Jesus' family. The A- and B-stories are related by the similarity in the way the scribes and Jesus' family misunderstand the spiritual forces at work in Jesus. The juxtaposition of these stories seems to imply that not only the scribes but even Jesus' own family are guilty of the unforgivable sin of blasphemy against the holy spirit, for they, like the scribes, deny that Jesus' authority is from God (they think he is crazy—a mental state usually ascribed to demonic influence; the scribes think he is possessed by Beelzebub but is controlling and using it).⁵⁴ The intercalation stresses that true insiders perceive the eschatological realities behind Jesus' encounters with the demonic realm (cf. 4:10–13), respond with faith to Jesus (symbolized by gathering

54. The scribes say *Βεελζεβοὺλ ἔχει*, which seems to imply that Jesus is in control—hence their comment “by the prince of demons he casts out demons.” Cf. Trocmé, *Formation*, 135–36; Stein, *Proper Methodology*, 216–17, 218; Kelber, *Kingdom*, 25–26; Lane, *Mark*, 147; Matera, “Prologue,” 10; Hooker, *St Mark*, 114; Munro, “Women Disciples,” 56; Goulder, “Those Outside,” 292, 295; Camery-Hoggatt, *Irony in Mark's Gospel*, 124; and esp. Barton, *Family Ties*, 75–78 (note the authors he cites in n. 79). Guelich (*Mark*, 1:171) thinks the damnation of Jesus' family is not so certain as it is for the scribes, and Barton is inclined to agree, but vacillates due to the strong parallels produced between the attitude of the scribes and the actions of Jesus' family. See also the discussion in R. E. Brown et al., *Mary in the New Testament*, 53–59.

close to him in 3:32 and 4:10), and do the will of God; true outsiders are those whose lack of faith prevents them from perceiving the salvific implications of the conflict that is really going on behind Jesus' exorcisms (3:23–30). In general, these A-stories do convey the discipleship theme that one must desert one's family in order to do the will of God, just as Jesus rejects his own family in favour of people who follow his teachings and who perceive that Jesus is an agent of the holy spirit. The theme of Jesus' death is not evident here, unless one perceives, as Donahue would later argue, that doing the will of God is associated elsewhere in the story with "the cross of Christ."⁵⁵

Donahue concedes that the stories of Jairus's daughter and of the woman with the hemorrhage do not fit the scheme of a focus on Jesus' death and on the way of the cross.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, the remaining intercalations more adequately support Donahue's point. Concerning the temple/fig tree intercalation, Donahue pointed out that the B-story culminates in the decision of the chief priests and scribes to kill Jesus (11:18). One may affirm that this theme is brought into relation with the action of clearing the temple, but it is hard to see a focus on this theme in this intercalation. Mark does correlate the fact of the destruction of the temple with the fact of the crucifixion (14:58; 15:29, 38), but the immediate focus in this intercalation, as I have noted, is on the bar-

55. Donahue, *The Gospel in Parable*, 45. The best example is 14:36: "And he said, 'Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee; remove this cup from me; but not what I will, but what thou wilt.'" A reader would not perceive this association on an initial reading, and few would perceive it on subsequent readings. Still, Donahue draws an interesting connection.

56. Marshall (*Faith*, 99–100) argues that the resurrection of Jairus's daughter is "a symbolic anticipation" of Jesus' resurrection. He notes that the three disciples brought with Jesus to witness this miracle are the same three who are brought to witness the transfiguration (an anticipation of Jesus' resurrection, with reference to the prior necessity of his suffering) and who accompany Jesus when he goes off on his own to pray that "the hour might pass from him" and that God might "'remove this cup.'" In his view, "This signals to the reader that the raising of the dead girl acquires its fullest meaning when viewed in relation to the cross and resurrection of Jesus." It is hard not to see some sort of anticipation of Jesus' resurrection in his raising of the little girl, but it is difficult to view the story of the woman with the menstrual flow as a teaching on the way of discipleship rather than as a lesson about faith, and the positions of these two stories are the reverse of Donahue's scheme (i.e. the inner story is supposed to focus on christology, the outer on discipleship).

reness of the temple, which is the justification for its later destruction. However, as we have seen, the incident in the temple and the hostility it invokes from the Jewish leadership is the A¹ story of an overlapping intercalation in which the place of Jesus' death in the divine scheme figures prominently. After these authorities confront Jesus in the A² story, 11:21–33, Mark has Jesus reply to them with an allegorical story about the owner of a vineyard (i.e. God) sending his son (the messiah) to his vineyard (Israel, Jerusalem, the temple) “to get from his tenants” (who in 11:27 are identified as “the chief priests and the scribes and the elders”) “some of the fruit of the vineyard” (12:2). The theme of the owner sending his son *to get fruit* from the tenants reconfirms the point of the first of these three interconnected intercalations, that Jesus' action of approaching the fig tree looking for fruit was a metaphor for the messiah arriving at the temple seeking a people prepared by the religious authorities;⁵⁷ what is now added to this thought is the theme that the self-interest of the Jewish authorities (note the attribution of greed to these leaders in 11:17 and 12:7) will result in the messiah's rejection and death and in the destruction of these leaders. So Jesus' death is connected with the theme of the temple's destruction, made clear by the middle intercalation; but the focus on Jesus' death is principally at issue in the third intercalation, particularly when the A²-story is thought to include 12:1–12.⁵⁸ A focus on discipleship does occur in the story of the cursing of the fig tree (e.g. the lesson on faith), though it is interesting to note that these A-stories are the B-stories of the flanking intercalations.

14:1–11 situates the story of Jesus' anointing within the plot to kill Jesus, which culminates in Judas' decision to betray him. The perfidious plot contrasts with the woman's selfless act of service, helping to illuminate the significance of this anointing as a foretokening of Jesus' passion: what the religious leaders do will lead to Jesus'

57. On the symbolism of the fruit, see n. 47.

58. Cf. Burkill, *Mysterious Revelation*, 121–22, who focuses on the destruction of Israel (which is not a Markan theme) rather than on the destruction of the temple, but makes essentially the same argument.

death; hence the woman's anointing is explained as the preparation of Jesus' body beforehand for burial. The B-story of her sacrifice for another does seem to become an illustration of the nature of his passion, for Jesus comments that wherever the gospel is preached what she has done will be told in her memory.⁵⁹ In the light of the middle story, the plot to kill Jesus appears not as a defeat but as a necessary occurrence controlled by God. But though the B-story conforms to Donahue's scheme, I cannot agree that the A-material here is discipleship oriented, despite its mention of Judas.

The situating of Jesus' trial within the story of Peter's denial produces a strong contrast between Jesus' fearless confession that he is the Christ, which leads to his condemnation as deserving death (14:64), and Peter's sworn denial of any knowledge of Jesus, backed with a curse. In other words, the intercalation offers contrasting models of discipleship. A disciple must bear testimony through persecution (13:9–13) and endure to the end. As earlier, in 8:31–38, Peter has become a prime example of one who is ashamed of Jesus and his words, of the message that discipleship involves taking up one's cross and following Jesus. The sense of simultaneity produced by this intercalation also reinforces the motif that divine provenance is controlling these events, for the mocking of Jesus' prophetic ability (14:65) is made to occur at the same moment as his prophecies about the Son of man's rejection and of Peter's three denials are being fulfilled.

The final intercalation to consider is the insertion of the story of John's death within the story of the sending of the disciples to preach and the mention of their return (6:7–14a, 14b–29, 30). As Donahue argues, the interlude recalling John's death and burial carries on the earlier theme that John is a precursor of Jesus in the "way" (1:2, 3), which the central section defines as the way of suffering and death. Jesus is the

59. At least that seems to be a reasonable interpretation of Jesus' comment about her. The meaning of this comment is certainly not obvious.

next to follow in this way, for he began his own preaching mission after John was “delivered up” (1:14); the B-story, then, both elucidates what eventually happened to John and anticipates what will happen to Jesus. The fact that this story is surrounded by the story about a mission of Jesus’ disciples underscores the actuality that Jesus’ own disciples will eventually take their turn and begin their preaching mission after Jesus dies (cf. 1:14–15), and will themselves be “delivered up” as a result (13:9–10).⁶⁰ Herod’s worry that Jesus might be John *redivivus* may also suggest to a reader (though not on an initial reading) that Jesus’ resurrection/vindication is attested in the subsequent activities of his disciples. In this example the A-story is, as Donahue proposes, discipleship oriented, and the B-story prototypical of Jesus’ death.

Overall, then, Donahue seems to be correct that the literary device of intercalation is used to stress important theological motifs, particularly discipleship and its relation to Jesus’ inevitable death. The A-stories *tend* to focus somewhat more on the disciples and discipleship, whereas the B-stories often concentrate more on Jesus and his suffering and death. The LGM intercalation would seem to stand as an *ideal* instance of a tendency observable in half of Mark’s intercalations, and its relative clarity could help bring these themes into focus when they are encountered in other intercalations.

III.2. *Is Hermeneutic Precedence Given to the Inner Story?*

J. R. Edwards is another scholar who has examined the assumption that Markan intercalation is a mechanism for expressing the author’s theology. His distinctive proposal is that “*the middle story nearly always provides the key to the theological pur-*

60. Cf. Kelber, *Mark’s Story of Jesus*, 34; Edwards, “Markan Sandwiches,” 206; Best, *Temptation*, 119–20. Meye (*Jesus and the Twelve*, 28) tentatively suggests a similar interpretation, but does not explicitly endorse it. See also Black’s discussion of Meye’s suggestion in *The Disciples*, 80, 290 n. 91. Black emphasizes that these passages foreshadow Jesus’ death and the persecution of Christian missionaries.

pose of the sandwich."⁶¹ His contention is that the theological point of the B-story is usually clearer or more immediately apparent than that of the A-story; in other words, the B-story is less dependent on the A-story for its own elucidation, though it supplies the key to the meaning of the A-story.

As far as the usual six examples are concerned, I do not believe he has made a convincing case. Only the example in chapter 11 seems close to fitting this pattern. Jesus' behaviour with respect to the fig tree is certainly even more eccentric than his clearing of the temple. But this is also the example in which both stories most clearly elucidate each other. He offers a better example with 15:40–16:8 and 4:1–20, but these are not usually considered intercalations. In any event, though his point is weakly substantiated, it leads to an interesting observation concerning the LGM intercalation, namely that this intercalation further resembles the instance in chapter 11 by having the more straightforward story in the middle and the more puzzling incident as the frame.

IV. Intercalations and Dramatized Irony

Tom Shepherd has attempted to demonstrate that intercalations function to create instances of dramatized irony, and his dissertation reveals a number of interesting instances of dramatic irony that occur as a consequence of this device. Irony is most prominent in 14:53–72, where Peter's predicted denial of Jesus ironically vindicates the latter at the moment when his accusers are mocking his prophetic ability. In Mark 14:1–11 there is certainly irony in the fact that the plot of the priests is what brings about the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection which the woman's anointing characterizes (in its selflessness) and prefigures (he is anointed now because his body will be raised from the dead before it can be given a proper anointing). Irony exists in

61. "Markan Sandwiches," 196 (*italics original*).

the intercalation in chapter 3 but is tangential to the focus and possibly inadvertent. As Jesus is reasoning that a house divided cannot stand, his own house (i.e. his family) is divided and is coming against him (note *κρατέω*, which is also used for Jesus' arrest in 14:44, 46, 49, 51). This situational irony, which makes Jesus look mistaken in his reasoning, is resolved when Jesus redefines his family as those who do God's will.⁶²

Shepherd's arguments that irony is a noteworthy feature in the intercalations in Mark 6 and 11 seem forced. It may be significant that these two intercalations are also the ones in which the sense of simultaneity is weakest. If there is a correlation between simultaneity and situational irony in Mark's intercalations, it can be explained by the fact that the potential for situational irony is greatly enhanced when two logically unrelated actions are narrated as happening at the same time.

Since the intercalation produced by LGM 1 and 2 does not create much of a sense of simultaneity, it is not surprising that it also does not display any situational irony. Nevertheless, irony inheres to this intercalation insofar as the contrasting actions of the young man and the disciples are perceptible to the reader but not to the characters themselves. It is also worth noticing that irony already existed in the B-story. It is clear to the reader that when James and John assured Jesus that they could drink his "cup" and undergo his "baptism" they did so simply because they sought positions of honour above the other disciples; they had no idea that he was inquiring whether they could surrender their lives as martyrs (10:39a). James and John basically expected Jesus to usurp authority in Jerusalem and were attempting to secure personal benefits in light of this misconception. That they were not at that point capable of denying themselves to the point of dying with him is later made evident by the flight of all the disciples from Gethsemane. Yet James and John would eventually die as martyrs, as Jesus

62. *Definition*, 127–28, 136, 333. There is some (conceptually irrelevant) irony in the fact that Jairus's daughter dies during the interlude when the woman with the hemorrhage is healed.

implies in 10:39. It is thereby suggested to the reader that their insincere reply is actually true in a sense in which these disciples neither intended nor could comprehend. They thus spoke ironically.

Unlike the examples Shepherd produced, this irony exists in the B-story by itself, without reference to the A-story. Put differently, removing the A-story does not remove the irony. However, the longer gospel additions intensify this irony, for the young man whom Jesus just instructed in the mystery of the kingdom of God will himself exemplify both the insincerity and ironic truth that pertain to the words “We are able.” The insincerity of James and John’s claim to be able to undergo this baptism is symbolized when the young man leaves behind his linen (“baptismal”/burial) garment in Gethsemane after the others have run away. The ironic truth that they will undergo this baptism is symbolized when he reappears at the empty tomb donning the costume of the vindicated martyr (e.g. Rev. 6:11; 7:9, 13–14) and speaking of the restitution of the disciples under Jesus’ leadership, of Jesus’ “going before them” to Galilee.⁶³

V. Conclusions

It may be concluded that the insertion of LGM 1 and 2 into Mark 10 creates as clear an instance of Markan-style intercalation as any of the six standard examples of this technique. The literary effect of this device is to suggest to the reader that the initiation imagery in LGM 1b is baptismal and symbolic of the young man’s readiness to undergo Jesus’ “baptism” of suffering and death (Mark 10:38–39); his apparent sincerity contrasts with the insincere pledge of James and John in the middle pericope,

63. Shepherd’s argument (*Definition*, 331, 351) that intercalation is better conceived as a means of creating dramatized irony than as a means used by Mark to convey his theology has not adequately challenged the standard view. By assuming that intercalation has this *one* function, Shepherd has undervalued the mutually interpretive element in some of the pericopae, a quality which does not just serve the ends of dramatic irony. Moreover, irony exists throughout Mark, as Camery-Hoggatt’s book shows. The juxtaposition of two unconnected stories in a way that implies that they are actually related can greatly facilitate irony, but Mark did not need to use intercalation to produce this effect.

though, as it happens, the young man later fails to undergo this “baptism” when he attempts to “follow with” Jesus in Gethsemane.

Like at least half of the intercalations in Mark, the central story in the LGM intercalation anticipates Jesus’ passion, whereas the framing story focuses on discipleship. Though there is no appreciable effect of simultaneity or situational irony within the longer gospel intercalation, the mutually interpretive or “framing” function is as clear here as it is in Mark 11:12–25. Interestingly, these two intercalations also closely resemble each other by virtue of the fact that they both use an enigmatic and highly symbolic storyline to frame a more straightforward incident.

VI. Excursus on the Relevance of Intercalation to the Dating of the *Letter to Theodore*

The prospect that the author of LGM 1 and 2 was aware of the interpretative function of Markan intercalation has important implications for the date of the *Letter to Theodore*, for in the realm of biblical scholarship this general appreciation for what intercalation does had come about in the years subsequent to the letter’s discovery.

Though it is now common to read about the reciprocally-elucidating quality of this Markan literary technique, this perspective has only emerged in the last three decades.⁶⁴ References to the device have typically been more concerned with its relevance to the meaning (or tradition-historical development) of particular passages than with the nature of the phenomenon itself. Most discussions of intercalation were therefore relegated to parenthetical asides within paragraphs or in the small type at the bottom of pages. Presently, only a handful of studies have carefully examined intercalation as a subject in its own right, by analyzing the narratological effects of select

64. The following survey of the history of scholarly interpretation of intercalation is dependent upon the determinations of relevant authors provided in previous studies of this history (e.g. by Edwards, Shepherd, and van Oyen).

examples; the first dissertation on this technique was written in 1985; since then one other dissertation and a few articles have been produced.⁶⁵

Those who have traced the evolution of scholarly opinion concerning intercalation have pointed out that Mark's tendency to put one story inside another was first recognized to have a narrative function by von Dobschütz in 1928, who noted its utility in creating the illusion of time passing or of distance being traversed:⁶⁶

Zur Kunst eines guten Erzählers gehört es, die Gedanken seiner Zuhörer zu beschäftigen, wenn ein Zeitraum auszufüllen oder auch eine räumliche Entfernung zu überbrücken ist: Indem der Zuhörer inzwischen mit etwas anderem unterhalten wird, erweckt man in ihm die Illusion einer längeren Zeitdauer oder einer größeren räumlichen Entfernung. Von diesem Kunstgriff weiß Markus vorzüglichen Gebrauch zu machen.⁶⁷

Von Dobschütz also reasoned that intercalations can function as a means of anticipating later developments, as when the mentioning of Jesus asking his disciples to procure a boat (3:9) anticipates his teaching in a boat on the sea in 4:1 (this example is not now considered an instance of intercalation) or when Jesus first enters the temple and witnesses its functioning (11:11), which happens in anticipation of his "cleansing" the temple.⁶⁸ Both 3:9 and 11:11, moreover, anticipate other intercalations (3:20–35; 11:12–25) and function "zwei auf einanderfolgende Geschichten in innerliche Verbindung mit einander zu bringen."⁶⁹ The former intercalation works to contrast the motives behind the shared assessment of Jesus held by his family and the scribes. In

65. Dissertations: G. A. Wright, *Markan Intercalation: A Study in the Plot of the Gospel*, unpublished PhD dissertation (The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1985) (I have not managed to obtain this); T. Shepherd, *Definition* (1991). Articles: J. R. Edwards, "Markan Sandwiches" (1989); van Oyen, "Intercalation and Irony" (1992).

66. He is cited as the first to draw attention to the narrative effects of intercalation by Shepherd (*Definition*, 1), whose opinion is repeated by van Oyen ("Intercalation and Irony," 949). Others had already noted Mark's tendency to put one story inside another, but did not consider it to have a narrative function requisite of a deliberate technique. See van Oyen, "Intercalation and Irony," 958.

67. Von Dobschütz, "Erzählerkunst," 193.

68. "Erzählerkunst," 196–97.

69. "Erzählerkunst," 196.

the case of 14:53–72, intercalation functions to create the appearance not of time passing but of simultaneity.⁷⁰

Following von Dobschütz's study, the dominant impression among scholars was that the device was used to create or heighten the sense of time passing between the start of the first story and its resolution.⁷¹ The idea that this device was used by Mark to manipulate the sense of narrative time remained the dominant perspective through the 1960s, though infrequently other aspects of von Dobschütz's discussion appeared in the comments of some authors during this period. E. Klostermann noted in 1950 that the device brings related stories together, and T. A. Burkill observed in 1963 that the technique draws attention to parallels or contrasts in the two episodes.⁷² The earliest reference I have found to the mutually interpretive function of this device appears, however, in an unconventional article from 1953 by C. H. Bird, an early proponent of Mark's authorial creativity.⁷³ In this article he mentioned the "Marcan parenthesis" of

70. "Erzählerkunst," 197–98.

71. This idea reappears in Bultmann, *History* (2nd ed.: 1931), 214, 301–302 (cited by van Oyen, "Intercalation and Irony," 950); Klostermann, *Das Markus-Evangelium* (1950), 50; S. E. Johnson, *Mark* (1960), 104, 123, 191; Nineham, *The Gospel of St Mark* (1963), 112, 157, 172; Achtemeier, "Toward the Isolation of Pre-Markan Miracle Catenae," *JBL* 89 (1970): 270; Schweizer, *The Good News According to Mark* (1970), 116. This was the most common interpretation before the 1960s, and is still mentioned with frequency (see, e.g., Schuyler Brown, "Mark 3.21," 100–101 n. 4). Most scholars holding this view have assumed that recourse to this device was necessary in order to produce the effect of time passing. The literary critic Frank Kermode (*Genesis*, 130) points to this assumption as an example of "the remarkable naiveté of professional exegesis when confronted with problems of narrative. ... When, in sober fact, time passed, time must pass in the story." Note also the comments to this effect by Edwards ("Markan Sandwiches," 195 n. 13), Best (*Temptation*, 76), Fowler (*Loaves*, 114–15), and Telford (*Mark*, 103–104), following Edwards. The sense of time passing is not so important as the sense that an action or reality initiated in the A-story is developing simultaneously with the actions of the B-story. Two logically unconnected events with strikingly parallel aspects are unfolding simultaneously and are therefore actually connected, in some occult fashion.

72. Klostermann, *Das Markus-Evangelium*, 36; Burkill, *Mysterious Revelation*, 121 and n. 10. Both are cited by Edwards in "Markan Sandwiches," 196 n. 14. Burkill came close to conscious realization that one story provides hints for the interpretation of the other when he stated that "Israel stands under the curse of the Messiah...because it failed to bring forth the fruit which one would naturally have expected of a privileged people" (121–22); as with a number of other scholars, his impression that the cursed fig tree represents an indictment of Israel depended more on his understanding of Luke's parable of "the unproductive fig tree" (13:6–9) than on his awareness of how intercalation causes two stories to illuminate each other (see his n. 11).

73. "Some γαρ Clauses," 171–87.

the temple clearing and cursed fig tree, and noted that the former “should be regarded as elucidating and elucidated by this episode,” adding that this is a “function of a Marcan parenthesis.”⁷⁴ He extended this insight to the intercalation in Mark 5 as well (he mentions the one in chapter 3, but did not offer an interpretation).⁷⁵ The kind of understanding exhibited by Bird of intercalations did not carry through the fifties, and only a few authors had begun to see the matter this way a decade later.⁷⁶ It is during the middle-to-late 1960s and the 1970s that intercalation comes to be appreciated, by a sizable number of authors at least, as a device that permits stories to be mutually interpretive in terms of Mark’s theological purposes. This perspective only began to

74. Bird, “Some $\gamma\alpha\rho$ Clauses,” 177.

75. “Some $\gamma\alpha\rho$ Clauses,” 180. Apart from his interpretations of the intercalations in chapter 11 and 5, he says little more about the nature of the device than what I here quote.

76. A progression can be traced from year to year in the commentaries. S. E. Johnson (1960) did not see any significance beyond allowing the passing of time, and then only in Mark 5, 6, and 11. He almost perceived more when he wrote, “The cleansing of the Temple and the night, spent presumably in Bethany, provide the necessary lapse of time for the fig tree to be withered. Mark’s connexion of this with the cleansing of the Temple is deliberate” (*Mark*, 191). Nothing about the connection is added. The closest Carrington came to recognizing the device in his 1960 commentary was when he noted with respect to 14:1–11 that “We recognize immediately a typical specimen of the ‘split lection’ or interlocking technique of Mark, by which one narrative is enfolded within another so as to add to the suspense and drama of the situation; Mark’s characteristic treatment of his material makes the evil designs of the priesthood and the treachery of the trusted disciple a dark background for the romantic story of the anointing...” (*According to Mark*, 301–302). The technique is not noted in any of his discussions of the other classic examples, though. Minear (1962) noticed that the insertion of the temple cleansing within the fig tree story indicated that Mark saw a “connection” between the two (*Mark*, 108–109). But he did not see any such significance in any of the other examples, apart from 14:1–11, concerning which he noticed the achievement of a sharp contrast between the woman and the chief priests and Judas (121), and 14:53–72, in which he perceived a twin trial of Jesus and Peter full of fascinating contrasts (he says nothing about one story being within the other, though). Nineham (1963) reasoned that in 5:21–43, 6:7–32, and 14:1–11 “time [is] being...given for the initial action to develop,” but he did see a symbolic purpose to 11:12–25 (*St Mark*, 112, 299, 300–301) which he explicitly attributed to the device, without explanation of how it achieves this effect (he noted the parable in Luke 13:6–9 as well). In the same year (1963), though, Trocmé (*Formation*, 105–106 n. 1; cf. 135, 231) stated “There is an obvious relationship between the mysterious episode of the barren fig-tree and that of the cleansing of the Temple (11.15–19) which is sandwiched into it. Whatever meaning is to be attributed to Jesus’ attitude to the tree..., it is clear that the curse cast on it and its miraculous effectiveness are designed in Mark to explain the significance of the brutal cleansing of the Temple.” In a footnote (82, n. 2) he added, “It is frequent in Mark for a story to be related in two parts, between which comes a passage relating to some quite different episode. In such a case, even if the connection [*sic*] between the two is not clear, Mark endeavours to explain one with the help of the other.” He then listed all six of the classic examples. He referred to the device as an “elementary...literary technique” (82).

dominate, though, in the 1980s.⁷⁷

James Edwards suggests that this slow realization of the theological dimension to the literary functioning of intercalation reflects the development of the idea that Mark is not just a compiler of tradition but also a creative author.⁷⁸ General acceptance of Mark's creativity was slow in coming: Bird's efforts would have seemed peculiar for his time. Interest in the device as an indicator of Mark's theological interests came about through the self-conscious efforts of certain redaction critics to refine their criteria for ascribing compositional techniques to Mark. R. H. Stein suggested in 1969 that "A Markan redaction history can only be ascertained from a 'sandwich' if in some way the inserted pericope interprets or is interpreted by the pericope into which it is inserted."⁷⁹ Stein was interested in this mutually interpretive function as a criterion of

77. As late as 1979, Frank Kermode, in a work of literary criticism that has yet to make much of an impact on the study of the device (though see Aichele, *Jesus Framed*, 28–29), had to deal with a variety of misconceptions about its purpose (see *Genesis*, 127–35), referring often (e.g. 128, 130) to Kee's mid-1970s study *Community of the New Age*. Kee's lack of precision in defining the device (*Community*, 54–56) was typical of scholarship on this subject in the middle of that decade. He lumped the intercalated stories together with the interpolated stories (i.e. 2:1–5a, 5b–10a, 10b–12; 3:1–3, 4–5a, 5b–6) and saw no consistent purpose in all this: "The interpolation technique functions in a variety of ways in Mark: in the first two cases (2.1ff.; 3.1ff.) it serves to convert a wonder story into a controversy story; the third (3.20ff.) eases the otherwise embarrassing account of opposition towards Jesus from his own family by shifting the onus to 'the scribes from Jerusalem' (3.22). The fourth adds to the suspense of the first healing by inserting the second (5.21ff.), while in the fifth example, mention of John the Baptist in connection with mounting public notice of Jesus' activities opens the way for the vivid digression about John's death...." "In the three remaining interpolated sections (11.15–18; 14.55–65; 15.16–20) the fulfillment of scripture plays a central role." Similar confusion is not uncommon today (e.g., Broadhead, *Teaching with Authority*, 201; Duling and Perrin, *The New Testament*, 3rd. ed. [Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1994], 304).

78. Edwards, "Markan Sandwiches," 194–95.

79. *Proper Methodology*, 214–15 (cited in van Oyen, "Intercalation and Irony," 951 and n. 10). In *Temptation* (1965), Best had already begun to discuss the device as evidence of Mark's hand. The device is noted on a number of occasions (e.g. 74, 94); the temple/fig tree episode is recognized to be mutually interpretive (83), and he came close to viewing 6:14–29 this way, too (76). Stein attempted to be more rigorous. He saw the strongest evidence of Markan redaction in the fact that the intercalated stories have different locations; were it otherwise, the stories could conceivably have been connected in pre-Markan tradition because of their same location or because they actually occurred at the same time. He put forth the criterion of mutual interpretation in order to exclude instances of connection due to thematic similarity, which might represent "topical rather than theological reasons." Stein's interest in the theological value of intercalation was dictated by his redaction-critical goal. His concern was not with the literary functioning of the device. He excluded, for example, the possibility of treating 5:21–43 as a Markan creation not because of any consideration of a mutually interpretive function but because the stories could have happened that way (Taylor's explanation) and for other reasons which led him to see

Markan redaction, not for what it indicates of Markan technique. His own conclusion was that only 3:20–35 and 11:12–25 had mutually interpretive elements. After Stein, Neiryneck classified intercalation as an instance of the pervasive “duality” that characterizes Mark’s composition. Neiryneck at that time likewise offered no elaboration, only a list.⁸⁰

As far as I can tell, the view that intercalation reveals something of the author’s theology was first explored by Donahue in his book *Are You the Christ*, published in 1973.⁸¹ The idea has now become a common assumption among Markan scholars, though was still in need of demonstration when Edwards wrote his 1989 article, partly because only a few of the six classic examples can clearly be shown to work this way (a point not readily conceded).

We have seen that the known LGM additions create an example of intercalation as clear in its use of mutually interpretative stories (linked by the themes of death and baptism) as the exemplary instance in Mark 11; the intercalation created by LGM 1 and 2 would likewise be the clearest example of the emphasis on *both* “the way of suffering of Jesus, and the necessity of the disciple to follow Jesus in this way,” which Donahue suggested was most fundamental to its use in Mark and does seem to be at least quite prominent. The additional gospel material, in other words, appears to reflect a consciousness of particular matters of Mark’s literary technique that were not generally in evidence in the scholarly literature prior to the late 1960s and not commonly accepted

Mark 4:35–5:43 as pre-Markan (218–19); 14:53–72 was not considered because the incidents occur at the same time. He saw no literary function to the intercalations in Mark 6:6–31 and 14:1–11 (219–20). Only 3:20–35 and 11:12–25 are felt clearly to be mutually interpretive (215–18, 220–21).

80. *Duality*, 36, 133; 244 (1988 Supplementary Notes). His discussion in this book amounts to only a few sentences.

81. Donahue (42 n. 4) noted that theological interests were pursued briefly by Nineham in his *The Gospel of St Mark*, 112. In 1968, Meye (*Jesus and the Twelve*, 27–28) offered a terse list of possible implications this device had on the interpretation of the intercalated passages (he called the device *inclusio*) but did not pursue the matter much further, noting that his suggestions seem “speculative.”

until at least a decade later. In terms of the date of the composition of the *Letter to Theodore*, therefore, we have strong evidence for a pre-modern origin to the gospel fragment, if not strong reason to wonder if anyone other than “Mark” or a “disciple” of Mark could have been the author. These observations further confirm the general conclusion that whoever created the gospel fragments knew Markan literary technique as well as “Mark” did.

For the purposes of determining the authenticity of the letter, though, this evidence most strongly argues that the author was not an 18th century person, as Murgia and Musurillo argued. The technique was formally identified around the beginning of the twentieth century, and was generally known after 1928, but the kind of understanding reflected in the longer gospel quotations was not generally appreciated until about a decade or more after Smith reported his discovery of the text. The existence of this device only becomes apparent when the insertions are put into the text of canonical Mark and the resultant text read as a new narrative; at present, this procedure has not suggested itself to most readers of the letter, who still tend to analyze the gospel quotations in isolation. Smith himself never gave any indication that he realized that this technique was being used, nor has anyone else drawn attention to it in the secondary literature, apart from the word “sandwiched” used, perhaps inadvertently, by Schmidt.⁸²

Though nothing prevents one from imagining a mid-twentieth-century forger with more acumen into the literary technique of Mark than any other scholar in the earliest period of Markan redaction criticism (the beginning of which is usually associated with

82. Schmidt, *LM*, 43. Morton Smith did cite Bird’s 1953 article in connection with the *γάρ* clause in LGM 1:9 as support for his claim that “*ἤν/ἦσαν γάρ*, as an introduction of an appended explanation...is a Markan trait” (*CA*, 114). He did not comment on Bird’s argument that these awkward clauses are clues to a literary meaning, though he cited approvingly Bird’s assumption that repeated patterns in the composition of Mark’s story might have been identified and explained by teachers (*CA*, 166). Smith never displayed any appreciation for, or comprehension of, Markan *literary* techniques in his scholarship.

the publication of Marxsen's *Der Evangelist Markus* in 1956),⁸³ this amazing forger is an improbable one; there was little indication in the late 1950s that scholars would eventually start reading Mark holistically and thereby someday (as it happened, nearly forty years later) be able to appreciate the subtleties in the replication of this and other Markan narrative techniques.

83. For one of numerous comments to this effect, see Black, *The Disciples*, 17.

**THE LONGER-GOSPEL RESURRECTION STORIES
AS A MARKAN-STYLE PAIRED FRAME**

Intercalation is not the only Markan framing device employed by the author of LGM 1 and 2. By adding these fifteen verses he has managed to situate the Jerusalem section of the gospel between two strikingly similar resurrection stories. These stories share many distinctive features. Both take place at rock-hewn memorial tombs. Both draw attention to a stone cover and its removal from the door of the tomb. And both narrate movements into and out from the tomb. In the first story Jesus rolls away the stone himself and, upon entering, raises an unnamed νεανίσκος. In the second story some women followers of Jesus are wondering who will roll the stone from the door of his tomb, and, upon entering what turns out to be an open tomb, find an unnamed νεανίσκος who tells them that Jesus has been raised from the dead.¹ The verbal contacts are quite close:

*ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀπεκύλισε τὸν λίθον ἀπὸ τῆς θύρας τοῦ μνημείου
καὶ εἰσελθὼν εὐθὺς ὅπου ἦν ὁ νεανίσκος.
...ἐξελθόντες ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου.... (LGM 1:6–7, 9)*

1. In view of the fact that Jesus rolled the stone from the tomb of the young man, one may wonder if the young man is the person responsible for rolling away the stone at Jesus' tomb. Wink's comment ("Jesus as Magician," 5–6) that LGM 1 is tradition-critically later than John because it displays Jesus' "Herculean prowess in his ability to lift a stone which, in his source [*sic*] and in John, required the efforts of several men" overlooks the facts that in longer Mark the stone is "rolled" (not lifted) and that Joseph of Arimathea is presented in 15:46 as rolling the stone in place at Jesus' tomb without any need of help (*καὶ προσεκύλισεν λίθον ἐπὶ τὴν θύραν τοῦ μνημείου*). Moreover, when the women are wondering who will roll the enormous stone for them, the singular *τίς* is used, implying that they thought one person (i.e. one man) could do it.

Τίς ἀποκυλίσει ἡμῖν τὸν λίθον ἐκ τῆς θύρας τοῦ μνημείου;
 ...καὶ εἰσελθοῦσαι εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον εἶδον νεανίσκον....
 ...ἐξελθοῦσαι ἔφυγον ἀπὸ τοῦ μνημείου.... (Mark 16:3, 5, 8)

More notable, still, is the presence in LGM 1 and 2 of certain words which occur in the canonical gospel only in Mark 14:51–52 and 15:40–16:8. The words *νεανίσκος* (LGM 1:7, 8, 9, 10; 2:1) and *περιβεβλημένος* (LGM 1:11) only occur in 14:51 and 16:5. *Σινδών* (LGM 1:11) is used in 14:51 and 15:46. And *Σαλώμη* (LGM 2:1) only occurs in 15:40 and 16:1. The references to a *νεανίσκος* always describe what he has “put on.” In LGM 1:11 he had “put on” a *σινδών* and continued to wear it in 14:51 until he fled (*ἔφυγεν*; cf. *ἔφυγον* in 16:8). In 15:46 Jesus’ corpse was said to have been wrapped in a *σινδών*, whereas the young man is said to have “put on” a *στολήν λευκήν*. LGM 2:1 also repeats the theme of three women, including Salome, which occurred for the first time in the canonical text at 15:40, and again at 16:1. Finally, there is a reference in 10:32 and 16:7–8 to Jesus “going before” (*προάγω*) his frightened and amazed followers (*φοβέομαι* and *θαμβέομαι*).² In the former verse Jesus is leading his disciples on the way from Galilee to Jerusalem; in 16:7 he is said to be leading them from Jerusalem back to Galilee.³

2. In Mark’s usage, *θαμβέομαι* connotes “a natural reaction in the face of something unusual,” but *φοβέομαι* reflects cowardly fear associated with a lack of faith (McKinnis, “Mark X 32–34,” 85–86 and n. 21; see also Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*, 117–19; Lincoln, “Promise,” 285–87 and the authors he cites in n. 9; and Perkins, *Resurrection*, 121–22). In the empty tomb story, the women’s amazement is expressed in 16:5, 6 (*ἐξεθαμβήθησαν* and *Μὴ ἐκθαμβεῖσθε*) and their fear in 16:8.

3. Though my study is not concerned with possible extratextual allusions or the question of the possible interdependence of longer Mark and other gospels, there are a number of interesting intertextual connections between the women in LGM 2 and the references to the women at the cross in Matthew and John. The change in the name of Salome to “the mother of the sons of Zebedee” in Matthew’s parallel to Mark 15:40–41 (27:55–56) would make Salome the mother of James and John, i.e. of the two other disciples featured in the intercalation. Moreover, it is possible to infer from the list of women in John 19:25 that Salome is Jesus’ mother’s sister (see Culpepper, *John*, 8–9, 23 nn. 7 and 8) and that the sons of Zebedee are therefore Jesus’ cousins. All this becomes particularly interesting when we consider that in Matthew it is James and John’s mother who approaches Jesus asking for them to receive places of honour. Who “his mother” is in LGM 2:1 is ambiguous: she could refer either to Jesus’ mother or to the mother of the young man. Compared with the reference to three women in Mark 15:40, though, “his mother” would correspond to “Mary the mother of James the younger and Joses,” which is still

It is evident that many themes from the end of Mark's story now occur together at an earlier point in the longer gospel. Most of these derive from the longer gospel's additions, but not all. The image of Jesus going before his disciples already existed in both places. Examination of this specific repetition will reveal that an *inclusio* exists in the canonical gospel. This "bracket" around the passion narrative is enhanced by the additional repetitions provided by the longer gospel. In the longer gospel we find a story about Jesus raising a young man at a tomb as he leads his followers to Jerusalem and a second story about this same young man reappearing in Jesus' tomb announcing Jesus' own resurrection and the message that Jesus leads his followers back to Galilee; together, these stories serve as an interpretive frame for the passion narrative. Thus, in longer Mark a relatively inconspicuous *inclusio* is supplanted by a more conspicuous pair of framing stories, which enhance the presence and effect of the canonical

ambiguous, for, as 6:3 indicates, Jesus has brothers of that name (note that in John, Jesus' mother is specifically said to be at the cross). This ambiguity concerning whether the descriptions "his mother" and "the mother of James the younger and Joses" refer to Jesus' mother or the young man's mother is reminiscent of the sharing of one mother, Mary, by Jesus and the young man's counterpart in John, which also happens at the cross; Jesus gives her over to the beloved disciple, and she goes to live at his home (this sounds like a political statement against the Jerusalem church on John's part, for James or another of Jesus' brothers should take care of Jesus' own mother, and Acts 1:14 associates Mary and Jesus' brothers with the Jerusalem church). Note also that the first name in Mark 15:40, Mary Magdalene, was in later tradition considered to be Lazarus's sister, and her initial position in that verse parallels "the sister of the young man..." in LGM 2:1. The unnamed sister in LGM 1:1, 2:1 also has a role closer to that of Mary in the Lazarus story than to that of Martha (Bauckham, "Salome," 274). Thus there is also an extratextual parallel between Mary Magdalene and Lazarus, on the one hand, and the unnamed sister and brother in longer Mark (on these sorts of parallels see Smith, *CA*, 101–102, 119, 121; Bruce, *The "Secret" Gospel*, 12; Parker, "Smith's Find," 54–55; Schmidt, *LM*, 42; Grant, Review, 61; Bauckham, "Salome"). If these parallels have any traditional basis (e.g. a belief independent of Matthew 27:55–56 that Salome was the mother of James and John), then the three women at the cross and tomb could be taken to be the same three women in LGM 2:1, at least by readers who knew who Salome was (cf. Bauckham, "Salome," 274). The most problematic character is "Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses"; if this is not Jesus' mother then it is *conceivable* that she is the mother of the young man, in which case one of the two sons named could be the young man. A νεανίσκος might be called James *the younger*, and the distinction of *which* James becomes relevant if Salome is actually the mother of the disciple James. But we would expect this Mary to recognize her own son as the young man in the empty tomb. In any event, by the second century some Christian readers might have seen this group of women in LGM 2 as the female relatives of the main characters in this intercalation and as the same women at the cross and empty tomb.

bracket.⁴

I. What Constitutes an *Inclusio*?

The word *inclusio* refers to bracketing repetitions of words or phrases. Joanna Dewey offers a useful definition of the device:

The repetition of the same word or phrase at or near the beginning and ending of some unit, a sentence, a pericope, or a larger section. The form of the word need not be repeated exactly. For instance, one might find a noun and a verb from the same root. *Inclusio* is by definition an indication of structure, the beginning and end of a rhetorical unit of any size. It is a recognized technique of oral literatures. So the rhetorical critic by designating certain repetitions as *inclusios* is making a judgment about the limits of some unit of narrative.⁵

Strictly speaking, *inclusio* refers to repeated words or phrases, not to larger units like stories.⁶ Commonly noted examples of *inclusio* are the repetition of *εὐαγγέλιον* in Mark 1:1 and 1:14–15, which brackets the prologue, and the parallel phrases *καὶ ἐδίδασκεν αὐτοὺς ἐν παραβολαῖς πολλά* in 4:2 and *Καὶ τοιαύταις παραβολαῖς πολλαῖς ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον* in 4:33 that mark the start and finish of the parable discourse.⁷ But repetitions of certain words or phrases from one pericope in a similar

4. Perkins (*Resurrection*, 122) suggested that 10:32 and 16:7–8 form an *inclusio*; cf. Bode's view (*First Easter*, 48) that "the end of the gospel could possibly be indicated by the inclusion existing between 10:32 where the passion begins with Jesus going before his disciples, who follow with fear, to Jerusalem and 16:7–8 where the resurrection is heralded as Jesus' going before his disciples back to Galilee while the women who receive the message tremble, are bewildered and afraid." Crossan believes that 10:32–34 forms a "compositional frame" with both 15:40–41 and 16:1–8 (*Who Killed Jesus?* 183–84).

5. *Markan Public Debate*, 31.

6. Tolbert refers to "'episodic' *inclusios*" (*Sowing the Gospel*, 120) even though she defines *inclusio* (or *prosapodosis* or *redditio*) more strictly as "Word repetition at the beginning and ending of a semantic-syntactic unit" (115 n. 55). Ulansey's use of *inclusio* to describe what he considers to be the bracket created around the beginning and end of "the earthly career of Jesus" by the many parallels between the baptism and crucifixion scenes likewise uses the word *inclusio* in a non-technical sense ("Mark's Cosmic *Inclusio*," 23).

7. On these examples, see, e.g., Keck, "The Introduction to Mark's Gospel," 359–60 (he does not use the word *inclusio*); Neiryneck, *Duality in Mark*, 131; Guelich, "The Beginning of the Gospel," 7; Robins, *New Boundaries*, 140–43; Peabody, *Mark as Composer*, 122; Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 148 (she gives many other examples throughout her book); Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 13–14; Räisänen, *Messianic Secret*, 103; Schneck, *Isaiah*, 28, 37. Neiryneck offers 36 examples of small-scale *inclusio* in § 27 (131–32, 244).

pericope can have a comparable effect, provided the repetitions bracket a distinct section of a story. Repetitions of this sort are sometimes called “framing” stories.⁸

Dewey’s point that *inclusios* demarcate the beginning and end of a “section” of related materials is sometimes overlooked. The device indicates to the reader that there is a particular unity to the included material, that it can be understood as a discrete section.⁹ This information guides the reader’s comprehension, by requiring him or her to discover a basis of unity. Consequently, not every repetition of words or similar stories creates an *inclusio* or frame—only those that bracket what can be considered related material. For instance, the very similar stories of Jesus healing a deaf man (7:32–37) and a blind man (8:22–26) do not seem to enclose material that have some unified quality or feature that sets them apart from the adjacent materials as a section. Neither do the feeding miracles. But both of these sets of repetitions may be considered to be components within a larger section emphasizing the disciples’ incomprehension of who Jesus is, bracketed by narratives offering opinions on this very question (6:14–16; 8:27–30).¹⁰ If the intervening material cannot be comprehended as a unit, the repetitions should not be viewed as either framing or delimiting.

8. Dewey, *Markan Public Debate*, 23, 34. Fowler (*Reader*, 144) calls them “matched pairs of episodes”: he offers some discussion of this technique on pp. 144–46. Marshall (*Faith*, 135) argues that 1:14–20 and 10:46–52 are “two framing pericopae.”

9. Cf. Bassler, “Parable of the Loaves,” 169: “Similar or duplicate events are often used as literary markers to delineate the boundaries of a thematic unit. ...Mark has employed this inclusion device to good effect.” And Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 120: “...the segments are set off from one another by paralleled episodes or images at their beginnings and endings, the parallels being established by repetition with variation. In addition, the material encompassed by these ‘episodic’ *inclusios* often exhibits thematic or formal similarities or evinces some other reason why the included scenes need to be read together.” Similarly, Lohr, “Oral Techniques,” 409: “The use of this technique which is most significant for our purposes arises...with the expansion of an oral literature and the consequent need for interrelation between its naturally centrifugal parts. Because *inclusio* forces the attention back to the beginning, it can be used to interconnect the parts of a story. Its function at this stage of the tradition is to provide a frame, which will link more or less self-contained passages—episodes, similes, descriptions and digressions—to the web of the narrative.” And Marshall, *Faith*, 135.

10. On this instance of framing stories, see Matera, “Incomprehension.” Bassler (“Parable of the Loaves,” 169) expected the feeding miracles to function as a bracket around materials displaying “some thematic unity” but acknowledged “the nature of this unity has proved to be somewhat elusive.” It is worth considering that if 6:14–16 is taken as the first in a set of interpretive frame stories, we would have a canonical instance of a Markan intercalation (6:7–30) doubling as the first in a pair of frame

The two stories in Mark about the healing of blind men are the most frequently cited example of Mark's use of framing stories. The material in between is thematically and structurally related: along with other more or less relevant passages, it consists of three cycles of discipleship material. The section itself represents Jesus' journey along "the way" from (north of) Galilee to the road out of Jericho. Before this section comes Jesus' itinerant mission with its base in Galilee, and after it the closing chapters of Jesus' activities in Jerusalem. The story of Peter's "confession," which follows the healing of the first blind man, is the central turning point of the story, the *peripeteia*; it marks a significant transition in the disciples' understanding of who Jesus is.¹¹

II. Do 10:32 and 16:7-8 Create an *Inclusio*?

It is an often-made but seldom explored suggestion that the dynamics of Jesus' "going before" (*προάγω*) his disciples back to Galilee following his resurrection may be elucidated by the way in which Mark has used the same verb in 10:32.¹² Both pas-

stories, which is what I am arguing is occurring with the intercalation produced by LGM 1 and 2. Moreover, the conclusion of 6:14-8:30 overlaps with the start of the central section (which is at 8:22-26), much as 10:32-16:8 overlaps with the end of the central section (10:46-52).

11. This Markan structure will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

12. Recognition that the image in 10:32 of Jesus "going before" his disciples must have some relevance for the interpretation of 16:7 is apparent in, for example, Schweitzer, *Quest*, 334 (he takes both the action in 10:32 and the prediction in 14:28 as historical, their relation determined by Jesus rather than Mark; 10:32 is not explicitly mentioned); Hoskyns, "Adversaria Exegetica," 148-49; C. F. Evans, "Galilee," 5 (following Hoskyns); idem, *Resurrection and the New Testament*, 79; Schweizer, *Lordship and Discipleship*, 15; idem, "Messianic Secret," 70, 73 n. 32; *The Good News According to Mark*, 216, 372; Carrington, *According to Mark*, 317-18; K. D. Schmidt, "προάγω," 130-31; Best, *Temptation*, 174; Luz, "The Secrecy Motif," 84 (citing Schweizer); Manson, *The Servant-Messiah*, 95 (10:32 is not explicitly cited); Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve*, 81; Horstmann, *Studien zur markinischen Christologie*, 131; Bode, *First Easter*, 31, 48; Gaston, *No Stone*, 482 n. 2; Fuller (also following Hoskyns), *Formation*, 58, 60, 61 (though on p. 61, 10:32 is mistakenly called 10:33); van Cangh, "La Galilée," 75; Lane, *Mark*, 374 (though effectively retracted on p. 510 n. 62); Crossan, "Empty tomb," 149; idem, *Who Killed Jesus?* 183; McKinnis, "Mark X 32-34," 84-85; Catchpole, "Fearful Silence," 5, 6; Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium*, 2:148 n. 2 (citing Schmidt); Perkins, *Resurrection*, 120, 121, 122; W. E. Moore, "'Outside' and 'Inside'," 43; Lincoln, "Promise," 289; Marshall, *Faith*, 42; Hooker, *St Mark*, 385-86; Marcus, "Marcan Epistemology," 571 n. 47; idem, *The Way of the Lord*, 42; Fowler, *Reader*, 248 n. 44; Kinukawa, *Women and Jesus in Mark*, 111; Hamerton-Kelly, *The Gospel and the Sacred*, 61; Myers et al., *Mountain*, 132.

sages conjure an image of Jesus “going before” his disciples (*ἦν προάγων αὐτούς; Προάγει ὑμᾶς*) and follow this depiction with an indication of his followers’ cowardly fear (*ἐφοβοῦντο*).¹³ The disciples and the frightened followers are in both cases separate groups. 10:32 distinguishes the (amazed) disciples from “those who followed” (*ἀκολουθοῦντες*) in fear;¹⁴ and at the empty tomb the disciples are intended as the recipients of the message that Jesus is going before them, but it is a group of three women who explicitly react cowardly. Shortly beforehand, these three women were made representatives of those who “were following him” (*ἠκολούθουν αὐτῷ*) and who “came up with him to Jerusalem” (*αἱ συναναβᾶσαι αὐτῷ εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα; 15:40–41*)—a reminiscence of *ἀναβαίνοντες εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα* in 10:32, 33. Hence in both 10:32 and 16:8 the fear belongs to a distinct *category of characters*, a feature which strengthens the connection between the two passages. This group apparently represents anyone who would “come after” Jesus (*ὀπίσω μου ἀκολουθεῖν*), as the publicly addressed saying about taking up one’s cross and following him would indicate (8:34). That is, “those who followed” may be understood to be would-be members of the group called disciples, an expression similar in function to “those who were about him with the twelve” in 4:10. This category is obviously relevant to the reader: the nebulous group of “those who at least have taken some interest in Jesus’ preaching or even decided to be his disciples” is one with which an interested reader can identify,¹⁵

13. Cf. Crossan, “Empty Tomb,” 149: “The reaction of the disciples to Jesus’ leadership toward Jerusalem in 10:32 was *ethambounto* and *ephobounto*. So also now with the women [i.e. 16:5, 8].” Also, idem, *Who Killed Jesus?* 184; Myers et al., *Mountain*, 132.

14. On the naturalness of reading a distinction here between the twelve, who were amazed, and the followers, see Räsänen, *Messianic Secret*, 99 n. 80. The “they” in *ἦσαν* refers to Jesus and his disciples, for they are the persons mentioned in the previous episode. There, Jesus was talking to “his disciples” (v. 23), who were “amazed” (*ἐθαμβοῦντο*) and astonished (*ἐξεπλήσσοντο*) at his words about the inconceivability of the rich entering the kingdom of God (vv. 24, 26). Thus in 10:32 Jesus is going before his disciples and a group of anonymous “followers.”

15. Schweizer, *Lordship and Discipleship*, 15, cited by McKinnis in “Mark X 32–34,” 85.

by way of projecting him- or herself into the narrative. The failure of the women to deliver the young man's message forces the reader to consider what he or she will do: follow courageously or turn away.

The possibility that an interpretive bracket is being constructed becomes stronger when we consider that the passion prediction attached to 10:32 (vv. 33–34) itself summarizes the whole intervening sequence through a compendium of Jesus' sufferings best illustrating the self-sacrificing character of discipleship. 10:33–34 functions for the reader as a dramatic program note of upcoming key events of the plot, the whole of which is given the *heading* "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem":

and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles; and they will mock him, and spit upon him, and scourge him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise.

This list stretches from the present action of going up to Jerusalem to the reality mentioned in 16:6 of Jesus' rising from the dead. That is, it covers everything that occurs between 10:32 and 16:7. This last passion prediction is the one that situates the Son of man's sufferings in the context of a trial in Jerusalem. Before this point Jesus does not explain where they are going and how his sufferings will come about. 10:33–34 thus sets the agenda for the Jerusalem section of the story.¹⁶

The Jerusalem section itself begins with Jesus' ride on a colt up to Jerusalem. The fact that that story starts at 11:1 may seem to count against the possibility that 10:32 has a bracketing function. However, as Mary Ann Tolbert has noted, ancient rhetoricians believed that smoother narration resulted when divisions within a narrative "overlap it at the edges":

The tendency to supply linking words or phrases, often but not always indicative of

16. Hare (*Mark*, 128) calls this last passion prediction "'a table of contents' for the forthcoming passion narrative."

major themes, close to the end of one division and near the beginning of the next is a very common rhetorical practice. It serves to alert the reader to the shift in material while at the same time smoothing the transition.¹⁷

The political messianic conception that the crowds have of the procession to Jerusalem was already encountered in the request of James and John for positions of honour when Jesus enters his glory; and the cry of the crowds “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is coming!” (11:9–10) was anticipated in Bartimaeus’ plea “Son of David, have mercy on me!” (cf. LGM 1:2). Thus Tolbert is correct to perceive in the announcement of the goal of Jerusalem in 10:32–34 and the use of the title Son of David in 10:47–48 “a clear foreshadowing of the major theme of the second division” and thus an example of how “the close of [one] division overlaps at the edges with the opening of the [next] division.”¹⁸ That the leader-and-followers imagery in 10:32 and 16:7–8 produces an *interpretive* bracket around the Jerusalem section will become more apparent once both occurrences of this image have been examined.

III. Mark 10:32

III.1. 10:32 within 8:22–10:52

The significance of this journey to Jerusalem is developed within another “bracketed” segment overlapping the section just defined: the aptly termed “central section” separating the Galilean and Jerusalem phases of the narrative. This section

17. Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 109. She cites Lucian’s comment to this effect: “Only when the first point has been completed should it lead on to the next, which should be, as it were, the next link of the chain. There should be no sharp break, no multiplicity of juxtaposed narratives. One thing should not only lie adjacent to the next, but be related to it and overlap it at the edges” (*De conscribenda historia* 55). In “Forecasts and Echoes,” Dewey documents the phenomenon of overlapping structures in Mark.

18. *Sowing the Gospel*, 118. Tolbert considers 11:1–11 to introduce the second major division of the gospel. I have a different conception of the structure. Fowler (*Loaves*, 114) sees the overlapping of framing constructions (what some call “doublets”) to be typical of Mark’s composition. He diagrams three examples (on p. 113).

incorporates three discipleship teaching passages, in relation to which 10:32 forms the introduction to the last.¹⁹ This verse depicts a gesture by Jesus (*ἦν προάγων αὐτούς*) and the responses it invokes: “Now they were on the way, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid.”²⁰ The remainder of this section elaborates a pattern developed in the previous passages: Jesus foretells his coming passion, the disciples demonstrate their misunderstanding, and Jesus responds with a teaching on discipleship.²¹ Through the unfolding of this thrice repeated development may be found the figurative significance not only of this journey from Galilee to Jerusalem but also of the foretold return (14:28; 16:7).

The logic to this development emerges in retrospect from the discipleship teachings; therein when Jesus summons his disciples (*προσκαλεσάμενος* in 8:34 and 10:42; *ἐφώνησεν* in 9:35) it is in order to remonstrate a mind-set which is preventing them from appreciating the significance of his predictions; in the process of explaining true discipleship it is disclosed that the aptitude they lack is that characteristic of his passion: the abnegation of self.²² Through these stereotyped situations Mark contrasts two

19. These passages are 8:27–9:1, 9:30–37, and 10:32–45. Most scholars of Mark now agree that the Markan central section is bracketed by the two stories involving the healing of blind men, and therefore spans 8:22–10:52. Delineations of this section usually differ in their inclusions of one, both, or neither of the healing stories. Scholars who exclude one or both healing stories usually give no rationale for their decision. Those who include both usually mention that they frame the section. I do not see any important disagreement here. On this subject, see Dewey, “Forecasts and Echoes,” 221, 229–31.

20. Note that *ἀναβαίνοντες* in 10:32a modifies its implied “they,” not *ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ*. As with the prior occurrences of “on the way” in the central section the location of this road is not apparent from this description. There does not seem to be any intention to specify that this road was one leading directly to Jerusalem.

21. This pattern is a common observation in studies of Mark. It is delineated by, for instance, Perrin in “The Literary *Gattung*, ‘Gospel,’” 4–7; idem, *The Resurrection*, 20; and in Perrin and Duling, *The New Testament*, 248; Donahue, *Setting of Discipleship*, 38; Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 237; Kinukawa, *Women and Jesus in Mark*, 96–97 (further references are contained in her n. 27; among them are Tannehill, “The Disciples in Mark,” 400; Kelber, *Kingdom*, 67; Dewey, *Disciples of the Way*, 72; Swartley, “Structural Function,” 74; Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 317; Lincoln, “Promise,” 294).

22. I am referring to the ideal of denying self or having no concern for one’s self (or life) expressed by the words *ἀπαρνησάσθω ἐαυτὸν* in 8:34. This might be called self-abnegation. At times I will use the word *selflessness* because it is a less awkward term, but it is also a less apt word because it suggests a concern for others more than it does a lack of concern for one’s own status and existence.

modes of abiding in community—“worldly” self-preoccupation and world-denying self-abnegation.

III.2. *The Discipleship Passages of the Central Section*

The first discipleship teaching follows Peter’s rejection of the fate set out in the first passion prediction:

And he called to him the multitude with his disciples, and said to them, “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” (8:34–38)

The connection between Peter’s misunderstanding and this teaching on discipleship is not immediately apparent. However, the parallelism between the phrases “whoever loses his life for *my sake and the gospel’s*” (v. 35) and “whoever is ashamed of *me and of my words*” (v. 38) contrasts selflessness (or the willingness to lose one’s life) with the experience of shame for Jesus and his way of suffering—the experience exemplified through Peter’s championing of the views of humans.

Jesus responds to this attitude with a teaching depicting the road to the cross as the way to salvation. The aptness of death as a metaphor for self-abnegation (*ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτόν*) is here explored in eschatological language; in the emergent ideology, the Hellenistic mythology of the vindicated martyr is evident: only those willing to deny themselves even to death for the sake of the cause (“my sake and the gospel’s”) will secure salvation or “life.”²³ Thus by taking up his cross, Jesus

23. The promise of a postmortem vindication for those who die true to a noble cause is characteristic of this mythology. See Mack, *Myth of Innocence*, 105, 111. That this myth is extended to include both literal *and* figurative deaths is evident from the fact that the phrase “for my sake” occurs in a passage emphasizing the abandonment of one’s life in terms of former commitments (10:28–30) and in a passage emphasizing the physical risks associated with discipleship (13:9–13).

illustrates the principle that the selfless way of death is the road to life.²⁴

The same message is conveyed somewhat differently in the second discipleship teaching. The connection between self-preoccupation and misunderstanding is far more explicit here; in a pure caricature of conceit the disciples are made to respond to Jesus' prediction with a private discussion of which of them is the greatest. Jesus again responds with a teaching depicting humility as the way to exaltation:

And he sat down and called the twelve; and he said to them, "If any one would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." And he took a child, and put him in the midst of them; and taking him in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me." (9:35-37)

In this teaching the less literal dimension of dying to the self comes to the fore and contributes to an overall imperative of making oneself last in order to become first. That the child exemplifies the humility of Jesus' messiahship and the lowly status required of a disciple is suggested by the parallels between the sayings in 9:37, 9:41, and 10:14-15. All of these verses speak of (or are situated in the context of) receiving persons. In 9:37 these persons are children, and receiving them is tantamount to receiving Jesus and God. In 9:41 it is the followers of Jesus who are received and who are thereafter referred to as "little ones" (9:42; cf. the word "children" for disciples in 10:24). In 10:13-16 children are being hindered from meeting Jesus, and in vv. 14-15 the kingdom is said to belong to children. This passage appears to define the quality of a child which Jesus offers as exemplary of discipleship in 9:37. The children are persons who the twelve deem too inconsequential to be allowed to bother someone as important as Jesus. Thus lowliness is the essence of God's kingdom, and his kingdom

24. For similar analyses see Quesnell, *Mind*, 146-50; Weeden, *Traditions in Conflict*, 33-34; Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 317-19; Matera, *Passion Narratives*, 63-64. Set in the light of socio-rhetorical criticism, see Robbins, "Mark as a Jewish Document," 231-41 in his *New Boundaries*.

must be accepted in that way (like a child) in order for one to enter it (10:15).²⁵ This notion helps explain the logic of 9:37 as the conclusion of the second discipleship teaching. Receiving a child (or perhaps a lowly disciple) is the same as receiving Jesus or God (the one who sent him) inasmuch as Jesus is renouncing the status that his disciples expect of him. He is accepting the nominal status of a child, of one who is last of all and servant of all—a nobody; to this lowly status the disciples must aspire in order eventually to be numbered among the first.

If the misunderstanding accompanying the second passion prediction was perverse, the request by James and John for positions of glory following the third prediction surpasses even that burlesque of self-preoccupation. And again Jesus responds that his disciples must deny themselves to the point of death (or, metaphorically, die to their *selves*) if they would be great among the others:

And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
(10:42–45)

Jesus' willingness to abandon himself in death is again offered as the appropriate model to be emulated. As in the previous passage, the issue addressed concerns the means of becoming first or great "among you" (i.e. in a community of disciples) rather than that of attaining salvation itself. Nevertheless, all three examples concern a consummate vindication of the way of humility. The statements contrasting greatness and servitude or first and last (9:35; 10:43–44) are reminiscent of the one bringing to a close the section immediately preceding 10:32 ("But many that are first will be last,

25. Here I am following Fowler's interpretation in *Reader*, 172–73. The grammar of the sentence favours an interpretation that likens the kingdom, not the receiver, to a child: ὅς ἂν μὴ δέξηται τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς παιδίον, οὐ μὴ εἰσελθῆ εἰς αὐτήν.

and the last first”) and appear to elucidate the principle upon which such a reversal of a person’s current status is based. Hence, the greatness proffered in these sayings concerns one’s status in the eschaton and not (or not merely) the “paradoxical greatness” of those who humble themselves in the community.²⁶ In 10:42–45, as in the first discipleship teaching, Mark is interpreting the mechanism of eschatological reversal in accordance with the mythology of the apotheosis of the martyr, which is comparable to (and possibly the historical basis for) the apocalyptic conception of the resurrection of the righteous (e.g. Dan. 12:2–3; Rev. 20:4–6). The question posed to James and John makes this even clearer: “Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” (10:38). The image of the cup in the Hebrew scriptures is used to conjure suffering, joy, and wrath, but here, in conjunction with a second metaphor foretelling Jesus’ death, we recognize the influence of Hellenistic thought, wherein it is a symbol for “death as a violent end.”²⁷ The implication of transformation effected by such martyrdom is borne out more clearly by the latter metaphor. As Scroggs and Groff argue, Mark is conjuring the Pauline interpretation of baptism as a “dying and rising with Christ” (cf. Rom. 6:1–11; Col. 2:12);²⁸ for baptism is comparable to death only insofar as it is thought to signify a transition to a new quality of life, “that eschatological life with Christ that is perfected at the parousia.”²⁹ Implicit in these two negatively framed metaphors, then, is the promise of salvation or resurrection extended through Jesus’ example.

We have seen, then, that in 8:22–10:52 Jesus’ words on discipleship stress the need for selfless servitude in the present as the way of attaining exaltation in the future. This theme that life comes through death, or exaltation through humiliation, is the

26. A phrase used by Via in his study “Mark 10:32–52,” 194.

27. Mack, *Myth of Innocence*, 302.

28. Scroggs and Groff, “Baptism,” 536–37.

29. Perkins, *Resurrection*, 298.

abstract content symbolized concretely in the image of Jesus *προάγων* his disciples *ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ*. This leader-and-followers image occurs in relation to each passion prediction, as does the metaphor of “the way”: The theme of following Jesus is introduced in 8:34 in the call to *follow after* him (*ὀπίσω μου ἀκολουθεῖν...ἀκολουθεῖτω μοι*). The notion that his disciples were following after him is probably implicit within 9:33, where Jesus asks what his disciples had been discussing “on the way”: if he could not hear what they were talking about as a group, he had probably enacted this teaching by going ahead of them. And the picture of Jesus going before his disciple is made concrete in the narration of 10:32, where this gesture and the amazement and fear it invokes become the stimulus for an explanation of what they have been doing throughout this section (v. 33).³⁰ Clearly, the imagery of 10:32 dramatizes the companion metaphor in 8:34,³¹ with the result that the essential meaning of *προάγων* in the former verse is that of leadership in the sense that Jesus is presenting himself as a model to be emulated.³²

30. “The way” enters these teaching moments at 8:27; 9:33, 34; and 10:32. It is also mentioned before the encounter with the rich man (10:17) and is what Bartimaeus is said to have “followed him in” at the end of the central section (10:52). “That ‘on the way’ is an enacted spatial metaphor of discipleship is made...clear by the questions and discussions raised as characters are in movement on the road” (Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 69–70). See also Schweizer, *Lordship and Discipleship*, 11–21; Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve*, 74–75; Kelber, *Kingdom*, 69–71; McKinnis, “Mark X 32–34,” 83–84; Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 4–6; Swartley, “Structural Function,” 75–77; Williams, *Gospel Against Parable*, 97–104; Marshall, *Faith*, 142–43; van Iersel, “Operator,” 88–89.

31. Cf. Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium*, 2:148: “Markus versteht das übernommene Bild gewiß im Rahmen seiner Nachfolgethematik (8,34ff) paradigmatisch.” Cf. also R. E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah*, 1:141.

32. Van Iersel’s study of Mark 6:48d (“καὶ ἤθελεν παρελθεῖν αὐτούς,” 2:1065–76) led him to similar conclusions about the use of *προάγειν* in 6:45, where Jesus sends the disciples to go before him in the boat to the other side of the lake. Concerning the peculiar statement that when Jesus approached them as they struggled against the storm, he intended to walk past them, van Iersel concludes that “...Jesus wants to walk past the disciples on the water in order to regain his position at the head of the small procession and thus, walking on the water ahead of them, lead them on” (1075). He believes that *προάγω* has the meaning of go at the head in each of its occurrences in Mark except 11:9. Considered this way, the spatial imagery of this strange story makes for a good symbol of Jesus’ intention to lead his followers through troubled (“stormy”) times, or of the impossibility of getting through them when this leadership model is reversed and disciples attempt to lead the way themselves. The details about the disciples going ahead without Jesus to the other side and of Jesus wishing not to save them outright but rather to go past them are certainly strange, and we can agree with van Iersel at the very least that better explanations are wanting.

That this gesture is patterned upon a teaching image overtly symbolic of self-denial (note the addition of ἀπαρνησάσθω ἐαυτὸν to this metaphor)—a veritable hyperbole of more conventional metaphors such as “to come after” and “to serve”³³—underscores the symbolic (hence literary) dimension to this journey. The road to Jerusalem is the way (ὁδός) of suffering and death.³⁴

IV. Mark 16:7–8

IV.1. “He Goes Before You to Galilee”

Once we recognize the symbolic enactment of 8:34 in the imagery of 10:32, however, it becomes evident that the recurrence of this image denoting a *reverse* journey to Galilee from Jerusalem might also bear a symbolic, perhaps exemplary, quality, possibly one *opposite* to the developments embodied within the Jerusalem section. That Mark may be connoting the corollary of the theme of the way of suffering and death is apparent from the fact that the movement described in 16:7a is a complete reversal of the direction embarked upon in the central section.³⁵ The projected content of this reversal, however, derives its shape through the movements of the gospel as a whole. It has been suggested that “Mark images Jesus’ whole life as a

33. E.g. 1:13, 31; 10:43–45; 15:40–41. Selvidge discusses the theological relevance of these instances of service in “‘And Those Who Followed Feared,’” 398. A better study is offered by Kinukawa in *Women and Jesus in Mark*, esp. chapter 6 (90–106).

34. For this common interpretation of ὁδός in Mark, see, e.g., Lightfoot, *History and Interpretation*, 80; Farrer, *A Study in St Mark*, 192; Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve*, 80, 86; Schweizer, *The Good News According to Mark*, 216, 221–22, 385; Kelber, *Kingdom*, 70; Via, “Mark 10:32–52,” 2:195; Swartley, “Structural Function,” 77, 79, 82; Donahue, *Setting of Discipleship*, 37–38; Waetjen, *Reordering*, 172. Each of these scholars (except Schweizer and Donahue) notes that this is not only the road to death but also to resurrection.

35. Cf. Hoskyns, “Adversaria Exegetica,” 148–49; Horstmann, *Studien*, 131 (“Der Redaktor hat nämlich bis in die Formulierung hinein eine auffallende Korrespondenz zu dem ebenfalls redaktionellen Vers 10,32 hergestellt, so daß wir wohl nicht fehlgehen, wenn wir hier ansetzen, um seine Aussageabsicht zu ermitteln. Der Zug des Auferstandenen verläuft in umgekehrter Richtung wie der Weg des geschichtlichen Jesus, der den Jüngern nach Jerusalem vorangeht”); van Cangh, “La Galilée,” 75; Perkins, *Resurrection*, 120 (“...the verb fits into passion tradition as a reversal of that journey”).

journey along *the way* (1:2–3),”³⁶ and we shall not fully comprehend his central section without noticing that its unidirectionality is itself a symbolization of a broader progression encompassing the entire narrative. Mark’s portrayal of Jesus’ public career moves from that of a successful mission operating in and out of Galilee to a situation in which Jesus’ authority is subverted through its rejection by the Jerusalem leadership and his willing assumption of humility. A deliberateness to his ventures becomes apparent upon Peter’s “confession,” at which point the disciples’ (or at least the audiences’) expectations about Jesus’ messianic authority begin to be reversed, and the (symbolic) journey from Galilee (authority/exaltation) to Jerusalem (submission/humiliation) begins.³⁷ 16:7 looks backward to the status Jesus renounced through his passion, but also forward to the vindication proclaimed in the discipleship teachings. The way of life through death is now depicted auspiciously with a view to its results.

The emptiness of Jesus’ tomb attains its significance not merely from the message that Jesus is risen but from the implication of 16:7a that his presence is to be encountered elsewhere, *on the way to Galilee*. The women expected to find a crucified corpse; instead they learn that Jesus has not only been delivered from death but is leading his disciples once more. There is an implicit “because” in 16:7b. Jesus is not ὧδε (v. 6) because he is (spiritually) going before the disciples to Galilee: ἐκεῖ you will see him. These few, choice words of an anonymous young man leave the reader with the impression that the assailed shepherd is now reassembling his scattered flock, going before them to Galilee. But this time the leadership is spiritual, for, as the young man’s posture seems to indicate, Jesus has been exalted to heaven, to the right hand of

36. Via, *Ethics*, 160, referring to Kelber, *Kingdom*, 67–68.

37. Though 10:32 marks the first announcement to the disciples that they are en route to Jerusalem, the flow of geographical indices upon 8:27 plus the methodical use of the phrase “on the way” within this section make it clear that the journey to Jerusalem had begun at this earlier point; see McKinnis, “Mark X 32–34,” 85.

the Power (cf. 14:62a). The unique possibilities for stark and selective description afforded by the medium of verbal narrative permit Mark to conjure thoughts of restoration without having to specify how these notions are to be imagined realistically. What is of importance for the reader is to perceive that Jesus' final "departure" to Galilee extends the initial characterization of an ongoing "journey" or process patterned upon 8:34.³⁸

Three features of 16:7 remain to be examined: namely, the specific mention of Peter, the specification that the messenger was "a young man" and, of course, the words "there you will see him, as he told you."

IV.2. "To His Disciples and Peter"

The specific wording, *τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ καὶ τῷ Πέτρῳ* is often viewed as a passing reference to an early resurrection tradition naming Peter as the first to whom Jesus appeared.³⁹ Such an allusion is plausible, presuming that this tradition is something most readers would be expected to know. But it does not explain why the mention of Peter should come *after* the reference to "his disciples," particularly in view of his preeminent position both in the story itself and in the tradition of an initial appearance to him.⁴⁰ The unexpected manner of Peter's specification is probably a clue to its significance.

The reversal "his disciples and Peter" seems actually to set awry whatever positive conception of Peter might be inferred from a tradition naming him first. Does not this wording discreetly insinuate that at the moment of utterance Peter is outside of this group?⁴¹ Considered with a mind to the foregoing narrative, the special mention of

38. See Malbon's similar conclusions in *Narrative Space*, 54–56.

39. See, e.g., Fuller, *Formation*, 57–58, 63–64; Stein, "A Short Note," 144; Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium*, 2:535. This tradition is apparent from 1 Cor. 15:5 and Luke 24:34.

40. Cf. Crossan, "Empty Tomb," 149.

41. Cf. Fowler, *Reader*, 246.

Peter finds ready justification in Peter's attempts to exempt himself from the part assigned to the disciples in the fulfillment of the very prophecy of which the young man now speaks:

And Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away; for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." Peter said to him, "Even though they all fall away, I will not." And Jesus said to him, "Truly, I say to you, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." But he said vehemently, "If I must die with you, I will not deny you." And they all said the same. (14:27-29)⁴²

Peter's sworn dissociation from those who would fall away like frightened sheep was translated briefly into action when he continued to *follow* Jesus (*ἠκολούθησεν αὐτῷ*) after the rest had fled (14:54). His autonomous stance, however, becomes a source of burgeoning irony; despite his bravado, Peter followed tentatively and safely "at a distance," only to disown Jesus completely at the first signs of real danger (14:66-72). His confident assertion that *he* will not forsake Jesus thus emphasizes the greatness of his fall, though Mark's ironic concentration upon Peter really makes vivid the failure of the disciples as a whole (14:31).⁴³ Peter's total failure represents the blossoming into action of his earlier, equally representative attitude toward the notion of a suffering messiah (recall his rebuke of Jesus in 8:32-33).

42. Evans, *Resurrection and the New Testament*, 78-79: "the separate mention of Peter in 16:7 reflects the isolation of Peter amongst the 'all' who will be made to stumble in 14.27-29." To paraphrase Peter, "Your 'all' will not include me!" (Gundry, *Mark*, 845; cf. 861). Cf. Catchpole, "Fearful Silence," 4. Myers (*Binding the Strong Man*, 398) views the significance of this phrase somewhat similarly, though he puts the emphasis on the chronological or two-stage disintegration of the community of disciples; the disciples fled first, then Peter, and so this pattern is repeated in the words "his disciples and Peter." Herron (*Peter's Denial*, 143) suggests that the words *καὶ τῷ Πέτρῳ* have the sense of "even Peter" and imply that apostasy such as his can be forgiven through repentance. However one looks at these words, the manner of fulfillment of the first part of the prediction in 14:27-28, including Peter's preminent role as the worst example of this behaviour, is probably in view in 16:7. These words contain an allusion to the failure of the disciples.

43. Best (*Disciples and Discipleship*, 170 n. 42) rightly notes the importance of the adjective *πάντες* in 14:29, 31, 50b in tying together the prophecy and its actualization and in emphasizing the representativeness of Peter's role.

By alluding to Peter's failure at the very end of the story Mark raises the issue of salvation, for at this moment, in the wake of his denial, Peter surely belongs to the group of those ashamed by this teaching (8:38) and of whom the Son of man will be ashamed when he returns. The words "and to Peter" in 16:7 therefore once more imbue this prediction of the scattering of the sheep with the carefully related themes of self-centredness, discipleship failure, and forfeited salvation. But set within a context announcing the reversal of the striking of the shepherd and the scattering of the sheep, they evoke the polarity and mystery of the transformation whereby the fallen shepherd now goes before his scattered sheep to Galilee. It is as if to say that Jesus' exemplary sacrifice has now made all things—even the impossible journey of discipleship—possible (cf. 10:23–31).

IV.3. *The Νεανίσκος in Canonical Mark*

That a rather miraculous reversal is anticipated by the special mention of Peter is made all the more apparent by the presence of an unnamed *νεανίσκος* as the bearer of this message. Recall that a *νεανίσκος*, similarly identified only by his actions and his clothing, popped up just as inexplicably in Gethsemane.⁴⁴ In the longer gospel, as we

44. The noun *νεανίσκος* and the verb *περιβεβλημένος* only occur in these two places in canonical Mark, and in both instances the figure identified by these words is unnamed. The surprise that accompanies both appearances, which is emphasized by the strangeness of their apparels for those locations, is an important ingredient uniting these figures. During Jesus' arrest, the young man in Gethsemane is wearing a light linen sheet wrapped around his naked body (Neiryneck argues that it is instead "un manteau d'un tissu fin et coûteux; "Fuite," 64–65) even though, as we immediately learn, it is a "chilly spring night" (as Kermode says in *Genesis*, 56, noticing the implications of Mark 14:54). The notice that this sheet is worn "upon his naked body" heightens the irregularity of this dress, for men wore a coat (mantle) overtop of a shirt (cf. the hyperbole of Luke 6:29). The figure in chapter 16 is similarly strange. A young man seated in a white robe was not what the women expected to find inside their master's tomb at sunrise a few days after the burial. In both instances the reader must wonder "where the deuce did he pop up from?" (*Genesis*, 55; a slight paraphrase). Though we cannot take it for granted that in canonical Mark these two figures are the same person, there is no excuse for ignoring the blatant resemblances in their descriptions. For canonical Mark, the question of shared identity is largely irrelevant. The brevity and overt symbolism of their descriptions (the one "following," the other "sitting on the right hand side") indicates that their symbolic functions are far more important than their qualities as believable characters: indeed, the lack of verisimilitude is what signals to the reader that the symbolic level is paramount. And on the symbolic level they trade off of each other in revealing the literary point

have seen, the figure in Gethsemane is developed into an individual, a person with a past, a house, and a family; in that text, the *νεανίσκος* at the empty tomb is presumably the same *person* who was raised from the dead in Bethany and who followed Jesus briefly in Gethsemane. In the canonical text, however, the image of an unnamed *νεανίσκος* hardly concerns a *person* as such. Of the figure in Gethsemane we learn only that he, too, in tandem with Peter, was *following* Jesus, wearing only a linen sheet, but then fled naked in the face of actual danger. Like Peter, this *νεανίσκος* is, as we have already seen, a symbol of the disciples' failure to follow in the way of life through death. At the tomb, however, we are told of a young man dressed in a garment symbolizing the glory common both to heavenly beings and to eschatological vindication;⁴⁵ moreover, he is assuming the posture of triumph or vindication, seated at the right hand side (16:5).⁴⁶ A symbol of failure to follow in the way has been transformed into a symbol anticipating the reward of this journey (exaltation) for both Jesus

of inexplicable reversal.

45. See the article in *TDNT* by Michaelis, "λευκός, λευκαίνω," 241–50. Also Crossan, "Empty Tomb," 148; Jenkins, "Young Man or Angel?" 238–39; Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 250, 397–98; Drury, "Mark," 412; Lincoln, "Promise," 293; and Gundry, *Mark*, 863. Interestingly, all of these scholars perceive a connection between the white robe of this messenger and "the apparel of the martyr of Revelation..." (i.e. Rev. 6:11; 7:9, 13–14; Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 397–98). Jenkins ("Young Man or Angel?" 238–39) notes that in Daniel 12:10, "...the context suggests purification of those who are steadfast in tribulation and are resurrected to everlasting life (vv. 2f)." In Revelation we read, "These are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (7:14). If this is the standard portrait of vindicated martyrs, then it is especially appropriate to Mark's story. Cf. the place of these martyrs before the throne of God (7:15) with the symbolism of the young man's posture.

46. The exalted Jesus was traditionally described as sitting at the right hand of the Father, a metaphor based on Psalm 110:1 (cf. [Mk 16:19]; Acts 2:25, 33, 34; 7:55, 56; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12–13; 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22). Mark makes much of this image (cf. 10:37, 40; 12:36 and 14:62) and uses the imagery of a white garment elsewhere only in 9:3, to depict the post-resurrection situation of Jesus. For similar interpretations of 16:5, see Farrer, *A Study in St Mark*, 179; Scroggs and Groff, "Baptism," 535; Freyne, *Mark and Matthew*, 135; and Boomershine, *Story Journey*, 183–85.

and the disciples.⁴⁷ Put differently, this figure represents the coming to pass of both elements of the prophecy of 14:27–28 (scattering and restoration), embodying the story of the disciples in both aspects. The eventual success of the disciples in sharing Jesus' cup and baptism is clear enough in his clothes, which are now those of the vindicated martyr. Mark has prepared his readers to believe that these disciples (and anyone else) might finally, truly follow Jesus as he resumes his leadership in the way.

IV.4. *The Customary Readings of Mark 16:7*

It seems reasonable to conclude that Mark chose *προάγειν* in 16:7 to suggest a continuation of the symbolism of Jesus' leadership in the way to life through death: the exalted Jesus continues to "go before" his disciples (and anyone else who would "come after" him) as exemplar of this way, having become the apotheosis of what others may obtain by following his lead.⁴⁸ However, since this perspective on 16:7 conflicts with more familiar interpretations of this verse, some discussion of the traditional perspectives would be appropriate before moving on to examine the words "there you will see

47. Cf. Gundry, *Mark*, 990–91. Lincoln ("Promise," 293) has rightly noted that the designation *υφανίσκος* in place of *ἄγγελος* is sufficiently ambiguous about the nature of this figure (he could be angelic or human) to allow it to function not just as a messenger but also as a symbol of both Jesus' resurrected condition and the vindication of those whose failure this figure previously represented. He adds, "Ambiguity would not be surprising, since Mark's Jesus tells us that 'when they rise from the dead, they...are like angels in heaven' (12:25)." Contrary to those who argue that the young man at the tomb is either definitely human (e.g. McIndoe, "The Young man at the Tomb," 125 [i.e. he is John Mark himself]; Jenkins, "Young Man or Angel?" 237–40) or definitely angelic (e.g. Nineham, *The Gospel of St Mark*, 444; Bode, *First Easter*, 27; Mahoney, *Two Disciples*, 148; Marcus, *Mystery*, 145–46 n. 81; Gundry, *Mark*, 990–91; Jackson, "Cloak," 279 n. 19), it would appear that this young man functions as a general symbol of eschatological exaltation.

48. Cf. Horstmann, *Studien*, 131: "Beachtung verdient allerdings die Beobachtung Strobels, daß nach der Aussage von Mark 16:7 die Meister-Jünger-Idee nach Ostern fortgesetzt wird." The views of Malbon (esp. *Narrative Space*) on the relation of 16:7 to the discipleship motif of following "in the way" are very similar to mine, as are those of Meye (*Jesus and the Twelve*, esp. 80–87) and Myers (*Binding the Strong Man*, 397–404); on the theme of exaltation, cf. also Best's *Temptation*, 173–77. Hamerton-Kelly (*The Gospel and the Sacred*, 61) stresses the same points about Jesus' leadership in terms of "the cross" (10:32) and "resurrection" (16:7), adding that "the emphasis in both cases is as much on the way as on the destination, and in both cases a theological destination has been substituted for the geographical one." The position presented in this chapter is probably closest to R. E. Brown's in *The Death of the Messiah*, 1:130–33, 140–41.

him.” The ambiguities permitted by the brief verbal depiction of the risen Jesus have helped make 16:7 and its parallel in 14:28 an interpretive crux in Markan studies, supporting three alternative interpretations of the verbs *Προάγει* and *ᾔψεσθε*.

The traditional reading understands these words from the perspective of a bodily resurrection; Jesus is thought to be physically and temporally *going on ahead of* his disciples to the region where he will appear to them in bodily form. This interpretation permits no connotation of leadership to *προάγειν*, for Jesus could not be visibly leading his disciples if it is in Galilee that they will see him. It is assumed, rather, that Jesus is attempting to get there first.

The assumption that Mark was referring to Jesus' precedence of his disciples seemed natural enough until some scholars came to wonder why the earliest version of his gospel lacked a resurrection appearance story.⁴⁹ If Mark was indicating a reunion of Jesus with his disciples in Galilee, why did he not describe this reunion, as the other evangelists did? Why, indeed, did he conclude with the comment that the women failed to relate this message? How could this reunion occur if Jesus' disciples did not receive his directions? These questions spawned two alternative views of what the young man's comments mean. The most fashionable alternative has interpreted the verb *ᾔράω* as a reference to Jesus' physical appearance at the parousia; the gospel closes before the event is narrated because that event was still to take place.⁵⁰ But a symbolic interpretation of this verse has also been proposed: Jesus' "going before" his

49. It no longer needs to be argued that Mark originally ended at 16:8. For a recent book-length discussion, see Danove, *The End of Mark's Story*.

50. Advocates of a parousia reading include Lohmeyer, *Galiläa und Jerusalem*, 10–11; Marxsen, *Mark*, 75–95, 111–16; Lightfoot, *Locality and Doctrine*, 64–65; Hamilton, "Resurrection Tradition," 419–21; Gaston, *No Stone*, 482–86; Perrin, "Towards an Interpretation," 38; idem, *Resurrection*, 27–31; Weeden, *Traditions in Conflict*, 45–51; Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 298; Mearns, "Parables, Secrecy and Eschatology," 435. Others are noted in Stein, "Short Note," 135 n. 2.

disciples is thought by some to refer figuratively to his leading them in mission to the Gentile world. It is in the Gentile church that one truly sees Jesus.⁵¹

IV.4.1. *Problems with the Traditional Perspectives*

Despite protracted debate, none of these positions has emerged as clearly superior. Moreover, it seems that the dispute among these particular options has run its course, for each has failed to produce the essential determinant of a superior argument—a compelling *exegetical* basis in the gospel. In all three of these approaches to Mark 16:7, exegesis has essentially been replaced by arguments that the chosen referent is what the

51. This interpretation was first set forth by Hoskyns in "Adversaria Exegetica" (1923) and gained due recognition after it was reformulated by Evans in "Galilee" (1954). Boobyer ("Galilee and Galileans" [1953]) has argued that 16:7 must refer to the Gentile mission simply because this mission was so important to Mark. Van Cangh ("La Galilée," 67–75, esp. 75 [1971]) attempted to base this connection with the Gentiles on the strange itinerary of Mark 7:24, 31, suggesting that this area is included within Mark's Galilee. And though interpreting 16:7b as a reference to the parousia, Gaston (*No Stone*, 482–83 [1970]), Crossan ("Empty tomb," 149 [1976]) and Perrin (*Resurrection*, 26–27, 33–34 [1977]) have accepted Evans's and Hoskyns's argument that at least 16:7a refers to the mission to the Gentiles. Of more importance to the history of this interpretation, Best (e.g. *Temptation*, 173–77; *idem*, *Following Jesus*, 199–202; *Disciples and Discipleship*, 184) rejected any parousia associations and refined Evans's interpretation with a greater sensitivity to the function of Galilee in the story itself. Galilee is understood as "the place where the gospel is preached" and the place of the "early Church," where, "as a Shepherd, it has its Lord with it and can see him as it carries on the work of proclamation to which he has called it, and for which he has gathered together its scattered members, and to which he leads it" (*Temptation*, 174, 176–77). For Best, seeing Jesus (16:7b) does refer to the resurrected state, though not to an event; rather what is "seen" is the exaltation as experienced in the early church's missionary work (*Temptation*, 127, 176; cf. Jenkins ["Young Man or Angel?" 239], who accepts the theme of Gentile mission but stresses the sense of vindicated martyrdom; also Lincoln, "Promise," 289). In reference to the theme of the disciples' misunderstanding, Best later added to this interpretation of "seeing Jesus" the sense of "spiritual sight which understands" (*Following Jesus*, 201). Though without explicitly discussing the theme of mission, van Iersel ("'To Galilee' or 'In Galilee'" [1982]) has nevertheless also expressed a very similar figurative reading of Jesus' "going before" and of his disciples' "seeing" him, relating the latter motif to the theme of the disciples' misunderstanding (369–70). Similar ideas about the locus of Jesus' activity are expressed in Waetjen's 1965 article "Shift in Eschatology," esp. 119–128. He perceives an Exodus theme in 16:7 (122) and polemic against the Jerusalem church's parousia eschatology (127). His comparison with the Exodus is similar to a messianic interpretation suggested by Wieder in 1962 (*The Judean Scrolls*, 30–51, cited and discussed by Davies in *The Gospel and the Land*, 222–32); Wieder connects *προάγειν* in Mark 14:28 with the Divine Presence that led the way during the Exodus. Cf. Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 35–37, and Catchpole's comparison of 16:7 to "'heavenly traveller' narratives" in "Fearful Silence," 5–6. (This emphasis on the guiding of Israel during the Exodus is congenial to the interpretation I espouse.) In a somewhat different vein, Hanhart believes the young man in the tomb symbolizes Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, and that Mark is connoting Jesus' leading of Israel into exile (after the events of circa 70 CE). See *Open Tomb*, *passim*.

evangelist must have been *thinking of*. This is especially true of the conventional theory that 16:7 suggests a *bodily* resurrection appearance. Instead of showing that such an expectation is apparent in the existing gospel, proponents have normally argued that a bodily conception of Jesus' resurrection must have existed prior to Mark's composition⁵² and that just such an account must originally have followed Mark 16:8.⁵³ Similarly, the Gentile mission theory, though quite attentive to the wording of 16:7a,⁵⁴ can only appeal to precedents in the literary milieu of this writing to substantiate its premise that Mark's Galilee is a symbol for the Gentile world.⁵⁵ The parousia theory at least chose as a referent for ὄψεσθε a state undeniably anticipated by the text, but few of its proponents have tendered a literary explanation for reading the word this way. Norman Perrin's attempts to demonstrate a consistent coupling of references to the passion and resurrection with allusions to the parousia⁵⁶ overlook the immediate and more palpable "passion-resurrection connection" in the discipleship material he cites and ultimately highlight the difficulty in perceiving any hint of the parousia in 14:28 and 16:7.⁵⁷

52. Before Matthew, there are no references to resurrection appearances that clearly speak of persons seeing Jesus in his *physical* body (see, e.g., Fuller, *Formation*, chapter 2; Hamilton, "Resurrection Tradition," 415–18), nor is there evidence of a tradition locating this seeing in Galilee (Marxsen, *Mark*, 82–83).

53. E.g., Reedy, "Mk 8:31–11:10," 97; Trompf, "First Resurrection Appearance"; and Gundry, *Mark*, 1009–21. See Crossan, "Empty Tomb," 145 n. 27 for further bibliographical references.

54. Both Hoskyns and Evans pay particular attention to the verb προάγειν, arguing that Mark intends the (spatial) sense of leadership. The exception is Boobyer ("Galilee and Galileans," 334–48). His interpretation of 16:7 focuses exclusively on the word "Galilee" and makes no attempt to show how Mark's interest in the Gentile mission is perceptible in the language of the verse as a whole.

55. For a typical discussion see Evans, "Galilee," 5, 13–18. The logic of the Gentile mission theory is as follows: since other, comparable literature associates Galilee with Gentiles (e.g. the phrase "Galilee of the Gentiles" found three times in the LXX) and Mark demonstrates an interest in the post-easter Gentile mission, Galilee is likely to be a symbol for the Gentile world in Mark 16:7 as well. The problem with inferring such an association in Mark is that had Mark intended this significance he likely would have made reference to Isaiah 9:1 (as Matthew did in 4:15–16). As Fuller (*Formation*, 61–62) and Malbon (*Narrative Space*, 43–44) point out, there is no *textual* support in the gospel even for the presumed traditional equation of Galilee with the Gentiles.

56. See Perrin, "Towards an Interpretation," 31–45.

57. As noted by Stein in "A Short Note," 139 [448] (*italics added*).

The most telling problem with the traditional solutions is the lack of internal consistency in the way the two halves of 16:7 are interpreted. The Gentile mission theory interprets 16:7a in terms of Jesus' spiritual guidance of the church in its mission to the nations. This strictly symbolic interpretation breaks down as soon as one asks what symbolic sense is meant by Jesus appearing or being seen by *these* eleven disciples *there*, in Galilee, when Galilee is taken to be a symbol for the Gentile world.⁵⁸ Pondering the dilemma this caused for Evans's theory, Gaston supposed that "Evans may be thinking of something like the vision Paul had when he was called as Apostle to the Gentiles, as is explicitly stated by T. W. Manson."⁵⁹ But what textual basis is there for supposing an allusion to traditions of, or like, Paul's commissioning revelation? How would a reader perceive this connection? Manson based his argument on the other gospels, Acts, and Paul's commissioning revelation—but not on Mark. The Gentile mission theory can make some sense of 16:7a, but not of 16:7b.

The parousia reading has the opposite problem. It has great difficulty explaining the movement indicated by *προάγειν* in 16:7a. The message that Jesus is now going before his disciples into Galilee "could hardly be a way of describing the parousia or the approach of it."⁶⁰ Obvious as this difficulty is, one is hard pressed to find comment on it. Most discussions treat the whole of 16:7 as if it were a simple variation of the words in 13:26 "they will see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and

58. For criticism of Evans's "representative symbolic rather than literal interpretation of 'I will go before you into Galilee' . . .," cf. Petersen, "When is the End not the End?" 153 n. 7.

59. Gaston, *No Stone*, 483. He is citing *The Servant-Messiah*, 97 (93–99). Manson perceived the leadership dimension to Mark 16:7, but associated it directly with Christian mission rather than with the general, individualistic ethic of suffering service. The image of leadership concerns the discipleship theme, first and foremost. Mark's discipleship teachings concentrate on service in (Christian) community and perseverance through persecution; *that* is what this gospel suggests Jesus leads people in, as a model sufferer who underwent an exemplary passion; the *context* in which one follows in this "way," however, *involves* mission and proclamation. Certainly Mark's Galilee is associated with both those themes—and many others. The essential problem is the association between Galilee and the Gentiles/nations, which is not made in Mark.

60. Evans, "Galilee," 12.

glory.”⁶¹ The tendency to focus attention almost entirely on 16:7b received validation from Marxsen’s influential suggestion that the interval between resurrection and parousia is telescoped in this verse into a focus on the parousia. In his view, the resultant impression that 16:7 presents resurrection and parousia as consecutive events is an illusion that results from not understanding how Mark thinks.⁶² But this telescopic interest is more apparent in Marxsen’s ignoring of 7a than in the verse itself. One can place a predominant focus on the words “there you will see him” only by subordinating all the elements in 16:7 to which Mark gives emphasis. The conception of Jesus “going before” his disciples to Galilee after his resurrection is the only element common to both 14:28 and 16:7 and a scenario to which the resurrection itself is twice subordinated.⁶³ What is more, the effect of the change in the tense of *προάγειν* from future in 14:28 to present in 16:7 asserts the relevance of this verb, making it not only somewhat more prominent than the new notion of seeing Jesus but also more immediate. Jesus *is* now doing what he said he *would* do after his resurrection.

The presence of the verb *προάγειν* indicates that there is some sense in which Jesus can be said to be *between* the tomb and Galilee at the moment of the young man’s speaking, and this message is the essential point being conveyed. Marxsen dealt with this verb by proposing that v. 7a represents the spiritual sense of Jesus’ presence in Galilee during the interim. Why Jesus has to be said to be in the process of going there

61. Note that these scholars do not seem to read “you will see...” in 16:7, since enough disciples—including Peter—have already died by the probable time of Mark’s writing; Evans, *Resurrection and the New Testament*, 80; Stein, “Short Note,” 142–43, 144.

62. *Mark*, 112–13. Cf. Weeden, *Traditions in Conflict*, 112.

63. Evans, *Resurrection and the New Testament*, 79: “A curious feature in 14.28, that the resurrection is referred to in a subordinate clause and is used as a time indication (‘after I am raised up...’), recurs in the juxtaposition of 16.6 and 16.7, in that the fact of the resurrection...is relegated to second place by the announcement of what is to follow as the climax.” Cf. Waetjen, “Shift in Eschatology,” 121: “The women are not ordered to announce the resurrection. Matthew has inserted this into his redaction. ...Apparently the reminder that the disciples are to follow Jesus to Galilee is more important to Mark than the report of the resurrection.”

in order to be spiritually present when the disciples arrive is unclear.⁶⁴ Perrin attempted a more adequate explanation of *προάγειν* by combining Evans's reading of 16:7a in terms of "Jesus leading his disciples into the Gentile world" with a parousia reading of "there you will see him." His solution only created a new difficulty. It was problematic enough that the parousia theory viewed Galilee itself as the precise location for the parousia;⁶⁵ now Jesus must *literally* return within a *symbolic* locale, "in the Gentile world of the church's mission."⁶⁶

64. *Mark*, 86 (and 94). Marxsen properly read *εἰς* as meaning "to" Galilee. Some of the proponents of the Gentile mission theory interpret *εἰς* as meaning "in." For example, Best (*Following Jesus*, 201) reads 16:7a as a reference to mission *in* symbolic Galilee: "Galilee is the area in which Jesus is to go at the head of the disciples (14.28; 16.7)" Van Iersel attempted to give a linguistic basis for this sort of reading in his semantic study of *εἰς* in 16:7 ("'To Galilee' or 'In Galilee,'" 365–70). He favours "going before you *in* Galilee" over "to Galilee" since only the former reading, in his view, allows "Jesus' preceding on the way" and "the followers' seeing of Jesus" to be conceived "as structural and continuing relationships" (370). Though he is correct that a symbolic reading is required, his assumption that "to Galilee" is necessarily too literal merely because it implies "one actual journey from Jerusalem to Galilee" (367) is not correct. The sense of a continuing relevance or truth inheres to the image of Jesus going before his disciples on a one-time journey because of its emblematic quality, as is abundantly apparent in the initial characterization of the one-time journey to Jerusalem: "If anyone would come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me." Van Iersel himself supplies the best evidence for reading *εἰς* as "to" in 16:7 by pointing out that it is so used in 10:32 (368). Since framing material is formed in part through the repetition of words and concepts which congeal into a theme or type-scene providing an interpretative framework, it is natural to assume that, just as *προάγω* has the same symbolic meaning in both places, so too the shared preposition helps channel both movements into *symbolic* journeys—or *one* symbolic Journey—oriented ultimately toward "Galilee," with its connotations of power and victory (exaltation).

65. Marxsen thought that Mark was written in Galilee after the Jerusalem community's exodus to Pella, as a message to other Christians in Judea to come to Galilee to await the parousia (*Mark*, 106–107, 113–16). He quavers a bit when faced with the problem of the parousia occurring *there*, explaining that, "To overstate the case, Mark does not intend to say: Jesus worked in Galilee, but rather: Where Jesus worked, there is Galilee" (93–94). This rationalization will not do. Even if we imagine that for Mark Galilee extends to the Decapolis and southern Syria (as argued by van Cangh in "La Galilée"), the idea of seeing Jesus' parousia in a specific locale severely restricts the magnitude normally attributed to the event of Jesus' reappearance. This greater scope is implied by Mark's use of *ἄψορται* without a specific antecedent, in 13:26, a context which moreover describes signs and wonders which would be visible to all people (vv. 19–27, esp. 19–20, 24–26). In other words, the unspecified "they" is supplied by the implied everyone or the universal perspective that forms the background to this description of the cosmic signs accompanying the end (cf. Hamilton, *Protestant Adventure*, 78, 118).

66. Perrin, *Resurrection*, 27; cf. "symbolic Galilee" (33). I do not think he perceived this difficulty. Gaston (*No Stone*, 482–83) had earlier proposed that both halves of 16:7 refer to the mission to the Gentiles, but that 7b additionally refers to the parousia. How one reference to seeing Jesus can refer to both of these ideas is unclear, and his own evaluation can be cited against this view: "To be sure, Gentile mission and near expectation in fact exclude one another, but Mark was not the only one in the first Christian generation not to realize this."

The bodily appearance theory also faces a quandary accounting for the specification of Galilee as the place of appearance. The problem here is that the emphasis given to *προάγειν* makes little sense if all it means is that Jesus is preceding his disciples in time. One is left wondering why Mark was so concerned to specify that Jesus would hurry to get to Galilee *ahead of the disciples* that he not only twice elevated this detail over the resurrection but also chose to end the story on the note that this preceding is now taking place; surely a narration of a resurrection appearance in Galilee would make a better ending than the comment that Jesus will make it to that location first. This reading makes the emphasis given to *προάγειν* seem a frivolous squandering of the word's potential intratextual significance. As Morna Hooker perceived,

...he is certainly saying something far more significant than that Jesus will arrive in Galilee before the disciples. This is no mere rendezvous, but a call to the disciples to follow Jesus once again. On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus had gone ahead (10.32 ἦν προάγων), and the disciples had seen him and followed. Now they are called to follow him, even though they cannot see him. What looks like an inconsistency in Mark may be a deliberate attempt on his part to underline that this is what discipleship means, now that Jesus has been raised from the dead.⁶⁷

IV.5. "There You Will See Him"

The standard interpretations of 16:7 have not made good sense of the verse as a whole, in its literary context. But if *Προάγει ὑμᾶς* refers to Jesus' continued leadership in "the way," what does *ἐκεῖ αὐτὸν ὄψεσθε* mean? The future tense of *ὄραω* is certainly not a "technical term" for the parousia.⁶⁸ And a physical appearance cannot be presumed for Mark on the basis that Matthew and Luke interpreted this prediction as

67. *St Mark*, 385–86.

68. Horstmann, *Studien*, 130–31; Stein, "Short Note," 137–38 and n. 10 [446–47 and n. 6]. See also Lightfoot, *Locality and Doctrine*, 75–76; Weeden, *Conflict*, 112 n. 14; Perkins, *Resurrection*, 120; and Hooker, *St Mark*, 386. This notion is usually rebuffed by pointing out that *ὄραω* is not so exclusively used of the parousia that, for example, resurrection appearances are excluded (e.g. 1 Cor. 9:1; John 20:20; and Matt. 28:17); and the prominence of its future tense in relation to the parousia is attributable to the fact that that was an event thought yet to occur (Stein, "Short Note," 137 [447]).

a physical appearance. There is no reason to suppose that Mark intends a meaning different from the earlier Christian use of the verb *ὁράω* to connote a non-physical manifestation of Jesus' risen state, as in Paul's use of the word in 1 Cor. 9:1: "Have I not seen (*έόρακα*) Jesus our Lord?"; this is language he found complementary to his experience of the revelation of Jesus *ἐν ἐμοί* (Gal. 1:16). That is, 16:7 may represent another instance of the visionary conception of Jesus' appearance that characterized the use of resurrection language in the earliest traditions.

It could be argued that the transfiguration contains Mark's most overt attempt to render the nature of this epiphany in concrete narrative form. Therein, Jesus is transformed to appear as he will become following his death: a heavenly being in the company of Elijah and Moses. It has frequently been argued that the two ancient figures who accompany Jesus were chosen to comment on the nature of the resurrection, specifically by illuminating the significance of the emptiness of the tomb. The point is that Jesus will have been physically translated to heaven by the time the women arrived at the tomb, for these two biblical figures (along with Enoch) were thought by some writers in Mark's day to have been taken up alive into heaven.⁶⁹ I concur that the presence of Elijah with Moses on the mount implies that this vision is concerned with Jesus' fate following his existence on earth. But I think the emphasis is not so much on *how* Elijah and Moses got to heaven as on the thought that they exist there, alive. The essential point is that Jesus, too, will join these immortalized heroes. That Jesus will attain this status as a result of the vindication of his shameful death is perhaps suggested

69. See 2 Kings 2.1–12; Philo *Questions of Genesis* 1.86; Josephus *Antiquities* 4.326; *As. Mos.* This interpretation is offered by, among others, Bickermann ("Das leere Grab," *ZNW* 23 [1924]: 281–92); Carrington (*According to Mark*, 192–95); Hamilton ("Resurrection Tradition," 415–21); Talbert (*What is a Gospel?* 41); Fuller (*Formation*, 57); Weeden (*Traditions in Conflict*, 106–108); Scroggs and Groff ("Baptism," 536 and n. 16 [a brief appeal to Weeden and Bickermann]); Perrin (*Resurrection*, 24–25); McGuckin, *Transfiguration*, 15–17; Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 87–90. A recent discussion of relevant texts may be found in Collins, *The Beginning of the Gospel*, 138–43. According to this position, the empty tomb is significant because, to quote Weeden, "it conforms to the central motif and proof which lies at the heart of translation stories: the disappearance or absence of the corpse" (106).

by the emphasis placed on the astounding brightness of his clothes, which are those of the vindicated martyr.⁷⁰ At the end of the story, Jesus' actual attainment of this exaltation will be represented by the posture and clothing of the young man in the tomb. In this respect the young man functions almost as an epiphany of the exalted Lord. Thus Mark seems to have conceived of Jesus' resurrection much like Paul did: "for Paul, apparently, Christ's resurrection was an ascent after death direct to heaven, in shining δόξα; that is, resurrection and ascension were two aspects of one occurrence; and the appearances of Christ after the resurrection were appearances *from heaven* in this body."⁷¹ Jesus' resurrection was, in other words, a transformation of his physical body into a heavenly body, not unlike the transfiguration. By witnessing the transfiguration, Peter, James and John are experiencing something much like a "spiritual" resurrection appearance, a proleptic, visionary appearance of Jesus to them from heaven.⁷² That is what the disciples will experience in Galilee.

IV.6. *Seeing and Understanding*

16:7, then, carries connotations both consonant with and distinct from the traditional notions of a resurrection appearance. Its distinctive connotations are directed to the reader, and define discipleship as following in the way of suffering. However, the theme of following Jesus does not exhaust Mark's discipleship emphasis in the closing verses, and in accord with his use of the verb *ὁπάω* elsewhere 16:7 may carry the

70. Cf. Kee, "Transfiguration," 143–44.

71. Boobyer, *St Mark and the Transfiguration Story*, 24–25, cited by Thrall in "Elijah and Moses," 310 n. 4.

72. That Elijah and Moses represent "the heavenly glory that is enjoyed by the greatest of God's heroes" is argued at length by McGuckin in *Transfiguration*, 40–53 (49–51). On the transfiguration as a vision of Jesus' exaltation, cf. Burkill, *Mysterious Revelation*, 160–64; Marcus, *Mystery*, 52–53; idem, *The Way of the Lord*, 87; and McGuckin, *Transfiguration*, 27, 53, 63–64, 82.

christological connotation of understanding who Jesus really is.⁷³

Concerning this latter association, we may recall the explicit play on the double meaning of *see* in βλέποντες βλέπωσιν καὶ μὴ ἴδωσιν, καὶ ἀκούοντες ἀκούωσιν καὶ μὴ συνιῶσιν, μήποτε ἐπιστρέψωσιν καὶ ἀφεθῆ ἀντοῖς (“looking they see and do not perceive, listening they hear and do not comprehend...”; 4:12). Here, a form of ὁράω (ἴδωσιν) is used to express this very notion of understanding what has been available to one’s eyes. This passage is instrumental in establishing an association between the idea of spiritual understanding and “verbs of seeing”—a connection which becomes programmatic in the stories framing the central section of the book.⁷⁴ The first of these stories, 8:22–26, uses the imagery of sight-giving to disclose a two-stage development in the disciples’ christological understanding. Peter’s confession marks a transition in the disciples’ comprehension of Jesus from the total imperceptiveness about his messiahship that they display in the first half of the story (*blindness*) to the misconception of the nature of this messiahship (seeing *imperfectly*), a characterization of the disciples that dominates hereafter. “Like the man in 8.22–26 [Peter] only ‘sees’ dimly and in a confused way at first. Full ‘sight’, i.e. insight into the full meaning of Jesus’ identity, can only come at the cross (cf. 15,39) and the resurrection (cf. 16:7).”⁷⁵ “Peter ‘sees’

73. Van Iersel, “‘To Galilee’ or ‘In Galilee,’” 369–70. Compare the sense of spiritual (albeit demonic) perception of Jesus’ true nature in 5:6 (καὶ ἰδὼν τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ἔδραμεν καὶ προσεκύνησεν αὐτῷ...) and the revelatory insight of the centurion in 15:39, which resulted from *seeing* how Jesus died (both instances of the verb concern the messianic secret motif, as does 14:62a). The opposite sense of misconceiving Jesus’ true nature accompanies 6:49, 50; 15:32 (ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ Βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ κατάβατω νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἵνα ἴδωμεν καὶ πιστεύσωμεν) and 15:36. Ὁράω is also commonly used in relation to the theme of apprehending an extraordinary sight (1:10; 2:12; 5:16; 6:49, 50; 9:4, 8, 9, 15; 11:20; 13:26; 14:62) and as a prelude to an action by a character (i.e. as a focalizer: 1:16, 19; 2:14, 16; 5:14; 6:33, 34, 48; 7:2; 9:14; 12:28; 14:67, 69; 16:5). On Mark’s use of verbs of seeing to connote spiritual perception or misunderstanding, see also Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve*, 78 (61–80); Freyne, *Mark and Matthew*, 74–75, 129–30; Trompf, “First Resurrection Appearance,” 318 n. 4; Marshall, *Faith*, 40, 131 n. 1; and Fowler, *Reader*, 249 n. 45.

74. I am developing insights drawn from van Iersel, “‘To Galilee’ or ‘In Galilee,’” 369–70; as was noted earlier, a similar view was put forward by Best, *Following Jesus*, 201.

75. Tuckett, “Mark’s Concerns,” 17–18; he cites Marcus, *Mystery*, 145. Cf. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 102.

that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ. But he fails to 'see' that, as the Christ, Jesus must suffer. To heal Peter (and perhaps the implied reader) of that blindness will require a second stage, the second half of Mark's Gospel."⁷⁶ Thus the second development is from misconception to true understanding of this messiahship (seeing *plainly*), a state projected in 16:7.⁷⁷ The imagery of a blind man attaining imperfect sight symbolizes the abrupt yet partial insight that the disciples now have into who Jesus is.

The second story involving a blind man, the closing "bracket" around the central section, presents Jesus' healing of blindness as the catalyst in a man's passage from initial faith and preliminary insight ("Son of David, Jesus...") to subsequent discipleship.⁷⁸ The image of the once blind Bartimaeus following Jesus "on the way" could hardly present a more fitting complement to the leadership image in 10:32. Thus

76. Malbon, "How Does the Story Mean?" 47; cf. Matera, *Passion Narratives*, 230 n. 12; Guelich, *Mark*, 1:436.

77. Contra Räisänen (*Messianic Secret*, 204 n. 219; cf. Gundry, *Mark*, 1, 421–22), Mark gives strong indications that the disciples are represented by the blind man. The word βλέπειν occurs in both the story of the healing of the blind man and the immediately preceding story about the disciples' incomprehension about the feeding miracles: 8:15, 18, 23, 24, 25. In the latter, Jesus asks them "Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear. And do you not remember? ...Do you not yet understand?" These comments effectively compare the disciples to blind and deaf men, that is, to the deaf man and the blind man who are healed within the section of the gospel bracketed by the question of Jesus' identity. On these topics, see E. S. Johnson, "Blind Man," 380–83; Matera, "Incomprehension," esp. 154, 163–65, 169–72. Johnson argues that the disciples see imperfectly throughout the story, and therefore errs in overlooking Jesus' assertion of the disciples' *blindness* in 8:18. Matera similarly argues that they see imperfectly up to Peter's confession, but suggests that they see clearly after that. He does not adequately account for the fact that Peter is immediately shown not to understand what being the Christ is all about. It makes more sense to suppose that the disciples are functionally blind before Peter's confession, see imperfectly from that point until the end, and will see clearly only after the story is over.

78. At present I am inclined to view Bartimaeus's christological confession "Son of David" as a partial insight, comparable to Peter's partly adequate confession and similarly in need of further elucidation (cf. 12:35–37, which seems to imply that Jesus is either not David's son or that he is more than David's son). Bartimaeus's confession sets the stage for the misunderstanding by all of Jesus' followers that the arrival at Jerusalem precipitates the coming Davidic kingdom (11:9–10) rather than the humble death of the suffering Son of man. If Bartimaeus's confession is viewed as inadequate, his gaining of sight following this would parallel the transition in the previous sight-giving story from seeing imperfectly to seeing plainly. However Bartimaeus's confession is viewed, it cannot designate the transition to the third phase in which the disciples truly understand, for their actions throughout the Jerusalem section testify to their continued imperceptiveness. Cf. Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 164–65; Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus and Mark*, 251–52.

we have good reason to infer a similar significance to the promise of seeing Jesus in 16:7—that of christological insight into what was always available to be seen.⁷⁹

IV.7. Reading 16:7

If the themes of Jesus' exaltation and his resumption of leadership in "the way" are plausible connotations for this verse they must have a coherent literal conception as their basis. As van Iersel has noted,

...in the case of narrative texts...the *connotative* meaning not only leaves the underlying *denotative* meaning intact but also requires it. This requirement is so absolute that the *connotative* meaning can only be produced on the basis of a *denotative* meaning.⁸⁰

What the reader would literally imagine is that the "resurrected" or exalted Jesus is, spiritually, restoring his scattered "flock," leading them back to the region of his former authority, the way a shepherd walks before his sheep.⁸¹ Once there they will see him, through a "spiritual" resurrection appearance disclosing his exalted state, an appearance like the vision that Peter, James and John had of Jesus on the mountain; but in addition to perceiving his exaltation to heaven, the disciples will attain insight into his teachings about the necessity of the Son of man's suffering and death. Though more ethereal than the image of Jesus walking before his disciples on the road to Jerusalem, this conception of restitution and insight is the concrete basis for a second

79. Cf. Lightfoot, *Gospel Message*, 116. I think the interpretation I offer is detectable in germinal form in his appendix to this book. Malbon's views ("Mark: Myth and Parable," 11) are similar: "To 'see' Jesus is to perceive that being a disciple is following the way that he took, the way on which he is still 'going before' (16:7)." She is cited (disapprovingly) by Gundry in *Mark*, 1007.

80. "Operator," 87.

81. Following Evans, *Resurrection and the New Testament*, 81: "...*προάγειν* should here be given what is its most common meaning, 'to lead,' which is the meaning in all the instances of *προάγειν* governing an object cited from the papyri by F. Preisigke, and which is the only possible meaning in 14.28 if the shepherd-sheep metaphor is being continued from 14.27." Also, Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium*, 2:381: "*προάγειν* mit personale Akkusativobjekt hat hier nicht die Bedeutung 'zuvorkommen,' sondern 'voranziehen' im Sinne von 'führen'; 2 Makk 10,1 ist vergleichbar von der Führung Gottes die Rede (*τοῦ κυρίου προάγοντος αὐτούς*). Im Horizont der Hirtenmetaphorik (vgl. bes. Mich 2,12f) ist von der Sammlung der Jünger in Galiläa die Rede; vgl. weiter zu 16,7."

symbol of Jesus' leadership in the way of death and resurrection; but here the thought is focused more on his triumph than on his selfless sacrifice. The indirect and imprecise verbal description in Mark 16:7 allows the symbolic suggestiveness of the way of life through death in 10:32 to dominate a reader's visualizations of an unseen Jesus leading his disciples back whence they came and of his appearance to them.

IV.8. *Mark 16:8*

The gospel concludes with the astonishing statement that the women did not convey to the disciples the message with which they were entrusted. Instead, the women "fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to nobody, for they were afraid." The story ends on an exceptionally negative note that, moreover, complicates the predicted restitution of the disciples. This silence is especially problematic when 16:7 is thought to denote a physical resurrection. Some scholars therefore have denied that the silence of the women was as final as Mark emphatically conveys, reasoning that the disciples surely could not have met up with Jesus without being told to return to Galilee.⁸² Others have gone so far as to suggest that the disciples never reassembled and saw the risen Jesus in Galilee, and were therefore never commissioned as apostles.⁸³

These readings of 16:7-8 neglect certain peculiarities of the wording. "Galilee" is too large a locale to serve as a specification for a rendezvous. Moreover, "16.7 is only very indirectly a command to go to Galilee, and 14.28, on which it is based, is hardly a

82. E.g. Catchpole, "Fearful Silence," 6; Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 322; Gundry, *Mark*, 1009.

83. This is argued by Weeden in *Traditions in Conflict*. Cf. Kelber, *Mark's Story*, 86. Weeden inconsistently interprets the seeing of Jesus in 16:7b as a reference to the parousia and not to a resurrection appearance (p. 110) and 16:8 as implying a missed resurrection appearance (p. 50); this flaw was noticed by Catchpole in "Fearful Silence," 4 n. 4.

command at all.”⁸⁴ The message itself is not the expected news of Jesus’ resurrection. The young man announced the resurrection to the women by way of explaining why Jesus was not in the tomb; the fact that Jesus is risen is conveyed almost as incidental preparation for the message that they were supposed to deliver to the disciples, which is that Jesus *is going before* them, leading them back to Galilee.⁸⁵ The young man is announcing that the prophecy Jesus made in 14:27–28 *is* now taking place, a reality which does not depend on what the women do. Because the prophecy *is* being fulfilled, the reader can presume that the disciples will come to understand that Jesus is still leading them, whether the women tell them this or not. When they reach Galilee he will appear to them, and they will understand the necessity of his passion and resurrection.

What is most troubling to the reader is not the fact that the disciples never received this message. Rather, it is the fact that the story ends with the observation that despite the fulfillment of the predicted restoration of the disciples under Jesus’ leadership, the women were too frightened to join them or even to say anything about this at all. Why does the story end on a note of failure and incomprehension? Perhaps this startling situation is meant to provoke the reader into a decision about the way of discipleship. Will he or she flee like the women or follow like the disciples? The question put earlier to James and John is now put to the reader: “Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?”⁸⁶

84. Evans, *Resurrection and the New Testament*, 80; cf. Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 37, 180 nn. 48, 49.

85. The young man asks the women to inform the disciples of what *is* happening, not of what *should start* happening nor, as some scholars imagine, of a potential positive outcome that remains ambiguous. The outcome is positive, the reaction of the women is negative.

86. Cf. Boomershine, “Apostolic Commission,” 237; Bush, “Mark’s Call to Action,” esp. 26–28; Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 297–99; Robbins, *Jesus the Teacher*, 192–93 (cited by Bush). These authors overemphasize the notion of a call on the reader to proclaim the resurrection, considering that this theme was not directly mentioned as part of what the women were told to convey to the disciples (see Lincoln, “Promise,” 297). I take the emphasis in 16:7–8 to be on following in the way; proclaiming the kerygma is but one facet of the author’s call to follow.

V. LGM 1 and 2 and Mark 16:1–8 as a Frame for the Passion

The longer gospel's resurrection story added after Mark 10:34 develops the significance of the *inclusio* formed by 10:32 and 16:7–8. To appreciate this we should consider how a reader encounters LGM 1 and 2 in context and how the presence of these additions affects our reading of 14:51–52 and 16:1–8. The passion prediction preceding LGM 1 (10:32–34) depicts Jesus leading his amazed disciples and frightened followers to Jerusalem and taking a moment to explain to the twelve the sufferings he will undergo at the hands of the religious and political authorities. Like the previous predictions, this description of the humiliations he must passively endure concludes with an active conception of the end result: his resurrection (*ἀναστῆναι*).⁸⁷ The basic point being made through these three verses and the discipleship teachings of the central section as a whole is that Jesus' death exemplifies the way to salvation, that it is precisely by losing one's life that one saves it. In the longer gospel this third prediction of Jesus' passion and resurrection is immediately followed by a story about Jesus resurrecting a young man, who then wishes to become a disciple and receives private instruction in his own house. This very theme that life comes through death is the con-

87. This observation applies especially to 8:31. In this prediction the various things *done to* Jesus are accentuated through a string of passive infinitives, whereas his rising is conveyed with an active infinitive. Moreover, as Perrin notes ("Towards an Interpretation," 27), Mark's use of *ἀναστῆναι* as an intransitive "is distinctive in that it puts the emphasis upon the rising rather than upon being raised. Jesus now raises himself and is no longer the passive object of God's handling...." Perrin believes "it is the appropriate verb to use with Son of Man to blend together emphases upon both suffering and power in the passion predictions," but it is more accurate to say that these emphases are separated and contrasted. Note also the recurrence of this verb in the transfiguration (9:9, 10) and in the exorcism patterned upon death and resurrection imagery, which follows the transfiguration (9:26–27). The use of passive verbs to indicate Jesus' passive acceptance of the things done to him is mirrored in the passion narrative itself, beginning after Jesus' arrest: "In the first part of the passion narrative, until the arrest in 14:43, Jesus is the constant initiator of action and the subject of the verbs. After 14:42 he is passive and the object of the verbs. In the first part of the narrative Jesus speaks thirteen times, while after 14:42 he speaks only four times, and then in short cryptic statements (14:28 [*sic*; 14:48?], 62; 15:2, 34). The character of the narrative as passion or something done to Jesus is dramatically communicated by its language" (Donahue, "Jesus as the Parable of God," 159).

tent of the man's instruction, as the intercalation created by LGM 1 and 2 around Jesus' teaching on his cup and baptism indicates. But by this point in the story a reader should also appreciate that when Jesus returns to a house and gives private instruction, the teaching gives insider information concerning the preceding incident.⁸⁸ The reader has recently encountered a resurrection-like exorcism followed by private instruction in a house in 9:28, and may presume that the mystery of the kingdom of God is a teaching somehow apropos of the young man's own rising from the dead.⁸⁹

The relationship between the resurrection and private teaching on the mystery of the kingdom of God will be explored in the next chapter. Stated simply, the young man's resurrection becomes the basis for his instruction in the nature of salvation, the eschatological truth that in order to attain "life" one must first "die" to the self. The way of discipleship is the way of suffering and death, which in turn leads to life.

When the young man comes to Jesus in the evening he has dressed as if for baptism,

88. E.g. 7:17-23; 9:28-29, 33; 10:10-12. For discussion of the theme of private instruction in Mark, see Fowler, *Reader*, 211; Räisänen, *Messianic Secret*, 100-101; and the authors mentioned in chapter 2 n. 197. Räisänen's discussion makes it clear that the theme of special, esoteric instruction in the deeper (or allegorical) sense of a preceding public teaching, which was presented in 4:10ff., is not apparent in two of the incidents situated in houses (cf. Schuyler Brown, "Secret," 68-70). In 9:28-29 and 10:10-12 the private instruction offered in a house is supplementary and not implicit in the preceding event. Only in 7:17-23 do we have something resembling the theme of 4:10ff. (the exact close of this private instruction is unclear; it is most likely v. 20 or v. 25). But the theme introduced in 4:10ff. is paralleled elsewhere in the story. In 8:14-21 private instruction of the disciples in the deeper meaning of the feeding miracles occurs in a boat. The apocalyptic discourse on the mount of Olives is another point of comparison (13:3-37 as commentary on 13:1-2). 4:10-20 is the closest parallel to the esoteric instruction in LGM 1b, and has the same subject matter (the mystery of the kingdom of God). This teaching itself is not located in a house. Where the dialogue in 4:10-20 is spoken is unclear; like 8:14-21, it may occur in a boat (cf. 4:36).

89. LGM 1b differs from all the other instances of private instruction insofar as the teaching is not initiated by a question from the disciples (here the young man) about the meaning of some aspect of the preceding incident (7:17; 9:28; 10:10; cf. 4:10; 8:16; 9:10; 13:3-4). Thus the resurrection is not specifically designated as something in need of further elucidation or as the subject of the young man's instruction. In this respect the instruction is more like the discipleship teachings of the central section, which are initiated by Jesus. This is to be expected considering LGM 1 and 2 are incorporated around the third. Those teachings are sparked by preceding instances of misunderstanding, though here the impetus is the young man's imploring to "be with" Jesus. But as we will see, a connection of some sort between the preceding miracle and the young man's instruction is probably implied, particularly when one considers the parallels between LGM 1a and b and the transfiguration story.

perhaps in his former burial shroud, as a symbol of the transformation that comes through death. When it is time to “follow” Jesus in his “baptism” of death in Jerusalem, the young man will again put on this garment and attempt to follow with Jesus as Jesus is being led away.

To our surprise, however, at the first sign of trouble the young man fails in his resolve, becoming, like Peter, a figure for the abandonment of the disciples as a whole. Why this ideal disciple who responded so quickly and positively and was taken into Jesus’ confidence should fail just as quickly and miserably is difficult to fathom, though his story is in keeping with Jesus’ analogy of the seed sown upon rocky ground (*πετρῶδες*), “who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; and they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away” (4:16–17). It is not too surprising that the other disciple to fall this way is nicknamed Πέτρος, meaning rock.⁹⁰ The young man’s surprising failure is also much like the unexpected failure of the women related in 16:8.⁹¹ Unlike the disciples, these women did not abandon Jesus at the first sign of trouble, yet it is the disciples whose eventual success as disciples is conveyed at the end of the story, and the women who become the negative examples.

Whatever one makes of the young man’s failure, one thing is fairly clear. This abandonment seems to have a structural function. Neiryck had observed that the scene in Gethsemane with this young man marks a transition in the passion narrative. “Le passage serait à la jointure des deux grandes sections du récit de la Passion: ‘la première se déroule dans le cercle des amis de Jésus, la seconde dans le camp de

90. Tolbert (*Sowing the Gospel*, 145–46, 195–218) argued that Mark used Jesus’ disciples to represent the scenario of seed sown on rocky soil in the Sower parable, and noted the correspondence between the words Πέτρος (Peter) and πετρῶδες (rocky ground) and the quickness of their responses to Jesus’ initial call.

91. Cf. Boomershine, “Apostolic Commission,” 229.

l'opposition.'"⁹² It can therefore be said that the motif of the young man in the longer text not only helps frame the "Jerusalem section" with the theme of life through death but also divides this section into two parts. The start of Jesus' passion proper, through which he suffers alone, is marked by this brief reappearance of the young man.

At the end of Jesus' passion the young man appears once more to proclaim that "Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, has risen," implicitly signifying Jesus' exaltation by sitting on the right side of an empty tomb. The one who, with Peter, personified the failure of the disciples now inexplicably announces the restoration of this group, including Peter. He instructs the women to tell the disciples that Jesus is leading them once more (i.e. "on the way"), this time back to Galilee. The miraculous nature of the reversal in the disciples' ability to follow Jesus is also emphasized by the inexplicable exoneration of the young man who conveys this message. What happened between his shameful failure and triumphant reappearance to permit the restoration he anticipates in his words and appearance is utterly unclear, but seems to have something to do with his announcement about the rising of Jesus of Nazareth, the one who was crucified. The reader gets the sense that the clear insight and confidence available to this young man and soon to be shared by the disciples is possible because of Jesus' death and resurrection, and ultimately dependent on revelation. They will attain the insight that the centurion had (cf. 9:9, 15:39).

It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that the two resurrection stories situated at tombs, using the figure of the νεανίσκος and the theme of three women, establish a much more conspicuous pair of framing stories upon an existing *inclusio* formed by the image of Jesus going before his frightened followers. With dramatic vividness these additions underscore the theological motif that a follower of Jesus must undergo the

92. Neiryneck, "Fuite," 237-38, citing B. Standaert, *L'Évangile selon Marc*, 157.

“baptism” of suffering and death with which Jesus “is baptized,” that one must “die” in order to attain “life”.

VERBAL REPETITIONS

The preceding two chapters examined the longer gospel's use of two familiar Markan framing techniques, and the results were fairly straightforward. This final chapter will explore the additional interpretive moves encouraged by the numerous echoes of Markan phrases that exist within LGM 1. The Markan narrator's proclivity to repeat words and phrases across episodes is familiar to interpreters of the canonical gospel, who often explain the phenomenon in terms of emphasis and cross-referencing. Discussions of this device in the secondary literature are less common than discussions of Mark's bracketing techniques, though Rhoads and Michie have taken note of it:

Repetition of words or phrases also bridges many episodes. The choice of words throughout the story is simple and limited, yet the many key words which recur throughout the story are like major and minor motifs running through a musical composition.

...The repetition of a limited number of words through the many episodes provides echoes which invite the reader to make connections between one part of the narrative and another. For example, the "ripping" of the temple curtain just before the centurion recognizes Jesus as the Son of God recalls by verbal association the "ripping" of the heavens just before God pronounces Jesus to be his son. ...Tracing such verbal motifs through the story is illuminating. And as the words recur in similar or different contexts, they are enriched by repetition and accumulate many nuances of meaning for the reader.¹

1. *Mark as Story*, 46–47. Cf. Donahue, "Jesus as the Parable of God," 163; Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel*, 67; Marshall, *Faith*, 1, 23–24. Verbal echoes have recently been examined as a Markan literary technique by Dewey ("Forecasts and Echoes") and Malbon ("Echoes and Forshadowings"). Relevant instances are noted in Smith, *CA*, 135–38; and Peabody, *Mark as Composer*, 31–32 (e.g. Mark 4:35–41 and 6:45–52; 7:32–37, 8:22–26, and 5:21–24, 35–43; and 11:1–7 and 14:12–16. With the conviction that "doublets" have a literary purpose, Fowler (*Loaves*) has examined 6:31–44 and 8:1–10.

Starting with Smith, the great amount of repetition of particular Markan phrases in LGM 1 and 2 has normally been taken as an indication that Mark's parlance has been imitated by someone else.² We have seen, however, that the strong parallels with the open tomb and the young man's flight from Gethsemane have literary significance. So whether the general closeness and preponderance of verbal correspondences does favour imitation by another author, that explanation can no longer seem sufficient. We need to reconsider the more prominent repetitions of Markan phrases within LGM 1 and 2 in light of the Markan tendency to repeat significant words and phrases as a means of suggesting the interrelatedness of incidents, that is, of encouraging the reader to consider different stories in light of each other.

This examination of echoes will begin with some prominent parallels to stories within the central section, in particular the episodes of the rich man's question and the transfiguration; following this, the phrases "great cry" and "the mystery of the kingdom of God" will be discussed.³

I. Reminiscences of the Story of the Rich Man

At the end of LGM 1a we encounter two reminiscences of the story of the rich man in Mark 10:17–22. LGM 1:8 repeats the words *ὁ δὲ...ἐμβλέψας αὐτῷ ἠγάπησεν αὐτὸν καὶ* from Mark 10:21, reversing the subject (Jesus) and object (an anonymous man). And 1:9 terminates with the phrase *ἦν γὰρ πλούσιος*, which is close in its wording to the finale of that story, *ἦν γὰρ ἔχων κτήματα πολλά*. The former phrase is peculiar merely for its awkwardness: why repeat this phrase so soon after its initial

2. CA, 135–44; see also Wink, "Jesus as Magician," 7.

3. By *prominent parallel* I usually mean parallels of four or more consecutive words, though other features can make a parallel "prominent." In the case of *ἦν γὰρ πλούσιος*, the similarity to *ἦν γὰρ ἔχων κτήματα πολλά* consists in the fact that both clauses form abrupt explanatory conclusions to sections of a narrative, and the variant words have the same meaning. The "great cry" in LGM 1:5 has four parallels in Mark but is "prominent" mainly because it stands out in LGM 1 as a very strange detail.

occurrence and reverse the relationship between the subject and object?⁴ The latter phrase is more peculiar. As an explanation for why Jesus and the young man went into the man's house, the fact that he was rich merely serves to press the question: *καὶ ἐξελθόντες ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου ἦλθον εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ νεανίσκου· ἦν γὰρ πλούσιος* (1:9).

Taken at face value, this explanation implies that they went into his house for a taste of the good life. The comment is humorous, for in the preceding dialogue between Jesus and a rich man, Jesus denounced the very attachment to wealth to which the narrator seems to be attributing Jesus' week-long stay.⁵ The reader, who is relying on the narrator to disclose the value structure of the narrative world, must suppose that this time "Mark" meant something other than what he seems to imply—that, perhaps, he meant to explain why a man who is probably only in his twenties had the luxury to spend a week at home with a guest. In any event, the detail is not just peculiar but a little perplexing, a *non sequitur* that confounds narrative logic and thereby draws attention to itself. But humorously puzzling explanatory *γάρ* clauses are a feature of Mark's style, and a purpose to this clause becomes apparent when we consider how these clauses can manipulate the reader.

In 1953 C. H. Bird proposed that Mark used embarrassingly peculiar *γάρ* clauses to draw attention to particular details of some hermeneutical relevance.⁶ Compare, for instance, the comment about Jairus's daughter in 5:42: "and immediately the girl got up and walked, for she was twelve years old." Her *age* does not explain why she got up and walked—it is the reason she was *able* to do so (the numerous diminutives in the

4. The phrase "Son of David, have mercy on me" makes the parallels in Mark 10:47, 48 seem somewhat more awkward, as well. Cf. Mullins ("Papias and Clement," 192), who notes that elsewhere in the story "no two persons asking help use exactly the same language in addressing him."

5. Murgia drew attention to the humour of this detail in *LM*, 60. He read the detail as evidence that the story of the young man was intended to satire the gospel of Mark.

6. "Some *Γάρ* Clauses," 171–87. I am drawing especially on pp. 178–79.

story might lead one to think she were an infant). The reader must pause to figure out what Mark meant, because it cannot be what he said. The strangeness of the expression draws attention to the number twelve, which is a feature that relates this story to the intercalated incident of the woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years. The coincidence that the woman had been suffering as long as the girl had been alive (and stopped suffering when the girl died) is a hint that there is another level of meaning to the story, and the number itself becomes a point of entry into this symbolic dimension.⁷ Similarly, in 16:4, the women's concern about who will roll back the stone for them is followed by the remark, "And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled back, for it was very large." The size of the stone does not explain why the stone was rolled back. It explains why the women were concerned that they had forgotten to bring someone strong enough to help them get at the body to anoint it.⁸ But the description ἦν γὰρ μέγας σφόδρα has broader implications. As we shall see a little later in the discussion, the word μέγας has connotations within Mark of conflict with the powers of death, and here heightens the miraculousness of Jesus' victory over it (like the "great" calm that resulted after Jesus rebuked the "great" wind of the storm that threatened to kill the disciples on the sea; 4:37, 39). In another γὰρ clause Mark accounts for why Jesus found no fruit on the leafy fig tree with the words ὁ γὰρ καιρὸς οὐκ ἦν σύκων (11:13). This is the most remarkable one of all, for it manages to make Jesus look foolish for thinking he would find figs out of season, and spiteful for destroying the tree for not going along with his mistake. This foolishness and

7. Cf. Berg, "Reading In/to Mark," 199–200: "What an odd placement for the statement 'for she was twelve years old'! It almost seems to be brought forward as the reason for her walking. She walks because she is twelve years old. That's what twelve year olds do. But of course, she walks because she has been healed by Jesus. But, then, why bring in the detail of twelve years old? Well, I believe it has a metonymic relation to the story of the woman that interrupted the story of the girl. While the girl was twelve years old, the woman bled for twelve years. The narrative begins to take on the qualities of a Freudian dream landscape where linguistic logic rather than narrative logic causes things to happen."

8. Fowler (*Reader*, 245) calls 16:4 "one of his [Mark's] patented awkward *gar* parentheses."

misplaced anger conflict with the picture of Jesus presented thus far in the story, but the discrepancy may be naturalized if one infers that the action is *symbolic* and that, therefore, Jesus staged the incident and meant nothing personal with respect to the poor tree. Many scholars now take this peculiar *γάρ* comment as a hint that his curse and the resultant withering are a prophetic gesture commenting upon the intercalated incident of the clearing of the temple.⁹ It is interesting to notice that awkward *γάρ* clauses occur in the two intercalations that are most readily viewed as mutually interpretative (5:21–43 and 11:12–22), and that these clauses function as hints for the reader to seek a concealed meaning. LGM 1:1–2:2 belongs with these intercalations, and its peculiar *γάρ* clause may likewise be taken as a hint.

If the words *ἦν γὰρ πλούσιος* are a hint, their heuristic relevance should derive from the words they echo from the previous story. There, a man with many possessions, who wants to know “what must I do to inherit eternal life,” is told “go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” After this man went away sorrowful, Jesus continued to say to his disciples, “How hard it will be for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!” (10:23). The two close and peculiar verbal reminiscences of this story within LGM 1a encourage the reader to consider that the young man whom Jesus has raised from the dead shares the same *dilemma* of that other man.¹⁰ This is a hint that the instruction of

9. For discussions of the problems created by the *γάρ* clause in Mark 11:13, see Carrington, *According to Mark*, 237; Stein, “Temple,” 129; Berg, “Reading In/to Mark,” 200; and Gundry, *Mark*, 635–36. That this particular *γάρ* clause has “a symbolic function” is argued by Telford in *Barren Temple*, 91 n. 84; Stein, “Temple,” 129; Williams, *Gospel Against Parable*, 73–74; and Hooker in *St Mark*, 262 (cf. also Kelber, *Mark’s Story of Jesus*, 59–60; he focuses more on the “loaded religious term” *καιρός*). Fowler (*Reader*, 96–97) also discusses this instance of a *γάρ* clause being used to impart a symbolic quality to a story, noting that it is a clue to the figurative dimension revealed through the sandwich technique. His discussion is situated within the broader category of “[*g*]ar clauses that offer strategically withheld information.” He points out that they often occur “at the very end of an episode” (p. 97). This is true in Mark 5:42 and LGM 1:9 (occurring at the close of LGM 1a).

10. Contra Marvin Meyer’s inference that these two men were the same person; see the discussion of his theory in chapter 1.

the young man likewise concerns eternal life and involves a call to leave riches and family behind and “follow” Jesus (10:23–31). Gundry believes that the young man was commanded in LGM 1:10 to sell everything he owned and that the *συνδών* symbolizes his utter destitution, for he now possesses only that which belongs to a corpse.¹¹ These inferences seem basically reasonable, though we can only be sure that he has abandoned family and home, and of that only after we see him in Gethsemane “following” Jesus towards death. In retrospect we might suppose that Jesus refused to meet the man’s mother and sister because they objected to some radical behaviour on the brother’s part (e.g. renouncing his possessions) and wanted to take control of him. Rumours of bizarre behaviour are what led Jesus’ family to attempt to seize him, with the result that Jesus refused to meet them and acknowledge their familial claims (3:20–21, 31–35). It is perhaps significant that both 10:23–31 and 3:31–35 stress the importance of abandoning “house or brothers or sisters or mother...” and following Jesus (10:28; note the same word order as in 3:35).¹²

11. “Excursus,” 622.

12. On the connections between Mark 3:35, 6:3, and 10:30, see Barton, *Family Ties*, 74. The phrase “his mother” in LGM 2:1 is grammatically ambiguous, and some commentators take it to refer to Jesus’ mother (e.g. Munro, “Women Disciples,” 55–58). Jesus’ name is mentioned last, immediately before the words “and his mother,” but both males appear in the same subordinate phrase, modifying the sister (i.e. “of the young man who [was] loved [by] Jesus”), and Jesus is also subordinated in reference to the young man. However, the description of the woman is principally familial in reference to her brother, as it was earlier in LGM 1:1, so one might expect “his mother” likewise to be a familial reference to that man’s mother, rather than to Jesus’, though the nature of any relation to Salome is still unclear. The intertextual connections between LGM 2 and the scene at the cross in Mark 15:40–41/Matthew 27:55–56 would lead one to connect “his mother” with “Mary the mother of James the younger and Joses,” which, alas, is still strangely ambiguous, for, as I mentioned in chapter 6 n. 3, Mark 6:3 indicates that Jesus has brothers of that name. In any event, when trying to puzzle out to which male “his mother” refers, the reader will probably consider Jesus first (and possibly be reminded of Jesus’ rejection of his mother in 3:33–35) but likely settle on the young man. I suspect this process will accentuate the parallelism between the two situations involving family members seeking Jesus.

II. “And After Six Days”

Once inside the house, six days pass before Jesus gives charge to the young man and the latter comes to him in the evening for private instruction in a mystery. A period of six days also preceded the private revelation of Jesus’ future, exalted condition to Peter, James and John on the mountain (9:2).¹³ Since both instances of the phrase *καὶ μεθ’ ἡμέρας ἕξ* function as the introductions to episodes of private revelation closely connected with one of the discipleship teaching sections, the repetition in LGM 1:10 is probably intended to invoke a comparison between Jesus’ transfiguration and the resurrection and initiation of the young man.¹⁴

The comparison itself would seem to focus on changes in Jesus’ and the young man’s clothing, to which attention is drawn in the sentences following this phrase. Jesus’ clothes are transformed into a brilliant white to make him appear as if he is attaining his exaltation to the right hand of the Father, and the young man wraps a linen cloth about his naked body as part of the baptismal symbolism of his initiation into the mystery of the kingdom of God. Though the mystery is given an eschatological content, the young man’s clothing and the private, nocturnal context are evocative of mystery initiation, and therefore suggestive of epiphany and insight; initiations of this sort function as rites of passage, marking a change in ontological status to that of the saved.¹⁵ Through a change in clothing, therefore, both Jesus and the young man are

13. Kee refers to the transfiguration as “the eschatological vision of Jesus’ exaltation at God’s right hand” (*Community*, 75, cited in Hamilton, *Protestant Adventure*, 219; cf. Kee, “Transfiguration,” 144, 149). I am presupposing my earlier discussion of the resurrection/exaltation symbolism of the transfiguration in chapter 6, pp. 335–36.

14. The structure is not the same. Mark 8:31–9:1 follows this structure: passion prediction (8:31), disciple misunderstanding (8:32b), discipleship teaching (8:34–38), then “and after six days.” Mark 10:32–45 plus LGM 1 and 2 follows a different structure: passion prediction (10:33–34), LGM 1a, “and after six days” with the rest of LGM 1b, disciple misunderstanding (10:35–40), discipleship teaching (10:42–45), then 10:46a and LGM 2, etc.

15. Cf. Smith, *CA*, 136–37; Schenke, “Mystery,” 79–80.

depicted *as if* involved in ontological transformations. These states become actual for both at the end of the gospel, when the young man shows up in Jesus' tomb wearing a *στολή* the same colour as that to which Jesus' *ιμάτιον* was transformed on the mountain. In the canonical gospel, the word *λευκός* occurs only in 9:3 and 16:5.¹⁶

The point of evoking this comparison becomes clearer when we notice that both stories involve the themes of resurrection and suffering. LGM 1a presents a resurrection followed by a private teaching on the need to follow Jesus in his "baptism" of death in Jerusalem (LGM 1b in view of Mark 10:35–45). Mark 9:2–8 offers a vision of Jesus' resurrected state followed by a teaching stressing the scriptural necessity "that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt" (9:12–13). No explanation is given for why Jesus speaks to the three disciples about the common fates of Elijah (John the Baptist) and the Son of man while he descends the mountain, but there are indications that in 9:12–13 Jesus is offering further insight into the vision these three have just witnessed. This discussion is preceded by a reference to the vision (9:9), and the disciples' inquiry about what the scribes say concerning Elijah is represented as a response to their confusion concerning the part about "the rising from the dead." 9:12–13, however, does not refer to the resurrection but makes the point that just as it was predicted that Elijah must come first, and did, covertly, in the mission and suffering of John the Baptist, so, too, the Son of man must appear incognito, and suffer many things.¹⁷ Much as in LGM 1, the reader is left to find the thread that connects the

16. Someone reading the longer gospel might wonder what would become of the young man after 16:8, for every indication is given that he has attained the status of a resurrected believer, which Mark describes as angelic (12:25). Mark is vague about his conception of life after the resurrection, but 12:25 and 10:21 seem to imply it is a celestial existence, if not a life "in heaven." As was noted in the last chapter, the young man's position "on the right hand side" also symbolizes Jesus' condition in heaven seated at the right hand of the Father (12:36 and 14:62).

17. Mark's message about the hidden quality of God's actions through John and Jesus may have been motivated in part by a wish to find meaning in the suffering of the Christians for whom he was writing. That is, if God chose to exhibit his decisive, eschatological activity in a paradoxically hidden manner through the preaching and apparent defeat of John and Jesus, then the same power can exist in the church despite its small size and its suffering at the hands of outsiders.

various details, but in this case he or she needs only to look back to the teaching in relation to which this episode happens “after six days.” In 8:34–38 martyrdom is put forward as the means of saving one’s life; these sayings affirm the apocalyptic precept that resurrection is the reward of the righteous sufferer. The requisiteness of suffering is probably what the voice from the cloud iterates when it tells the disciples to “listen to him!”, for that teaching, now resumed in 9:12–13, is what Peter had resisted hearing.¹⁸ McGuckin’s analysis merits consent:

Mark...has redacted the narrative in line with his frequent concern to demonstrate that the Messiah’s glory is achieved only through a divinely appointed suffering, and that this will be a pattern for disciples to follow. In this he reproduces the Pauline theodicy. In this sense we define the narrative as being intimately bound up with articulating the nature of Christ’s envelopment in the glory of God—that is the glory of his exaltation to the right hand of the throne of Yahweh after his sufferings and death. Briefly put, this means that the Transfiguration story is the evangelist’s comment on the mystery of Christ’s Resurrection status.¹⁹

Since the private words about the need for the Son of man to suffer constitute an enigmatic teaching pertaining to the preceding vision, a reader may presume that a similar connection exists between the young man’s resurrection and his instruction after six days in the mystery of the kingdom of God. Indeed, in this gospel when Jesus enters a house and gives private instruction, the teaching is always related in some way to the preceding incident.²⁰ How this resurrection and initiation relate together will be examined later in this chapter when we consider LGM 1a and 1b as an example of the Markan pattern of following instances of parabolic revelation with private explanation to the disciples; that is, it shall be argued that the resurrection is itself another parabolic revelation of the mystery of the kingdom of God.

18. Cf. Kee, “Transfiguration,” 147–48; McGuckin, *Transfiguration*, 79–80; Matera, “Prologue,” 12; Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 205–207; Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 93; Telford, *Mark*, 33.

19. McGuckin, *Transfiguration*, 26–27.

20. E.g. 7:17; 9:28, 33; 10:10. Although not occurring in a house, cf. 4:10–20; 8:14–21; 13:3–37.

The parallels between LGM 1 and the transfiguration thus underscore the idea that the mystery in which the young man was instructed is related not only to discipleship but also to the mystery of who Jesus is, to his roles as God's beloved Son and the suffering Son of man. The shared theme of transformation through suffering seems also to be prefigured in the story of Jesus' baptism. God's reference to Jesus as "my beloved Son" in 9:7 reiterates the allusion made to Psalm 2:7 in Mark 1:11. Like the transfiguration, the story of his baptism provides a positive conception of the transformation that comes through suffering and death—provided one perceives the movements of the prologue as a microcosm for the meaning of the gospel as a whole.²¹ That is, just as the gospel of Mark is structured as a trip by Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem to be crucified, followed by a return to Galilee, the prologue has Jesus come from Galilee to Judea for baptism then return to Galilee. Thus, in the prologue, Jesus' crucifixion is represented symbolically by his baptism in the Jordan, though the latent meaning of this symbolism is only developed later in the story, within the material framed by LGM 1 and 2; there Jesus implicitly associates the baptism with which he is baptized with the crucifixion, which is the other incident with strong parallels to the transfiguration story. McGuckin also noticed the significance of these parallels, and concluded that

...both the Baptismal narrative and that of the Transfiguration are concerned with teaching that Christ's glory is inextricably bound up with the mystery of his sufferings and death. This, I believe, is the real reason Mark wishes us to remember the Baptismal story at the point of 9:7.²²

I have grown somewhat skeptical about the appropriateness of delineating elaborate

21. Cf. Vaage, "Bird-watching," 283–86.

22. *Transfiguration*, 78. Cf. Lincoln, "Promise," 294: "The Son of man's future glory is anticipated through Jesus' transfiguration in the presence of his disciples, but it is only an anticipation. The incident is meant to reassure the disciples that both for Jesus and for them glory *will* follow suffering but it will not bypass the way of the cross."

structural (i.e. visual) patterns in this gospel, which is why I tend to focus on narrative *techniques*. But I am tempted to argue that the baptism and transfiguration form a bracket around the Galilean section (overlapping the start of the central section) much as the known LGM additions and the empty tomb story bracket the Jerusalem section (and overlap the end of the central section). These brackets follow a pattern: in the first pair, Jesus is involved in a real baptism (1:9–11) and a symbolic resurrection (9:2–8); in the second, Jesus and the young man are involved in a symbolic baptism (Mark 10:38–39; LGM 1b) and a real resurrection (16:1–8; LGM 1a, Mark 16:5). The order in 9:2–13 and LGM 1 of a depiction of resurrection being followed by a teaching on suffering might be considered a microcosm of the overall structure of the gospel, which presents a career of wonder working followed by passive suffering and death. In keeping with the focus on Jesus' power and authority in the Galilean section, the first pair of bracketing stories focus more overtly on the positive aspect of exaltation, whereas the bracketing stories around the passion are more overtly focused on death and suffering as the means to this end. In any case, both the transfiguration and LGM 1 are concerned with the eschatological state of resurrection/exaltation and give private disclosure of the suffering involved in its attainment.

III. The “Great Cry” from the Tomb

LGM 1 includes the peculiar detail of a great cry that is heard from the tomb as Jesus sets out for the garden. The fact that this voice cries out *before* Jesus raises the youth has caused problems for commentators. Some scholars have supposed that the miracle was performed at a distance or that the young man was not entirely dead to start with.²³ These interpretations attempt to preserve the literal integrity of the text

23. S. E. Johnson (*LM*, 26) read the untimely scream as an indication “that Jesus has already worked the miracle while approaching the tomb, or even before, when the sister first appeals to him, i.e. it is a healing from a distance.” If intertextual associations are considered, there is a strong similarity between the woman’s petition in 1:2 and that of the Canaanite woman in Matthew 15:22, 25, whose daughter is

from violation by an impossible detail, but are not encouraged by the narrative. The reader, rather, has been led to assume that the physical contact gained through Jesus' gesture of stretching out the hand and touching or raising a person (LGM 1:7) is essential in restoring wholeness and life (e.g. Mark 1:31, 41; 5:23, 41–42). Other scholars, presuming the voice to be an impossible detail, have construed its presence as a tradition-critical problem, noting that the words *φωνῆ μεγάλη* are also used in John 11:43 to dramatize the summoning of Lazarus from the tomb. For them, the pertinent question is whether a stranger form of the same detail is indicative of a more primitive or a more developed tradition. Smith thought that the “demonological parallels” and the lack of any difficulty pertaining to the voice in John imply that longer Mark is “primitive.”²⁴ Fuller sensed that this voice “spoils the miracle and must be more primitive than the attribution of the cry to the wonder worker as part of his miraculous technique.”²⁵ Wink agreed that the cry in John is charismatic, but with Richardson interpreted the cry in longer Mark as “that of the initiate undergoing his *mors voluntaria*, prior to his baptismal regeneration.” He therefore supposed “a late, Alexandrian

healed at a distance. In Matthew she says “Have mercy on me. O Lord, Son of David” then prostrates before him. In the Markan version (7:24–30) no title is used but the woman also falls down at Jesus' feet, and the demon is expelled at a distance, without any command, prayer or gesture made to cause it to depart. Hence this interpretation has a precedent in Mark and is a possible way of reading LGM 1. Pierson Parker (Review, 5) supposed that the raising story is not a miracle at all but only a story about Jesus saving a man who somehow got buried alive (cf. Danker, Review, 316). Levin (“Early History,” 4281) also saw the loud cry as evidence that the young man was already alive. Although he appreciated the consonance of the unexpected cry with other Markan stories, he preferred to use it as support for the eccentric theory that Jesus was not actually dead in his tomb and continued to live in relative obscurity after his “resurrection” (4284–86). He was correct to note that in this and two other Markan resurrection-type stories there is room for uncertainty about whether the one raised was actually dead (cf. 5:39; 9:26). John removes all uncertainty by having Jesus tarry in the other Bethany until Lazarus is dead, then show up four days after the burial, when the body is already rotting (10:40, 11:6, 17, 39). Smith notes that had the author of John encountered this ambiguity in his source, the heavy emphasis on proof of Lazarus' death would find a ready explanation (CA, 156).

24. Smith, CA, 157.

25. LM, 3.

provenance."²⁶ Murgia suggested a *very* late provenance compared to John by proposing that this strange detail was deliberately crafted by a clever forger in order to project an impression of clumsiness.²⁷ Crossan, however, considered the broader context of the gospel in his assessment of the question:

In Mark...a "great cry" is uttered both by demons as Jesus exorcises them (1:26; 5:7) and by Jesus himself as he dies (15:34, 37). In [LGM 1], *θηου*, it has overtones of the struggle with the demonic power of death. But John never uses it elsewhere, and in 11:43 it seems at best a residue.²⁸

Crossan has a good point. Setting aside the question of a possible direction of development, the connotations of this detail within the Markan text are clear, and other scholars have perceived the same thing. The resemblance between this voice and the responses of demons to Jesus' mere presence (5:7; 1:26; cf. 9:20) recalls previous conflicts with "the demonic power of death," whose minions were causing their hosts to act in self-destructive ways: 1:26; 5:2–5, 13; 9:18, 20, 22, 26.²⁹ But in what sense is this voice the power of death? For there is no demon and no exorcism in LGM 1a, only an unexplained cry in response to Jesus' proximity. To understand what this voice connotes in the context of longer Mark it is necessary to consider the connotations of the words *φωνή* and *μέγας* in the Markan gospel.

As Danker notes, "The term *φωνή* is reserved by Mark for extraordinary communication, appearing first at 1:3 in the quotation from [Isaiah] 40:3; in 1:11 and 9:7 in connection with the Bath Qol; and in 1:26 and 5:7 in a description of demonic expression."³⁰ The adjective *μέγας*, on the other hand, is frequently used in connec-

26. "Jesus as Magician," 5. Cf. R. E. Brown, "Relation," 482: "SGM's attribution of the voice to (the youth within?) the tomb...may be a deliberate change to favor the initiation rite." The logic of that proposal is not self-explanatory.

27. *LM*, 61.

28. *Four Other Gospels*, 105. Cf. Smith, *CA*, 107.

29. See Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*, 87.

30. "Demonic Secret," 52.

tion with symbolizations or embodiments of death: the demonic cries in a loud voice (*φωνῆ μεγάλη*; 1:26; 5:7), the great wind (*λαίλαψ μεγάλη ἀνέμου*) that arose on the sea (4:37),³¹ the great herd (*ἀγέλη...μεγάλη*) of possessed pigs (5:11),³² and the very great (*μέγας σφόδρα*) stone that sealed Jesus' tomb (16:4).³³ It is also connected with the theme of exorcism: a demon is rebuked, legion is told to go out, and the wind on the sea is rebuked. Further, the specific theme of crying out in a great voice is connected with the realization of impending demise or destruction: Jesus succumbs to death with two great cries, and the Capernaum and Gerasene demoniacs express their fear of destruction (or torment) *φωνῆ μεγάλη* (cf. 1:24 5:7).³⁴ Thus, situated within the larger context of the gospel of Mark, the *φωνῆ μεγάλη* in LGM 1:5 is somehow, as Winston volunteered, "death, about to be worsted."³⁵ The very presence of the messiah now provokes terror not just in Satan's minions, but in the kingdom of Death itself.³⁶

31. As many scholars agree, the stormy sea symbolizes "the powers of chaos in general," as is frequent in the Psalms and in ancient Near Eastern poetry. See Gundry, *Mark*, 241 (the authors he cites summarize the evidence); as well as Kee, "Terminology," 36–37; Malbon, "Galilee and Jerusalem," 251; Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 197; McVann, "Destroying Death," 125; Hooker, *St Mark*, 139; Gundry, *Mark*, 241; Broadhead, *Teaching with Authority*, 95–96 and n. 1, 200; and Hare, *Mark*, 62.

32. The greatness of the herd is a way of making concrete the great size and "destructive nature" of the demons Jesus destroyed. Guelich, *Mark*, 1:282, cited by Schneck, *Isaiah*, 136.

33. Apart from the description of the large upper room in which Jesus arranged to have the last supper (14:15), the word *μέγας* otherwise only occurs in reactions to events involving the defeat of death. The disciples respond to the rebuking of the sea with a great fear (*φόβον μέγαν*; 4:41); and observers of the raising of Jairus' daughter were overcome with great amazement (*ἐκστάσει μεγάλη*; 5:42). The substantive *οἱ μεγάλοι* (great men) occurs in Mark 10:42, 43, and the superlative in 9:34 ("for on the way they had discussed with one another who was the greatest").

34. Cf. Kelber, "Conclusion," 161.

35. *LM*, 61. This is his characterization of Smith's position, and it is not entirely clear here that Winston is endorsing it. Smith noted that the crying out of demons "before being cast out or conquered is a favorite theme of early Christian literature, beginning with Mark 5:6" (*LM*, 13; he gives examples in "Merkel," 146 n. 72). Shumaker (p. 61) likewise states "it may be the voice of the demon, resisting expulsion." On the same page Coolidge and Winston speculate instead that it is Death personified. Smith's assessment in *CA*, 157 (cf. *SG*, 55) is that it is "the cry of Death, departing from its prey." R. E. Brown appears to agree: "The voice could be that of the demon of death" ("Relation," 482 n. 44). Notice that the young man responds to the miracle by imploring to "be with" Jesus, the way the man who identified himself as Legion responded when he was released from demonic bondage.

36. The concept of a demonic realm of death presided over by Satan is conjured in 3:23–27. There, Jesus' exorcisms are described as a plundering of Satan's "house," which is also described as a "kingdom." The demons are treated as personal extensions of Satan. Thus the accusations that Jesus is possessed by Beelzebul and casts out demons by the prince of demons is taken by Jesus to imply that Satan would be casting out himself. Finally, the association between this demonic kingdom and death is

As a personification of death, the speakerless voice that reacts within the tomb violates the boundary between literal and poetic. The literal integrity of the story must compete with these symbolic connotations, for the alternatives that the man was raised at a distance or that he was not actually dead are not encouraged by the narrative. The inadequacies of the possible literal explanations in view of the restorative function given elsewhere in the narrative to Jesus' grasping of the hand encourage the reader to consider whether a more consistent significance emerges from the invariable association between great cries and conflicts with death and the demonic realm, and thereby to perceive the same cosmic dynamics occurring within LGM 1a. This revivification of a dead body thereby acquires unmistakable *eschatological* overtones of the triumph of the power of God over the demonic sphere, that is, of actual *resurrection*. Through this peculiar detail the episode becomes not just another instance of the theme that God's kingdom is established through the destruction of death, but a paradigm for this struggle.³⁷

LGM 1a's exorcistic-like resurrection is paralleled by a resurrection-like exorcism in 9:25–27. As Robinson comments, "Following upon the act of exorcism, the scene is depicted so as to make it evident that violence and death itself have been cast out. Jesus' cure of the epileptic boy is described in terms of resurrection...."³⁸ The motif that Jesus' exorcisms are struggles with the powers of death is made unmistakable in this story, a great deal of which is devoted to describing the attempts this demon would make on the boy's life (9:18, 20, 22, 26). This symbolism is repeated in LGM 1 and made even more explicit. In order that the young man may live again, Jesus defeats

evident from the fact that demons are frequently described as attempting to cause their hosts to destroy themselves.

37. The gospel of John also uses this story as a paradigm for eschatological life, but puts it in the service of a realized eschatology (e.g. 11:23–26).

38. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*, 87.

the power Death has over him. The resurrection-like exorcism, occurring just before the second passion prediction, and the exorcism-like resurrection, occurring just after the third, together symbolically depict salvation as a destruction of death and rising to life. Life comes through a struggle with death. One must therefore undergo death in order to defeat it.

IV. "The Mystery of the Kingdom of God"

At a symbolic level, the resurrection in LGM 1a depicts an eschatological triumph over the demonic powers of destruction, a paradigmatic defeat of Death itself. The return of Jesus with the young man to his house for private instruction engenders the expectation of further teaching pertaining to this resurrection (cf. 7:17; 9:28, 33; 10:10). But after relating with mimetic precision the circumstances surrounding this instruction (LGM 1:10–11), the narration shifts briefly to diegetic generality (1:12), and the reader learns only that this man was taught the mystery of the kingdom of God.³⁹ Together with the enigmatically precise references to the relative day and hour of instruction and the costume in which it was received, the unexplained reference to this mystery presents another gap for the reader to resolve by pondering various clues in the story.⁴⁰ The parallels with the pericope of the rich man perhaps imply that this mystery concerns what the young man must do to inherit eternal life. And as we saw in chapter 5, the juxtaposition of this episode with 10:35–45 produced by the use of

39. As Tolbert notes (*Sowing the Gospel*, 105–106), the difference between diegesis (authorial discourse) and mimesis (imitation of action) is the difference between telling and showing. Often mimesis is clearest in situations of direct discourse by a character, and diegesis, in moments of direct narration by the author. In LGM 1:10–11, however, the direct narration simply relates the details or shows the incident unfolding; the author prescinds from authoritative commentary on what these details represent. We "see" the actions, but have no guidance to help us make sense of what we are seeing. In 1:12 we are told, rather than shown, what transpired, but (to the best of our knowledge) the content of the mystery of the kingdom of God is not itself explained in longer Mark, so we remain outsiders to the incident.

40. Citing Wolfgang Iser, Bassler ("Parable of the Loaves," 164, n. 18) has commented on "the ability of an overabundance of detail to evoke bewilderment in the reader. This *overprecision* can constitute a blank."

intercalation may lead the reader to the discipleship theme of following Jesus in the way to life through death, which is the main theme of all three discipleship teaching cycles in the central section. But since within Mark's story episodes of private discipleship instruction elucidate the preceding incident, it follows that the symbolism that has been discerned concerning the young man's resurrection should reciprocally nuance this interpretation of "the mystery of the kingdom of God." In keeping with the initial occurrence of this phrase after the parable of the Sower, LGM 1b presumably treats the resurrection in LGM 1a as an enacted "parable" that conceals the eschatological mystery of the kingdom of God from "those outside" but functions to reveal this truth to insiders like the young man, with the help of private instruction (cf. 4:1–20).⁴¹

An "opening" into the symbolic dimension of the resurrection narrative is provided by the *φωνὴ μεγάλη*, an intrusion of poetic significance into the literal level of the text (LGM 1:5). The panicked cry suggests that Jesus brings life to the young man by defeating Death. This theme was conveyed previously in the exorcism of the epileptic boy, which required his "killing" and "raising" (9:25–27), and in the exorcistic rebuking of the wind and silencing of the raging sea—another personification of death. The

41. Cf. Munro, "Women Disciples," 54: "The raising of the woman's brother is in the nature of an acted parable, or allegory, like the withering of the fruitless fig tree...."; also Schenke ("Mystery," 77–78), who sees a symbolic connection between the resurrection and initiation stories. The word *παραβολή* has a wide range of meanings in Mark. The term is applied to "any statement that includes an element of indirection, perhaps even of obscurity, and hence demands explanation" (Carlston, cited in Patten, "Form and Function," 252). Parables in the classic sense constitute only one form to which this word is applied. The common denominator in Mark's usage is that the sayings be capable of a second level of meaning: the overt sense conceals a more significant point. Moreover, 4:12 implies that it is not just what people hear but also what they *see* that happens parabolically (*ἐν παραβολαῖς*), and the allusions to this quotation from Isaiah 6:9–10 in Mark 6:52 and 8:17–21 reinforce the impression that parables can also be extraordinary actions that have a deeper significance, in this case the nature miracles in chapters 4–8. On this topic, see Boobyer, "The Redaction of Mark IV. 1–34," 63 (61, 63–64); Patten, "Form and Function," 253; Boucher, *Mysterious Parable*, 69; Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel*, 110–11 (citing Boucher); Beavis, *Mark's Audience*, 111–14 (who cites Nineham, *The Gospel of St Mark*, 216); Marshall, *Faith*, 60–74; Mearns, "Parables, Secrecy and Eschatology," 427; Matera, "He Saved Others," 18–19, 24; Shiner, *Follow Me!* 241–42. For a detailed study of the Markan miracles as parabolic demonstrations of the eschatological power of God's kingdom, see chapter 3 of Marshall's book.

depiction of the young man's resurrection as Jesus' triumph over death itself anticipates Jesus' decisive victory, which this same young man will announce from inside Jesus' tomb.

As an enacted "parable" of the kingdom, the resurrection of the young man illustrates the paradox that resurrection or "life" is a victory that cannot be achieved apart from a struggle with the powers of death. The private explanation of this "parable" in LGM 1b expounds this insight by elaborating imagery of death and rebirth. The linen cloth worn over the young man's naked body connotes readiness to accept Jesus' "baptism" (10:38–39) and death (15:46). However, despite the ritualistic, even mystery-religion imagery, this character is *taught* a mystery, like the instruction given in 4:10–20. Baptism *imagery* is used here to interpret the salvific dimension of the young man's resurrection experience according to the analogy of dying (drowning in water) and rising again, though the baptism by which this eschatological reversal is obtained is not the Christian rite itself but Jesus' metaphorical baptism of "immersion" in sufferings and death. This meaning is founded on a conception of Christian baptism similar to the Pauline theology that through baptism one dies with Christ to the old self, though without the moralizing theme that one dies to the body of Sin.⁴²

It would appear, then, that in the longer gospel of Mark the mystery of the kingdom of God is the paradox that one saves one's life by losing it, and loses one life by saving it. This eschatological principle is the rationale that underlies both Mark's christology (note 15:31–32) and discipleship theology (8:35), the two main themes that appear in the section of the narrative in which LGM 1 and 2 were placed.

42. Though Rom. 6:1–14 speaks of participation in Christ's death and resurrection through baptism, in Mark this baptismal participation is a metaphor for a life of active self-denial patterned upon the passion (e.g. 8:34).

IV.1. LGM 1:12 as an Elaboration of Themes Introduced in Mark 4:11–12

A number of Markan scholars have offered the same motifs of the necessity of the messiah's death and of discipleship as the way of the cross as interpretations of the mystery of the kingdom of God in canonical Mark.⁴³ Unfortunately, interpretations of the *μυστήριον* in 4:11–12 have always been difficult to substantiate exegetically. This problem is partly the result of inconsistencies in the parable discourse, which emerged as a byproduct of multiple stages of composition.⁴⁴ The resultant text is problematic, and no interpretation of Mark 4:11–12 will conform perfectly with all the details in the discourse as it now stands. Nevertheless, the longer text's equation of the mystery of

43. Boucher's book *The Mysterious Parable* ends its section on the mystery of the kingdom of God with the conclusions that the mystery includes "the requirement for the disciple to 'deny himself and take up his cross' (8:34)" but also "a view of the messiahship which involves suffering": "the basic paradox is that he who works miracles with 'authority' ... is the one who must suffer and die" (81–83). In the abstract for her dissertation, Patten stated that "Mark has interpreted both teachings and events to convey a message about the 'mystery of the kingdom' which was found to be the suffering, rejection, death, and vindication of the Son of Man" ("Parable and Secret," 136). In a later article based on this dissertation, she voiced the suspicion that the secret behind the parables would reveal something about the messianic secret ("Form and Function," 257). J. G. Williams prefers to stress the christological dimension of the mystery as "the sacrificial suffering of the Son of man" but adds, "In one sense, 'the way of the Lord' could be viewed as the theme of Mark, an alternative image appropriate to the 'mystery of the Kingdom'" (*Gospel Against Parable*, 44). Donahue sees the mystery of the kingdom of God as having both a christological and discipleship dimension (*The Gospel in Parable*, 44–46). In his view, "the content of the 'mystery of the kingdom' in Mark is that the reign or power of God is now manifest in the brokenness of Jesus on the cross" (44); this mystery is in effect "the way of the cross" (46). Tuckett points to the christological subject matter of the parabolic discourses in 3:23–27 and 12:1–12 ("Mark's Concerns," 16–17). See also Cuvillier, *Le concept de ΠΑΡΑΒΟΛΗ*, 109–10.

44. See Meagher, *Clumsy Construction*, 85–92, 99–138. Many scholars now believe that Mark inserted this esoteric mystery theme into a discourse that formerly presented Jesus using parables as an effective pedagogical device (cf. 4:1–2, 33). Tuckett's survey of various redaction-critical studies of the parable chapter ("Mark's Concerns") shows that the esoteric verses 4:11–12, 21–25, and 34 (or 34b) are usually attributed to Mark (i.e. the final redactor), particularly in more recent studies. Vv. 11–12 and 21–25 are normally thought to disrupt a pre-Markan collection of seed parables with a scenario of secluded explanation that does not sit well with the notion that Jesus taught from and stayed in a boat (4:1, 36); and the tension between vv. 33 and 34 is thought most readily explained when v. 34 is viewed as a corrective of v. 33 and vv. 1–2. It is interesting, then, that 4:1–2 is universally attributed to Mark. Since these verses present Jesus as a concerned teacher effectively communicating with his audience (cf. 6:34b), the growing tendency to attribute the obfuscatory motif to the same person should imply that Mark reworked his gospel in order to develop a different conception of the parables. But at present, few scholars seem prepared to accept this implication, probably because they are used to attributing different redactional layers to different authors holding stable theological positions.

the kingdom of God with the major discipleship and christological themes of the central section is in many ways consistent with developments in the canonical gospel of concepts introduced in 4:11–12. I will attempt to demonstrate this consistency without attempting to resolve the numerous issues that pertain to the interpretation of the mystery of the kingdom of God in the canonical gospel.

There are features in the composition of Mark 4–8 that associate the mystery of the kingdom of God with the important christological and discipleship themes introduced in the central section. To begin with, a connection is provided implicitly in the use of *ὁ λόγος* to describe both the message contained in the parables and the first prediction of the passion. In 4:33–34 the preceding discourse by the sea is described in terms of Jesus speaking *τὸν λόγον* to the crowds through parables of the kingdom, but offering private explanations to his disciples. In other words, “the word” is synonymous with the message that “occurs” (*γίνεται*) to outsiders in riddles but has been given to “those around him with the twelve”;⁴⁵ it is the mystery of the kingdom of God. By speaking in parables, Jesus is characterized as taking on the role of the sower in the explanation of the Sower parable, where *ὁ λόγος* occurs eight times in reference to this message (4:14–20); by teaching the crowds in parables, Jesus was “disseminating” *τὸν λόγον* or mystery in riddling speech.

However, immediately after the first passion prediction the narrator declares that Jesus was speaking *παρρησίᾳ τὸν λόγον* (8:32). The similarities with 4:33a are evident: *Καὶ τοιαύταις παραβολαῖς ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον; καὶ παρρησίᾳ τὸν λόγον ἐλάλει*. The reference to *ορεν* speaking of “the word” implies a transition from the

45. On the meaning of *γίνεται*, see Meagher, *Clumsy Construction*, 114; Kelber in *Kingdom*, 32–33; Beavis, *Mark's Audience*, 147. On *ἐν παραβολαῖς* as “in riddles,” see Cuvillier, *Le concept de ΠΑΡΑΒΟΛΗ*, 195.

paradigm of riddling speech established in the parable discourse and therefore a different way of speaking about the same subject.⁴⁶

This inference that the phrase *καὶ παρρησία τὸν λόγον ἐλάλει* represents a transition from parabolic to plain disclosure of the mystery of the kingdom is also supported by the arrangement of incidents leading up to this section. Beginning with the parable discourse and culminating in the discussion about bread in the boat, Mark develops the theme of the disciples' incomprehension.⁴⁷ They do not understand the "master parable" of the Sower, which is "the key" to understanding the others (4:13);⁴⁸ they wonder who Jesus is in view of his mastery of wind and sea (4:41); they are astounded that he can walk on the water, precisely because they also do not understand the first feeding miracle (6:51b-52); they do not comprehend the parable about the true source of defilement, which should have been a riddle only to the crowds (7:18); and they do not understand the "parable" of the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod because they have also not comprehended the second feeding miracle (8:14-21).

It would be difficult to argue that these misunderstandings all involve one theme. However, one larger implication to the disciples' incomprehension is developed in the final pericope, 8:14-21. Here Jesus reprimands his disciples for their *blindness* concerning a reality revealed in the nature miracles: "Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes do you not see, and having ears

46. Boucher, *Mysterious Parable*, 81-82. Cf. Cuvillier, *Le concept de ΠΑΡΑΒΟΛΗ*, 110; Quesnell, *Mind*, 213; Bishop, "Parable and Parrhesia in Mark," 39-40. Robinson (*The Problem of History in Mark*, 49-52) notes the transition but offers an historicizing interpretation.

47. On viewing Mark 4:1-8:26 as a discrete section of narrative dominated by the motif of the sea voyage and the development of the motif that the disciples are as uncomprehending as "those outside," see Petersen, "Composition." For the development of the incomprehension theme within 6:14-8:30, see Matera, "Incomprehension."

48. Williams, *Gospel Against Parable*, 43. Cf. Quesnell, *Mind*, 78-79; Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*, 44-45; Boucher, *Mysterious Parable*, 46; Marshall *Faith*, 73; Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 172; Marcus, *Mystery*, 213; Hooker, *St Mark*, 120, 130-31; Blomberg, "Trends," 247. Hooker draws attention to the fact that the words about the mystery (4:11-12) are enclosed within (i.e. framed by) the Sower parable and its interpretation.

do you not hear? ...Do you not yet understand?" These words echo the Isaian language of blindness in 4:12 and Jesus' rebuke in 4:13, as well as the disciples' hard-hearted confusion about "the loaves" when confronted by Jesus walking on the sea (6:52), which might itself pick up the theme of hardheartedness in Isaiah 6:9–10. The intratextual linking of 4:12–13, 6:52, and 8:16–21 indicates that the nature miracles are parabolic manifestations of the mystery introduced in the parable discourse.⁴⁹

Jesus' rebuking of his disciples for their blindness concerning the nature miracles is immediately followed by a transitional story (the first "bracket" around the central section) in which a two-stage healing of blindness appears to characterize the disciples' imminent recognition of Jesus' messiahship as a transition from spiritual blindness (having eyes but not seeing) to "fuzzy" perception.⁵⁰ Hence "Peter's 'trees-as-men-walking' declaration" should represent a *partial* perception of that same reality about which the disciples were blind when confronted by the nature miracles: the mystery of the kingdom of God.⁵¹ His confession that Jesus is the Christ marks a first step in the disciples' insight into the larger, eschatological mystery of the rule of God which Jesus mediates.

At 8:29 Peter comes to realize *that* redemption is occurring with Jesus. But he does not comprehend what this redemption entails for Jesus and his followers. Jesus therefore begins to supplement the disciples' recognition with instruction in the necessity of the Son of man's death and the paradoxes of salvation. The three "plain" and

49. Cf. Boobyer, "The Redaction of Mark IV. 1–34," 63 (61, 63–64); Patten, "Form and Function," 253; Boucher, *Mysterious Parable*, 69; Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel*, 110–11 (citing Boucher); Beavis, *Mark's Audience*, 111–14 (who cites Nineham, *The Gospel of St Mark*, 216); Marshall, *Faith*, 60–74; Mearns, "Parables, Secrecy and Eschatology," 427; Matera, "He Saved Others," 18–19, 24; and Shiner, *Follow Me!* 241–42. For a detailed study of the Markan miracles as parabolic demonstrations of the eschatological power of God's kingdom, see chapter 3 of Marshall's book.

50. Note the use of βλέπω in 8:18 and 8:23, 24.

51. This felicitous phrase is taken from Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus and Mark*, 230. For a brief outline of the symbolism of the miracles in the section of narrative between the parable discourse and the central section, see n. 66 below.

(mostly) private discipleship teaching cycles would appear therefore to constitute the most unambiguous statements about the mystery of the kingdom of God in Mark. These teachings may be conceived as disclosures of the christological and discipleship correlates of the larger, eschatological mystery that life comes through suffering and death.⁵²

In terms of composition, therefore, it makes sense that LGM 1, a story that assists a reader's comprehension of the mystery of the kingdom of God, should appear in the central section of the Markan gospel and associate this mystery with the way to life through death. Moreover, the longer gospel's conception of the mystery of the kingdom of God is in accord with a general shift in emphasis that occurs in this section with respect to the conception of the kingdom of God. Though the coming of the kingdom (or its final glory) is in view at 9:1, the matter of what a disciple must do (or be or receive) in order to enter it is the focus of the other kingdom sayings. A disciple must overcome all penchants to sin (9:47), adopt the nominal status of a child (10:14), embrace the kingdom in the trifling form of a child (10:15), and relinquish wealth (10:23–25).⁵³ The image of the young man being taught the mystery of the kingdom of God symbolizes what is happening to the reader as he or she contemplates the discipleship teachings of this section of the narrative.

IV.2. The Mystery of the Kingdom of God and the Markan Gospel's Imperative of "Spiritual" Understanding

These observations concerning how LGM 1 accords with developments of the mystery/misunderstanding theme in Mark's gospel may be enhanced through a reader-response analysis of how the theme of the disciples' incomprehension affects the implied reader. Throughout chapter 4 and again in the discussion about the loaves in

52. Cf. Bishop, "Parabole and Parrhesia in Mark," 39–40.

53. For my interpretation of 10:14–15, see chapter 6, pp. 317–18.

chapter 8, the imperative of understanding is communicated to the reader. This expectation is first conveyed by the Sower parable, which is bracketed by the commands “Listen! Behold!” and “Whoever has ears to hear, hear!” (4:3, 9; cf. 7:14). These summonses to attention accentuate the necessity of perceiving a second level of meaning within the parable. The importance of perceiving this meaning is again reinforced by Jesus’ reproach to his disciples, the supposed insiders, for not having understood this parable (4:13). The allegorical explanation likewise places emphasis on understanding; in addition to outlining various barriers to discipleship, it provides a commentary on how it is that some people come to perceive the mystery whereas others do not. The different soils are also different kinds of *hearers*:

The interpretation of the first parable is devoted to an explanation of...two levels [of comprehension]: the superficial level, called “seeing” and “hearing” (v. 12), is exemplified by those who “hear” the word but then fall away (vv. 15, 16, 18). The deeper level, called “knowing” and “understanding” (v. 12), is itself the objective of the interpretation (v. 13), and is exemplified by the fourth example: “These hear the word and receive it and bear fruit...” (v. 20). Most illuminating are Mark’s explanations for the two levels: progress from the first to the second level is blocked by the cosmic enemy of Christ, Satan (v. 15). ...The deeper level is given by God (v. 11), and corresponds to the “repentance” and “forgiveness” (v. 12) for which the gospel calls.... Thus the struggle for “understanding” is the inner aspect of the struggle between Satan and God constituting the history of Jesus.⁵⁴

The need to work at discerning the mystery concealed in “the word” is the focus of vv. 21–25. The explanatory *γάρ* clauses in vv. 22 and 25 indicate that the parables of the lamp (4:21) and the measure (4:24) are interpreted by the aphorisms that follow them.⁵⁵ Thus 4:21–22 and 4:24–25 each form a unit, separated by a call to pay close attention. In context, the reference to the illogicality of taking out a lamp in order to place it under a bushel would concern the mystery concealed in the parables⁵⁶ or, more

54. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*, 125. Cf. Boucher, *Mysterious Parable*, 45–46.

55. Vorster, “Meaning and Reference,” 43; Bishop, “*Parabole and Parrhesia* in Mark,” 41; Malbon, “Echoes and Foreshadowings,” 217–18.

56. Burkill, *Mysterious Revelation*, 98–99; Quesnell, *Mind*, 82 and n. 41; Boucher, *Mysterious Parable*, 53; Robbins, *New Boundaries*, 209–10.

generally, the concealed revelation of the mystery of the kingdom in Jesus' riddling words and actions.⁵⁷ V. 21 indicates that the lamp, or hidden truth about the nature of God's rule, is not by nature supposed to remain hidden, and v. 22 explains, paradoxically, that the hiding occurred *so that* (ἵνα) the mystery might come to light. Interposed between these two units is another call to listen and discern: "If any man has ears to hear, let him hear" (4:23). This general call to *anyone* is another indication to the reader that knowledge of the mystery requires a willingness to pay close attention to the parables and the ability to discern their hidden truths. This theme is repeated in the next sentence, which introduces the parable of the measure: "Take heed *what you hear*; the measure you give will be the measure you get, and still more will be given you. For to him who has will more be given; and from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away":

The measure of listening of the reader is the basis for the measure of the reader's understanding of what has been said; according to that measure the secret will be revealed to him and the riddle solved, and he will be able to see even more than he could expect on account of the attention given by him (4:24b). The reader who is attentive is given understanding, but the reader who is not is robbed even of the understanding he has (4:25).⁵⁸

In 4:21–25, then, Mark develops the theme in 4:14–20 that discipleship is a struggle to "bear fruit" in an environment of forces hostile to "the word" by adding that success depends upon *straining to understand the deeper truths conveyed parabolically in this text*. This effort is rewarded with revelation. As 4:11–12 indicated, having insight into the mystery is essential for salvation, for this knowledge is what leads a

57. Marcus, *Mystery*, 142. Since this is a personified lamp that "comes" with a purpose (Μήτι ἔρχεται ὁ λύχνος ἵνα), it may also symbolize Jesus (cf. the use of ἔρχομαι of Jesus in 1:24, 38; 2:17c; 10:45). See Lane, *Mark*, 165; Donahue, *The Gospel in Parable*, 48; Hooker, *St Mark*, 133; and esp. Marcus, *Mystery*, 131.

58. Van Iersel, "Operator," 94. Cf. Boucher, *Mysterious Parable*, 53; Via, *Ethics*, 185; Beavis, *Mark's Audience*, 153; Tate, *Outside*, 62–63. As Williams points out (*Gospel Against Parable*, 171), the image of having something taken away (ἀρθήσεται ἀπ' αὐτοῦ) is reminiscent of the parable's image of the birds (= Satan) taking away (αἶρει) the sower's seed.

person to repent and be forgiven. Strangely, the private explanation given to the disciples in this discourse does little to clarify what the mystery is. The reader is left wondering what truth about God's rule is contained in all the kingdom parables.

The theme of the importance of "spiritual" understanding emerges again in Mark 8:14–21, the discussion about the loaves in the boat. This is one of the more peculiar incidents in the gospel. On the surface, the unfolding of this passage makes perfect sense. Jesus says something enigmatic about leaven which reminds his disciples of the fact that they have only one loaf of bread with them in the boat. They start to become concerned, and Jesus severely reprimands them for their obduracy, pointing out that he recently fed nine-thousand men with a dozen loaves of bread, and that the leftovers were greater than the amount of food with which he started.

As straightforward and sensible as this interchange appears, an attentive reader will realize that more is being said. Jesus' protracted comments about the imperceptiveness of his disciples contain allusions to two previous incidents in the story, both of which involve the theme of inability to perceive deeper truths evident in his words and deeds. The question "Are your hearts hardened?" is reminiscent of Mark's perplexing explanation for the disciples' apprehension in seeing Jesus walking on the water: "And they were utterly astounded, for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened" (6:52). And Jesus' further interrogatory "Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear?" reminds one of his earlier allusion to Isaiah 6:6–10 as an explanation for the fact that outsiders experience everything relating to the mystery of the kingdom of God in riddles (4:11–12). That the feeding miracles prove Jesus capable of providing sustenance for his disciples cannot, therefore, entirely be the point. His disciples should have seen something in these two miracles that would have given them a profound and essential insight into who Jesus is, the sort of insight that would forestall their fears and incomprehension.

What this insight is supposed to be, however, is far from apparent to the reader. As Bassler notices, Mark's reference to misunderstanding the loaves as an "explanation" for the disciples' anxiety in seeing Jesus walking on the sea is itself remarkably obscure; instead of offering clarification, this authorial explanation manages precisely to promote confusion about *both* the sea-walking episode and the first feeding miracle:

In the first place, this is not the explanation expected by the reader, who would find more illuminating a reference to the earlier episode where Jesus had demonstrated similar mastery over wind and waves (4:35–41). Furthermore, as Quentin Quesnell has noted, this explanation really clarifies nothing. "It leaves completely unspecified what they had not understood about the [loaves], and 6:30–44 contained no hint that there was anything about the [loaves] which required a special understanding...." At first reading, then, the narrative comment about the loaves has little apparent connection with the sea-walking episode. Its presence is jarring, the flow of the narrative is blocked, and the reader is provoked into considering possible modes of connection yet is unable to resolve the problem with the information given.⁵⁹

After the first feeding story the reader was given this indication that something important was there to be perceived. Now after the second feeding the point is made again. By alluding to the confounding "explanation" in 6:52, Mark 8:17–18 revives the reader's earlier confusion about the significance of the loaves though adds a scriptural hint that this truth is a part of the saving knowledge announced in chapter 4 but, alas, never clearly revealed. The reader, still wondering about the meaning of the "leaven of the Pharisees and Herod," is manipulated into recognizing that he or she also does not understand what the two feeding miracles reveal about Jesus or how this knowledge is related to the mystery of the kingdom of God. But at this point in this pericope, where Jesus would be expected to offer some words of revelation, he only leads his disciples, and the reader, through a patronizing review of the ratios of loaves (he ignores the fish) to people to leftovers involved in the two feeding miracles, a

⁵⁹ Bassler, "Parable of the Loaves," 163; he cites Quesnell, *Mind*, 66. Cf. Boomershine and Bartholomew, "Narrative Technique," 216.

protracted synopsis that culminates in the question “Do you not yet understand?” On this note the pericope ends, leaving the reader as dumfounded as the disciples about what it is that was seen but was not perceived when Jesus multiplied the loaves.

The most obvious message implied by the review of quantities is that Jesus’ performance has declined sharply, for the second time he used more loaves to feed fewer people and had fewer morsels left over. The christological implications of that fact are difficult to contemplate, and consequently the reader will probably not pursue this line of thought.⁶⁰ Frustrated, he or she will probably begin to wonder whether an allegorical clue was supplied in the numbers. Yet here again there seems to be indirection, for it is hardly apparent from the story what the numbers twelve or seven or five could symbolize.⁶¹ As Frank Kermode contemplated,

there is a strong suggestion that the answer has to do with number, but it probably doesn’t. ...[The disciples] cannot answer the riddle, any more than they could read the Parable of the Sower. And although this passage has been subjected to the intense scrutiny of the commentators, no one, so far as I know, has improved on the disciples’ performance. The riddle remains dark; so does the gospel.⁶²

As a consequence of these discourse-level maneuvers, “the reader is led, at a crucial point in the narrative, to *the same internal disposition that the disciples possess in the narrative: misunderstanding and confusion.*”⁶³ The interchange between Jesus and his disciples concerning bread brings Mark’s readers face to face with their own incomprehension, with the fact that they, too, are outsiders to the deeper truths con-

60. I imagine that many people have noticed this, but it is rare for someone to attempt to read this implication as the real point of Jesus’ relating of the ratios. For an interesting attempt, see Countryman, “How Many Baskets Full?” His solution does not take into consideration the fact that the disciples’ ability to understand was already imputed before the less impressive feeding of the four thousand (6:52).

61. Bassler, “Parable of the Loaves,” 164–65.

62. Kermode, *Genesis*, 46, 47.

63. Bassler, “Parable of the Loaves,” 165; italics original. Cf. van Iersel, “Operator,” 97; Tate, *Outside*, 120–22.

veyed within this story.⁶⁴ This is more than a little peculiar. “As it stands, the story seems self-defeating, unless its point were that proper insight is quite beyond all of us and yet required all the same.” This is Meagher’s assessment, and as improbable and counterintuitive as it might seem to scholars working within a tradition-critical framework, it warrants consideration by a literary critic.⁶⁵

Why would an author introduce the notion of a mystery requisite to repentance and salvation, omit an explanation of this mystery, then later suggest to his readers that they, like Jesus’ dimwitted and hardhearted disciples, are outsiders to the truth? Why hide this truth in the first place? Bassler suggests that Mark wished at the close of the Galilean section to induce his readers to pay close attention to the succeeding central section, where the essential truths of the gospel are conveyed. While the disciples continue to be blind to the mystery, the reader concentrates on the (now plain) teachings of “the word,” seeking some insight into the feeding miracles. This insight can only attain completion in retrospect of the last supper, when Jesus again takes, blesses, breaks, and offers bread (14:22; cf. 6:41; 8:6). There the reader learns that the “parable” of the loaves refers in some way to “Jesus’ broken body on the cross.”⁶⁶

64. Cf. Fowler, *Reader*, 211: “That some insiders are really outsiders and some outsiders really insiders is itself an explicit, major theme at the story level in Mark (see 3:31–35 and 4:11), one that ironically and paradoxically figures what is happening at the same time to the narratee at the discourse level.”

65. Meagher, *Clumsy Construction*, 77. Meagher supposed that Mark thought there must be a deeper truth here, yet could not manage to fathom it himself. It is worth noting that some scholars view this whole passage, with the exception of the saying about the leaven, as a Markan creation: Quesnell, *Mind*, 103–25; Beavis, *Mark’s Audience*, 106–13; Räisänen, *Messianic Secret*, 200–201; cf. Hobbs, *LM*, 70–71.

66. Bassler, “Parable of the Loaves,” 166–69 (Bassler is not specifically interested in the mystery of the kingdom of God); Malbon, “How Does the Story Mean?” 41; Tate, *Outside*, 138. The feedings allude to the miracle of the manna in the wilderness and therefore attest to Jesus’ messiahship, the insight Peter would have in 8:29. Jesus is leading a new Exodus. A connection with Jesus’ passion can be perceived only at the end of the story, in light of Mark’s use of Exodus typologies to interpret the significance of Jesus’ death. Like the blood of a paschal lamb, which protected the firstborn sons of the Israelites, Jesus’ death ransoms from God’s judgment (λύτρον in 10:45) those who share in a new covenant, which is also ratified by this blood (14:24, which alludes to Moses’ creation of a covenant between Yahweh and the Hebrews in Exodus 24:8). The walking on the water may also symbolize the passion inasmuch as it is a type of the redeemed passing through the Red sea, as in the eschatological vision in Isaiah 51:10–11 (cf. 35:9–10) of the deported returning to Zion: “Was it not thou that didst dry

IV.3. *Deeper Understanding as a Literary Agenda Shared by the Longer and Shorter Gospels*

It is apparent that the shorter gospel of Mark demands the kind of deeper or “spiritual” understanding of its own narrative that the longer gospel helps provide. The shorter gospel presents this understanding as a prerequisite to repentance and salvation. Yet it also makes its concealed truths difficult to penetrate. The mystery of the kingdom of God and the cameo of the linen-attired young man at Jesus’ arrest are enigmas in the shorter gospel. The puzzlement they produce in the reader appears to be quite deliberate. The clearest message that a reader of the canonical version of Mark can discern from Mark 4:11–12, 8:14–21, and 14:51–52 is that he or she does not understand everything.⁶⁷ And “where enigmas are credibly thought to exist in a text, it is virtually impossible to maintain that some parts of it are certainly not enigmatic.”⁶⁸ A reader who feels that there is more that can and should be understood will be highly motivated to read “a more spiritual gospel” that offers an initiation into the essential teachings of the Markan gospel.

V. Conclusions

The more prominent verbal repetitions in LGM 1 and 2 function in relation to the larger narrative as echoes and anticipations, developing existing themes and directing

up the sea, the waters of the great deep; that didst make the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over? And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing.” Similarly, the stilling of the storm alludes to scriptural types of the crossing of the Red Sea: “He rebuked the Red Sea, and it became dry; and he led them through the deep as through a desert” (Psalm 106:9). See Boucher, *Mysterious Parable*, 72–75; Malbon, “Sea of Galilee,” 366 n. 10; and Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus and Mark*, 228–36.

67. Fowler (“Figuring,” 78 n. 33) refers to the *νεανίσκοι* in Mark 14:51–52 and 16:5–7 as evidence that “Mark likes to give puzzles without obvious solutions.” See also the eloquent discussion in Kermode, *Genesis*, chapter 3.

68. Kermode, *Genesis*, 57.

the reader to perceive hermeneutically-significant intratextual relations. Together with the techniques of intercalation and framing stories, these repetitions help a reader make sense not only of LGM 1 and 2 as an episode within the Markan narrative, but also of the Markan narrative as a whole.

SUMMATION

I. General Historical Conclusions

I.1. *Clement's Use of the Longer Text*

In Part One of this dissertation it was argued that the longer gospel was neither a senseless pastiche, a forgery, a secret writing, nor a repository for cultic and catechetical readings, but a “more spiritual” version of Mark. It was treasured in the late second-century Alexandrian church as a work that was especially apt at leading its readers to an appreciation of the deeper, philosophical truths of orthodox Alexandrian Christianity, unwritten traditions which were thought to form the essential subtext of the scriptures.

Clement's conception that the deeper truths of Christianity are veiled within scripture conceivably shows the influence of longer Mark on his thought. We find the same sort of distinction between exoteric and public-esoteric philosophical writings in Clement's own publications. Like his description of the longer gospel in the *Letter to Theodore*, his explanation of the composition of his *Stromateis* presents that work as a publicly accessible esoteric writing in which the truth is concealed through indirection and veiled meanings. The justification he offered for producing this sort of writing is firmly grounded in his understanding of the Markan theme of Jesus' proclamation of the mystery of the kingdom of God in parables:

Since our tradition is not held in common or open to all..., it follows that we have to keep secret "the wisdom which is imparted in the context of a mystery," taught by God's Son [cf. Mark 4:11-12; LGM 1b]. ...These thoughts obstructed my writing. ...[The Lord] is telling us to receive the secret traditions of revealed knowledge...and...to pass them on to appropriate people, not to offer them to all without reserve, when he only pronounced thoughts in parables to them [Mark 4:33-34]. But in fact, my present outline of memoranda contains the truth in a kind of sporadic and dispersed fashion [cf. 4:3-9], so as to avoid the attention of those who pick up ideas like jackdaws [4:4, 15].¹ When it lights on good farmers [4:20], each of the germs of truth will grow and show the full-grown grain [only 4:28]. (*Stromateis* I.12.55.1-56.3)

In view of the similarity between Clement's two-stage program of gnostic instruction and the depiction of Jesus' week-long stay with the young man culminating in private instruction, Clement may have interpreted LGM 1b as justification for the instruction of select Christians in the small and great mysteries of nature and theology. The deeper truths which Clement used this gospel to explicate may not, however, have borne much resemblance to the interpretation of LGM 1 and 2 offered in Part Two of this dissertation. Clement's gnostic conception of salvation would have made it difficult for him to appreciate the eschatological conception of resurrection in the longer gospel.²

I.2. *The Original Purpose of the Longer Text*

The literary study of LGM 1 and 2 presented in Part Two concurs with Clement's understanding that this text was a "more spiritual" version of Mark, or one that con-

1. The jackdaw is a small, thievish bird belonging to the crow family.

2. In Clement's mythology, Jesus (the Word) descended to impart to a select few a saving gnosis that would permit their eventual deification and perfect contemplation/knowledge of God, through a process of moral and intellectual self-perfection that continued after death. This vision, and the unspecified significance of the cross within it, raises the question of whether Clement envisioned distinct types of salvation for gnostics and ordinary Christians. On this issue, Davison ("Structural Similarities," 212) stresses that Clement, in contrast to most gnostics, did not perceive any *inherent* difference in natures among Christians, only a difference in their stages of perfection, which Clement hoped would not be permanent. Lilla (*Christian Platonism*, 159), however, believed that "The idea of Christ as a redeemer of the whole of mankind by means of his sacrifice is replaced, in Clement's philosophical system, by the esoteric idea of *gnosis*." The crucifixion is not unimportant to Clement, but its significance in terms of the progress of the gnostic is unclear.

centrates more upon the meanings concealed beneath the literal level of the Markan text. Indeed, both the longer and shorter gospels stress the salvific necessity of a deeper or second-level understanding *of the Markan text itself*; the reader is strongly encouraged to penetrate the meanings concealed within Jesus' parabolic discourses and actions. By employing the Markan technique of ambiguous narration, LGM 1 and 2 deepen the mystery of Mark's story, exploiting the enigmas of the 4:11 and 14:51–52. But through their use of Markan-style intercalation, framing stories, and verbal echoes, LGM 1 and 2 ultimately offer a measure of closure to some disconcerting gaps in the shorter version and assist the reader in identifying with, or “joining,” the circle of disciples to whom the mystery is given.

Although the longer gospel was apparently more esoteric than the shorter version, the truths conveyed through LGM 1 and 2 are nonetheless available to readers of the shorter version. In fact, the most essential aspects of the Christian message as Mark understood it are featured in “plain” language in the central section of the Markan gospel. What LGM 1 and 2 do is nuance and deepen a reader's appreciation of these essential themes. They extend the Markan motif of revelation through parabolic concealment by prodding the reader to develop a more profound understanding of christology and discipleship. Since this text was of particular interest to those who sought to derive the essential, esoteric teachings of Christianity anagogically from the scriptures, it is plausible that the author of longer Mark strove to realize the kerygmatic potential of presenting Christianity as a philosophy containing esoteric teachings.³

The longer text's focus on deeper understanding has implications concerning the intended audience of this text. It is commonly assumed that all ancient gospels were intended only to be heard. And certainly the author of the canonical gospel strove to

3. It is noteworthy that some scholars interpret the mystery theme in the canonical gospel as having a philosophical dimension. See A. E. Harvey, “Mystery Language”; Mary Ann Beavis, *Mark's Audience*, 143–46.

make his message accessible to a wide and diversified audience, for he wrote the way people speak and used a limited vocabulary. But the canonical author's evident interest in unschooled hearers does not mean that he had only that sort of person in view, and literary-critical scholarship has shown that Mark's story is accommodating to the reader-response presupposition of a visual reading experience. That is, Mark also had educated *readers* in mind. He wrote a text that has something for everyone. The longer gospel of Mark is written in the same aural and accessible style, but it was evidently more concerned with persons who, similar to Clement, Philo, and the members of the Jewish Therapeutae, had the ability and opportunity to read a text closely and privately, pondering deeper (e.g. symbolic, allegorical and anagogical) meanings.

Considering that, as Clement asserted, the longer gospel contained no overt "secrets," it was probably intended to be a publicly accessible esoteric writing. The restriction of its reading to those who had proved themselves worthy of receiving advanced gnostic teachings may have been a later development. Complications resulting from the appropriation of an even longer version of the mystical gospel by the Carpocratians probably led to further discretion in the use of this text within the orthodox church.

No certain statements can be made about the contents of longer Mark as a whole based on a study integrating an analysis of a brief and fragmentary letter with a contextualized literary investigation of fifteen verses of scripture quoted therein. Nevertheless, it seems likely that the longer version developed the essential christological and discipleship themes of Mark's gospel through the addition of more stories with an overtly symbolic dimension (*αί μυστικάί*) and, perhaps, more parabolic utterances like Mark's three discourses *ἐν παραβολαῖς* (3:23–29; 4:2–34; 12:1–11). It would also have included other, non-mystical traditions of value, as Clement indicated (I.24–

25). Longer Mark was a more spiritual gospel, but it was not different *in kind* from the shorter version—only in degree.⁴

II. Matters for Further Research

II.1. *Longer Mark and the Gospel of John*

Longer Mark's ability to clarify symbolic elements in the Markan narrative can account for Clement's reference to this work as a *πνευματικώτερον εὐαγγέλιον*; to him, the mystical gospel was like the gospel of John inasmuch as it was concerned with the spiritual essence within the "bodily" details. Though we would no longer use Clement's mystery-religion language, we may agree that the author of the longer gospel "brought in certain traditions of which he knew the interpretation would, as a mystagogue, lead the hearers into the innermost sanctuary of the truth hidden by seven veils" (I.25–26). Clement's accurate characterization of the longer gospel's nature probably attests to a profound study of its contents; it is only natural to suppose that he was himself initiated into the Alexandrian mysteries through a guided exposition of this and other useful texts.

The similarities between the two gospels Clement referred to as "spiritual" deserve further investigation. Schenke and Meyer recognized that the young man in longer Mark is a counterpart for the Johannine beloved disciple inasmuch as both are ideal disciples. Yet these two figures are connected in other intriguing ways. In some sense longer Mark's young man appears to be the same character as John's beloved disciple, for at one point in these two gospels their stories intersect. In canonical and longer Mark, the young man wearing a linen cloth about his naked body followed with Jesus

4. Clement's remark in I.16–17 that Mark did not in the first version hint at the Lord's mystic acts does not accord with this conclusion, for 14:51–52 could be said to hint at LGM 1a, and the latter is, in my interpretation, a mystic act. Perhaps Clement did not read LGM 1a that way.

(*συνηκολούθει*) as Jesus was being led away under guard (14:51–52, 54); while this was going on, Peter was also following, safely, at a distance. At the same point in John's narrative, an unnamed character called "another disciple," "this disciple," and "the other disciple" makes an appearance, but instead of dressing in a linen cloth and running off naked, he and Peter follow Jesus (*ἠκολούθει*) to the court of the high priest, where this other disciple manages to enter unhindered and secure Peter's admittance (18:15–16). The reference in John 20:2 to Mary seeking "Simon Peter and the other disciple [*τὸν ἄλλον μαθητήν*], the one whom Jesus loved" refers back to the phrase *ἄλλος μαθητής* in 18:15 and designates him as the beloved disciple.⁵

Longer Mark's anonymous young man and John's anonymous beloved disciple are also associated with the deeper theological truths of their gospels. The young man, who is likewise described as someone "whom Jesus loved" (LGM 2:1), is depicted as the recipient of special revelation not given to the twelve, and his storyline helps convey the deeper meanings of the narrative to the reader. The Johannine "disciple whom Jesus loved" has a similar role. During the last supper, he lay *ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ* (13:23, 25). This image applies to him a metaphor used in the prologue of the gospel: "No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known (1:18). That is, the beloved disciple is to Jesus what Jesus is to God, and therefore this disciple is the only one who can make Jesus known. This special knowledge is depicted symbolically when the beloved disciple functions as an intermediary when Peter wishes to find out who will betray Jesus (13:21–26). Later in the story, this disciple is represented as having true spiritual insight into what is happening,

5. That the disciple following with Peter is the beloved disciple is argued by Neiryck in "The 'Other Disciple.'" As Neiryck (p. 136), Brown (*John*, 1:xciv) and Kurz ("Beloved Disciple," 104) note, in 18:16 this disciple is paired with Peter, as is usually the case in references to the beloved disciple. A similar situation of Peter and the beloved disciple following Jesus occurs in John 21:19–20. Kurz (101–106) argues that the author of John deliberately used ambiguous narration ("gaps") in connection with the beloved disciple.

which sets him apart from the other disciples. He is the only disciple to witness the flow of water and blood from Jesus' side; the importance and truthfulness of his witness, and its relationship to the reader's belief, are stressed here (19:34–35).⁶ Upon seeing the grave clothes in the empty tomb, he, in contradistinction to Peter, "saw and believed"—presumably in the resurrection (20:8).⁷ And he was the first to recognize the risen Jesus when the disciples were in the boat and a stranger told them to cast their net on the other side (21:7). The beloved disciple is thus depicted as someone who had greater insight into the meanings of theologically significant events, and this knowledge is what allows him to function as the justification behind the distinctive theology of the Johannine community.⁸

It is peculiar that the gospel of John probably originally ended at 20:31, without identifying the beloved disciple as the authority behind the gospel, since the validation of its christology against the more mainstream theologies associated with the twelve seems to be the point of the beloved disciple's appearances. The redactor who designated this character to be the source and validation of the Johannine gospel was therefore bringing an existing theme to a logical conclusion. As I have argued, the same is true of the author of the longer gospel in his elaboration of the symbolism of that gospel's counterpart to the beloved disciple.

However one might account for these puzzling affinities between the two gospels Clement called spiritual, they demonstrate that the longer gospel has an analogue in the

6. Both blood and flowing water are symbols of life. The spilling of Jesus' blood (his death) is thus life-giving. Blood and water also attest to the reality of his physical death and may therefore serve to disprove a docetic conception of Jesus' nature.

7. I am not persuaded by Charlesworth's argument that the beloved disciple is Thomas and that at this point he only believed Mary's claim that "the tomb was empty" (*Beloved Disciple*, 296). Though Charlesworth's interpretation makes good sense of 20:9–10, the emptiness of a tomb is not an obvious subject of *πίστις*: it is an observable fact. Moreover, the depictions of Thomas as one who, however nobly, sputters inappropriate responses indicative of incomplete understanding (11:16; 14:5; 20:25) is incompatible with the consistently positive depictions of the unnamed disciple. Uncharacteristically, Charlesworth devoted less than a sentence to the longer gospel of Mark (419).

8. See M. de Jonge, "The Beloved Disciple and the Date of the Gospel of John," 102–104.

fourth gospel, particularly in the manner in which the latter was redacted. In both cases we may be dealing with someone who was at least a student of the historical author.⁹ Why both writers elaborated different gospel portraits of what seem to be the same anonymous individual is an interesting puzzle in itself.

II.2. *Who Wrote the Longer Gospel?*

The methodologies employed in this study to investigate the narrative techniques and theology of LGM 1 and 2 are not those of historical investigation and cannot be expected to disclose such things as authorship or place and date of origin. Nevertheless, this study has generated observations and conclusions which are relevant to these matters and may prove useful to those interested in investigating them.

To begin with, longer Mark is best conceived of as a revision of Mark's gospel rather than a first edition. As was argued at the end of chapter 1, there are indications that LGM 1 and 2 are secondary to the context of the central section, for the former disrupts its threefold cycle of passion prediction, disciple misunderstanding, and discipleship teaching. These sentences also appear to be secondary in relation to Mark 14:51–52, which, at least in the shorter text, presupposes that the *νεανίσκος* has not already been introduced.

Significantly, the extraordinary character of this revision rules out the usual suspect: some anonymous church leader who sought to adapt Mark to his own theological interests. We are clearly not dealing with the kind of editing of Mark that produced Matthew and Luke. Instead, the author of the longer gospel used Markan language and literary techniques to elaborate obscure Markan theological themes, and these elaborations are in keeping with the ways in which these themes were being developed in the canonical version. One such theme makes an unprecedented degree of sense within the

9. Cf. Charlesworth, *Beloved Disciple*, 50.

context of the longer gospel. The anonymous *νεανίσκος* in Gethsemane who appears wearing only a linen wrap is a disciple attempting, quite symbolically, to follow Jesus in his “baptism” of suffering and death (cf. 15:46). In my view, Markan scholars have not offered a better interpretation of this incident than the one suggested by the fictive rhetoric of the longer gospel.

The obvious explanation for the basic affinity between the longer and shorter gospels is that they were written by the same author. The main reason for skepticism remains the fact that LGM 1 and 2 are *so* Markan. Compared to the rest of the Markan gospel, these fifteen verses contain fewer individualizing (i.e. unparalleled) details; repeat more phrases, and of greater length; and exhibit more Markan stylistic qualities. They also have points of contact with Matthew (*νεανίσκος*), Luke (“for he was rich”), and John (a disciple “whom Jesus loved”). But regardless of whether the author was “Mark” or an imitator of Mark, the agreement in theology points to a person who was a member of the same “branch” or “trajectory” or “school” of Christianity as the original author, and was quite possibly Mark’s student or disciple or co-worker. This conclusion in turn supports the traditional view that Mark was a missionary who spent time in Alexandria. As Griggs notes, “a continued bias against the traditional role of Mark in Egyptian Christian history” may in part explain why scholars have been so dismissive of Markan authorship of the longer gospel despite their readiness to accept theological and stylistic congruity as evidence for Clementine authorship of the letter.¹⁰

II.3. *When Was the Longer Gospel Written?*

If one does decide that the same person wrote both versions of the Markan gospel, it becomes conceivable that the shorter version was in places left provocatively incomplete in order to entice people to read the more spiritual version. This is not the

10. Griggs, *Early Egyptian Christianity*, 21.

place to begin a tradition-critical study of the origin of the longer text, but a few tentative suggestions may be offered to point a way for further research. The longer text's elucidation of the symbolism of the young man in 14:51–52 seems too cogent to be an afterthought. Since elements paralleling the young man's resurrection (LGM 1a) and following of Jesus (14:51–52) appear in John 10:40, 11:1–12:2, and 18:15, it is conceivable that Mark possessed the resurrection story contained in LGM 1 when he wrote 14:51–52, but omitted it in order to create a puzzling gap that the longer gospel could fill. Whether the two gospel texts were created concurrently or in the sequence Clement proposes, the evidence of this one passage favours the conclusion that the production of the longer version was conceived before the shorter gospel was completed.¹¹ It is worth noting that redaction critics often view the mystery passages in the parable chapter (e.g. 4:11–12, 21–25, and 34) as subsequent additions to a pericope in which Jesus was depicted using parables as an effective means of communicating with the crowds (4:1–2, 33),¹² and that the incident with the young man in 14:51–52 is readily removed from its context without any disturbance to the flow of the narrative. The secondary appearance of these passages supports the hypothesis that Mark revised his story at some point before publishing his shorter version, as preparation for the longer version. That the longer gospel had its origin in a later phase of rewriting is compatible with the fact that LGM 1 and 2 disrupt the simpler, carefully-crafted threefold discipleship teaching cycle by separating the misunderstanding evinced by James and John from the third passion prediction. The composition of the longer gospel thus possibly began during the last stages of the writing of the canonical gospel or shortly after the latter was completed.

11. This conclusion is not simply reconciled with the previous suggestion that the author wrote in Alexandria and was interested in countering a tendency there to view salvation as an inward-turning process of self-perfection. Of course, that tendency would not necessarily be unique to that environment. Also, there is no reason why Mark could not have visited Alexandria before he wrote either gospel.

12. See chapter 7 n. 44.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Reviews of Morton Smith's Books on Longer Mark

- Achtemeier, Paul. J. *JBL* 93 (1974): 625–28.
- Beardslee, William. A. *Int* 28 (1974): 234–36.
- Danker, F. W. *Dialog* 13 (1974): 316.
- Donfried, Karl Paul. “New-Found Fragments of an Early Gospel.” *Christian Century* 90 (July 18–25, 1973): 759–60.
- Fitzmyer, J. “How to Exploit a Secret Gospel.” *America* 128 (June 23, 1973): 570–72.
- Frend, W. “A New Jesus?” *New York Review of Books* 20 (August 9, 1973): 34–35.
- Gibbons, J. *Sign* 53 (September 1973): 48.
- Gibbs, John G. *TToday* 30 (1974): 423–26.
- Grant, Robert M. “Morton Smith's Two Books.” *ATR* 56 (1974): 58–64.
- Green, D. St. A. *The National Observer* 12 (1973): 15.
- Hanson, R. P. C. *JTS* n.s. 25 (1974): 513–21.
- Johnson, Marshall D. *LQ* 25 (1973): 426–27.
- Kee, Howard Clark. *JAAR* 43 (1975): 326–29.
- Koester, Helmut. *AHR* 80 (1975): 620–22.
- MacRae, George. “Yet Another Jesus.” *Commonweal* 99 (January 25, 1974): 417–420.
- Mitton, C. Leslie. *ExpTim* 86 (1974–75): 130–32.
- Nineham, Dennis. *JTS* 27 (April 1976): 195–97.
- Parker, P. “An Early Christian Cover-up?” *New York Times Book Review* (July 22, 1973): 5.

- Quesnell, Quentin. "'Secret Gospel': Improbable Puzzle." *National Catholic Reporter* (November 30, 1973): 12.
- Reese, James M. *CBQ* 36 (1974): 434–35.
- Richardson, C. C. *TS* 35 (1974): 571–77.
- Scroggs, Robin. *CTSR* 64:1 (November, 1973): 58–60.
- Sider, Ronald J. "Unfounded 'Secret.'" *CT* 18:3 (November 9, 1973): 26 [160].
- Skehan, Patrick W. *CHR* 60 (1974–75): 451–53.
- Talbert, C. H. *ANQ* 14 (1974): 283–85.
- Trevor-Roper, H. "Gospel of Liberty." *Sunday Times* (London, June 30, 1974): 15.
- Trocmé, Etienne. "Trois critiques au miroir de l'Évangile selon Marc." *RHPR* 55 (1975): 289–95.
- Yamauchi, Edwin M. "A Secret Gospel of Jesus as 'Magus'? A Review of the Recent Works of Morton Smith." *CSR* 4:3 (1975): 238–51.

Books and Articles

- Aichele, George. *Jesus Framed. Biblical Limits.* London and New York: Routledge, 1996.
- Allegro, John M. *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Christian Myth.* Newton Abbot, Eng.: Westbridge Books, 1979.
- . "Mark's Concept of the Parable: Mark 4.11f. in the Context of the Second Gospel." *CBQ* 29 (1967): 220–27.
- Anderson, Janice Capel. "Feminist Criticism: The Dancing Daughter." In *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, edited by Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore, 103–34. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.
- Baltz, Frederick W. *Lazarus and the Fourth Gospel Community.* Mellen Biblical Press Series 37. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1996.
- Barclay, William. *The Gospels and Acts. Vol. 2, The Fourth Gospel, The Acts of the Apostles.* London: SCM Press, 1976.
- Barnard, L. W. "St. Mark and Alexandria." *HTR* 57 (1964): 145–50.
- Barnstone, Willis, ed. *The Other Gospels.* San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984.

- Barton, Stephen C. *Discipleship and Family Ties in Mark and Matthew*. SNTSMS 80. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Bassler, Jouette M. "The Parable of the Loaves." *JR* 66 (1986): 157–72.
- Bauckham, Richard. "Salome the Sister of Jesus, Salome the Disciple of Jesus, and the Secret Gospel of Mark." *NovT* 33 (1991): 245–75.
- Bauer, Walter. *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*. Second German edition, with appendices by Georg Strecker. Translated by a team from the Philadelphia Seminar on Christian Origins, and edited by Robert A. Kraft and Gerhard Krodel. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971.
- Beavis, Mary Ann. *Mark's Audience: The Literary and Social Setting of Mark 4.11–12*. JSNTSS, 33. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989.
- Berg, Temma F. "Reading In/to Mark." *Semeia* 48 (1989): 187–206.
- Beskow, Per. *Strange Tales about Jesus: A Survey of Unfamiliar Gospels*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983.
- Best, Ernest. "Mark 10:13–16: The Child as Model Recipient." Chap. 6 in his *Disciples and Discipleship*.
- . *Disciples and Discipleship: Studies in the Gospel according to Mark*. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark Ltd., 1986.
- . *Following Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*. JSNTS 4. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981.
- . *The Temptation and the Passion: The Markan Soteriology*. SNTSMS 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965.
- . "Uncanonical Mark." Chapter 11 in *Disciples and Discipleship*. (Review of *Redactional Style in the Marcan Gospel*, by E. J. Pryke, initially published in *JSNT* 4 [1979]: 69–76.)
- Bird, C. H. "Some $\gamma\rho$ Clauses in St. Mark's Gospel." *JTS* 4 (1953): 171–87.
- Bishop, Jonathan. "Parabole and Parrhesia in Mark." *Int* 40 (1986): 39–52.
- Black, C. Clifton. *Mark: Images of an Apostolic Interpreter*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994.
- . *The Disciples According to Mark: Markan Research in Current Debate*. JSNTSup 27. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989.
- Blomberg, Craig L. "The Parables of Jesus: Current Trends and Needs in Research." In *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research*, edited by Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans, 231–54. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994.

- Bockmuehl, Markus N. A. *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1990.
- Bode, Edward Lynn. *The First Easter Morning: The Gospel Accounts of the Women's Visit to the Tomb of Jesus*. Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970.
- Boobyer, G. H. "Galilee and Galileans in St. Mark's Gospel." *BJRL* 35 (1953): 334-48.
- . "The Redaction of Mark IV.1-34." *NTS* 8 (1961-62): 59-70.
- Boomershine, Thomas E. "Mark 16:8 and the Apostolic Commission." *JBL* 100 (1981): 225-39.
- . *Story Journey: An Invitation to the Gospel as Storytelling*. 2nd ed. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990.
- Boomershine, Thomas E., and Gilbert L. Bartholomew. "The Narrative Technique of Mark 16:8." *JBL* 100 (1981): 213-23.
- Booth, Wayne C. *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
- Bornkamm, G. "μυστήριον, μνέω." *TDNT* 4 (1942; rpt. 1967): 802-28.
- Bornkamm, G., G. Barth, and H. J. Held. *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963.
- Boucher, Madeleine. *The Mysterious Parable: A Literary Study*. CBQMS 6. Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1977.
- Bouyer, Louis. "Mysterion." *La vie spirituelle, ascétique et mystique* supp. vol. 23 (1952): 397-412.
- . "'Mystique': Essai sur l'histoire d'un mot." *La vie spirituelle, ascétique et mystique* supp. vol. 9 (1949): 3-23.
- Broadhead, Edwin K. *Teaching with Authority: Miracles and Christology in the Gospel of Mark*. JSNTSS 74. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992.
- Brown, Raymond E. *The Death of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*. Vol. 1, *From Gethsemane to the Grave*. The Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York: Doubleday, 1994.
- . *The Gospel According to John (i-xii)*. 2nd ed. Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1980.
- . "The Relation of 'The Secret Gospel of Mark' to the Fourth Gospel." *CBQ* 36 (1974): 466-85.
- . *The Semitic Background of the term "Mystery" in the New Testament*. Facet Books Biblical Series 21. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968.

- Brown, Raymond E., Karl P. Donfried, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and John Reumann, eds. *Mary in the New Testament: A Collaborative Assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978.
- Brown, Schuyler. "Mk 3,21: A Forgotten Controversy?" In *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen*, edited by F. Paschke, 99–108. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag 1981.
- . "Philology." In *The New Testament and its Modern Interpreters*, eds. Eldon Jay Epp and George W. MacRae, 127–47. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989.
- . "The Secret of the Kingdom of God (Mark 4:11)." *JBL* 92 (1973): 60–74.
- Bruce, Frederick Fyvie. *The "Secret" Gospel of Mark*. Ethel M. Wood Lecture, University of London, 11 February 1974. London: The Athlone Press, 1974. This is reprinted with slight revision in Appendix I of his *The Canon of Scripture*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1988.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*. Translated by John Marsh. New York: Harper and Row, 1963.
- Burkert, Walter. *Ancient Mystery Cults*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987.
- Bush, Roger Anthony. "Mark's Call to Action: A Rhetorical Analysis of Mark 16:8." In *Church Divinity, 1986: National Student Essay Competition in Divinity*. Church Divinity Monograph Series, edited by John H. Morgan, 22–30. Bristol, IN: Wyndham Hall Press, 1986.
- Butterworth, G. W., trans. *Clement of Alexandria: The Exhortation to the Greeks, The Rich Man's Salvation, and the Fragment of an Address Entitled To the Newly Baptized*. The Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heinemann; New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1919.
- Cameron, Ron, ed. *The Other Gospels: Non-Canonical Gospel Texts*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982.
- Camery-Hoggatt, Jerry. *Irony in Mark's Gospel: Text and Subtext*. SNTSMS 72. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Caragounis, Chrys C. *The Ephesian Mysterion: Meaning and Content*. Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series 8. Uppsala: CWK Gleerup, 1977.
- Carrington, Philip. *According to Mark: A Running Commentary on the Oldest Gospel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960.
- Catchpole, David. "The Fearful Silence of the Women at the Tomb: A Study in Markan Theology." *JTSA* 18 (1977): 3–10.
- Charlesworth, James H. *The Beloved Disciple: Whose Witness Validates the Gospel of John?* Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995.

- Charlesworth, James H., and Craig A. Evans. "Jesus in the Agrapha and Apocryphal Gospels." In *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research*, edited by Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans, 479–533. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994.
- Chatman, Seymour. *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*. 2nd ed. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1983.
- Chilton, Bruce. "The Kingdom of God in Recent Discussion." In *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research*, edited by Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans, 255–80. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994.
- Cohen, Shaye J. D. Review of *Are There Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels?* by Jacob Neusner. *JAOS* 116:1 (1996): 85–89.
- Collins, A. Y. *The Beginning of the Gospel: Probing of Mark in Context*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.
- Criddle, A. H. "On the Mar Saba Letter Attributed to Clement of Alexandria." *J ECS* 3 (1995): 215–20.
- . <andrewc@wrox.com>, "Secret Mark." Private e-mail to author. February 18, 1999.
- Crossan, John Dominic. *The Cross that Spoke: The Origins of the Passion Narrative*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988.
- . "Empty Tomb and Absent Lord (Mark 16:1–8)." In *The Passion in Mark: Studies on Mark 14–16*, edited by Werner H. Kelber, 135–52. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976.
- . "A Form for Absence: The Markan Creation of Gospel." *Semeia* 12 (1978): 41–55.
- . *Four Other Gospels: Shadows on the Contours of Canon*. Minneapolis: Winston, 1985.
- . *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant*. San Francisco: Harper, 1991.
- . *In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus*. 1973. Reprint. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985.
- . "Thoughts on Two Extracanonial Gospels." *Semeia* 49 (1990): 155–68.
- . *Who Killed Jesus? Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel Story of the Death of Jesus*. 1995. Reprint. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996.
- Culpepper, R. Alan. *John, the Son of Zebedee: The Life of a Legend*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1994.

- Cuvillier, Elian, *Le concept de ΠΑΡΑΒΟΛΗ dans le Second Évangile: Son arrière-plan littéraire, sa signification dans le cadre de la rédaction marcienne, son utilisation dans la tradition de Jésus*. Études Bibliques n.s. 19. Paris: J. Gabalda, 1993.
- Danove, Paul L. *The End of Mark's Story: A Methodological Study*. Biblical Interpretation Series 3. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993.
- Davies, Stevan L. "Thomas and First Corinthians." Chapter 8 in *The Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*. New York: Seabury Press, 1983.
- Davies, W. D. *The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.
- Davison, James E. "Structural Similarities and Dissimilarities in the Thought of Clement of Alexandria and the Valentinians." *Second Century* 3 (1983): 201–17.
- Dawson, D. *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.
- de Conick, April D. *Seek to See Him: Ascent and Vision Mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas*. Leiden, New York: E. J. Brill, 1996.
- de Faye, Eugène. *Clément d'Alexandrie: Étude sur les rapports du christianisme et de la philosophie grecque au IIe siècle*. 2nd ed. Frankfurt: Unveränderter Nachdruck, 1967.
- de Jonge, M. "The Beloved Disciple and the Date of the Gospel of John." In *The Conversation Continues: Studies in Paul & John In Honor of J. Louis Martyn*, eds. Robert T. Fortna and Beverly R. Gaventa, 99–114. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990.
- des Places, Édouard. "Platon et la langue des mystères." In *Études Platoniciennes: 1929–1979*. Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain 90, 83–98. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981.
- Dewey, Joanna. *Markan Public Debate: Literary Technique, Concentric Structure, and Theology in Mark 2:1–3:6*. SBLDS 48. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980.
- 4galla
- . "Mark as Interwoven Tapestry: Forecasts and Echoes for a Listening Audience." *CBQ* 53 (1991): 221–36.
- Dillon, John Myles. *The Middle Platonists: A Study of Platonism, 80 B.C. to A. D. 220*. London: Duckworth, 1977.
- Donahue, John R. *Are You the Christ? The Trial Narrative in the Gospel of Mark*. SBLDS 10. Missoula: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973.
- . *The Gospel in Parable: Metaphor, Narrative, and Theology in the Synoptic Gospels*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988.

- . “Jesus as the Parable of God in the Gospel of Mark.” In *Interpreting the Gospels*, edited by James Luther Mays, 148–67. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981.
- . *The Theology and Setting of Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*. The 1983 Pere Marquette Theology Lecture. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1983.
- Drury, John. “Mark.” In *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, edited by Robert Alter and Frank Kermode, 402–17. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987.
- Echle, H. A. “The Baptism of the Apostles: A Fragment of Clement of Alexandria’s Lost Work ‘Ἐποτυπώσεις in the Pratum Spirituale of John Moschus.” *Traditio* 3 (1945): 365–68.
- . “Sacramental Initiation as a Christian Mystery-Initiation according to Clement of Alexandria.” In *Vom christlichen Mysterium: Gesammelte Arbeiten zum Gedächtnis von Odo Casel OSB*, edited by Anton Mayer, Johannes Quasten and Burkhard Neunheuser, 54–65. Düsseldorf: Patoms-Verlag Düsseldorf, 1951.
- Edwards, James R. “Markan Sandwiches: The Significance of Interpolations in Markan Narratives.” *NovT* 31 (1989): 193–216.
- Evans, Christopher Francis. “‘I Will Go Before You Into Galilee.’” *JTS* n.s. 5 (1954): 3–18.
- . *Resurrection and the New Testament*. SBT 2/12. London: SCM Press, 1970.
- Evans, Craig. “The Recently Published Dead Sea Scrolls and the Historical Jesus.” In *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research*, edited by Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans, 547–565. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994.
- Eyer, Shawn. “The Strange Case of the Secret Gospel According to Mark: How Morton Smith’s Discovery of a Lost Letter of Clement of Alexandria Scandalized Biblical Scholarship.” *Alexandria* 3 (1995): 103–129.
- Farrer, Austin. *A Study in St Mark*. Westminster: Dacre Press, 1951.
- Ferguson, *Clement of Alexandria*. TWAS 289. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1974.
- Ferguson, John, trans. *Clement of Alexandria Stromateis Books One to Three*. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1991.
- Finn, Thomas M. *Early Christian Baptism and the Catechumenate: Italy, North Africa, and Egypt*. Message of the Fathers of the Church 6. Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1992.
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. “Mark’s ‘Secret Gospel’?” *America* 129 (August 4, 1973): 65.

- . “The Oxyrhynchus Logoi of Jesus and the Coptic Gospel according to Thomas.” In *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament*, 355–433. London: Chapman, 1971. Originally published in *TS* 20 (1959): 505–60.
- Fleddermann, Harry. “The Flight of the Young Man (Mark 14:15–52).” *CBQ* 41 (1979): 412–18.
- Folkemer, Lawrence D. “A Study of the Catechumenate.” In *Conversion, Catechumenate, and Baptism in the Early Church*. Studies in Early Christianity 11, edited by Everett Ferguson et al., 244–65. New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1993.
- Fowler, Robert M. *Let the Reader Understand: Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.
- . *Loaves and Fishes: The Function of the Feeding Stories in the Gospel of Mark*. SBLDS 54. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981.
- . “Reader-Response Criticism: Figuring Mark’s Reader.” In *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, edited by Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore, 50–83. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.
- Freyne, Sean, and Henry Wansbrough. *Mark and Matthew*. Scripture Discussion Commentary 7. London: Sheed and Ward Ltd., 1971.
- Fuller, Reginald H. *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971.
- Funk, Robert W. *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996.
- Furnish, Victor Paul. “Mark, Secret Gospel of.” In *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible. Supplementary Volume*, edited by Keith Crim et al. Nashville: Abingdon, 1976.
- Glyndle, M. Feagin. *Irony and the Kingdom in Mark: A Literary-Critical Study*. Mellen Biblical Press Series 56. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1997.
- Gaston, Lloyd. *No Stone on Another: Studies in the Significance of the Fall of Jerusalem in the Synoptic Gospels*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970.
- Gilliard, “More Silent Reading in Antiquity: *NON OMNE VERBUM SONABAT*.” *JBL* 112 (1993): 689–96.
- Goulder, Michael D. “Those Outside (Mk. 4:10–12).” *NovT* 33 (1991): 289–302.
- Gourgues, Michel. “À propos du symbolisme christologique et baptismal de Marc 16.5.” *NTS* 27 (1981): 672–78.
- Grant, Robert M. “Early Alexandrian Christianity.” *ChH* 40 (1971): 133–44.

- . “Eusebius and his Church History.” In *Understanding the Sacred Text: Essays in Honor of Morton S. Enslin on the Hebrew Bible and Christian Beginnings*, edited by John Reumann, 235–47. Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1972.
- . “Theological Education at Alexandria.” In *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity. Studies in Antiquity and Christianity*, edited by Birger A. Pearson and James E. Goehring, 178–89. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.
- Green, Joel B. *The Death of Jesus: Tradition and Interpretation in the Passion Narrative*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1988.
- Grelot, Pierre. *L'origine des évangiles: Controverse avec J. Carmignac*. Apologique. Paris: Cerf, 1986.
- Griggs, C. Wilfred. *Early Egyptian Christianity: From its Origins to 451 C. E.* Coptic Studies, vol. 2. 2nd ed. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991.
- Gryson, Roger. “A propos du témoignage de Papias sur Mathieu: Le sens du mot *λόγιον* chez les Pères du second siècle.” *ETL* 41 (1965): 530–47.
- Guelich, Robert A. “‘The Beginning of the Gospel’: Mark 1:1–15.” *BR* 27 (1982): 5–15.
- . *Mark 1–8:26*. WBC 34. Dallas: Word Books, 1989.
- Gundry, Robert H. “Excursus on the Secret Gospel of Mark.” In his *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross*, 603–23. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993.
- . “Matthean Foreign Bodies in Agreements of Luke with Matthew against Mark Evidence that Luke Used Matthew.” In *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neiryneck*. Vol. 2, edited by F. van Segbroeck et al., 1467–95. Uitgeverij Peeters Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992.
- Hamerton-Kelly, Robert G. *The Gospel and the Sacred: Poetics of Violence in Mark*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994.
- Hamilton, J. D. B. “The Church and the Language of Mystery: The First Four Centuries.” *ETL* 53 (1977): 479–94.
- Hamilton, Neill Q. *Recovery of the Protestant Adventure*. New York: The Seabury Press, 1981.
- . “Resurrection Tradition and the Composition of Mark.” *JBL* 84:4 (1965): 415–21.
- Hanhart, Karel. *The Open Tomb: A New Approach, Mark's Passover Haggadah ([ca.] 72 C. E.)*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1995.
- Hare, Douglas R. *Mark*. Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.

- Harvey, A. E. "The Use of Mystery Language in the Bible." *JTS* n.s. 31 (1980): 320–36.
- Hengel, Martin. *Studies in the Gospel of Mark*. London: SCM Press Ltd., 1985.
- Herron, Robert W., Jr. *Mark's Account of Peter's Denial of Jesus: A History of its Interpretation*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991.
- Hooker, Morna D. *The Gospel according to St Mark*. Black's New Testament Commentaries. London: A and C Black, 1991.
- Horstmann, Maria. *Studien zur markinischen Christologie: Mk 8,27–9,13 als Zugang zum Christusbild des zweiten Evangeliums*. Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen 6. Münster: Aschendorff, 1969.
- Hort, F. J. A., and J. B. Mayor. *Clement of Alexandria Miscellanies Book VII: The Greek Text with Introduction, Translation, Notes, Dissertations and Indices*. London: Macmillan and Co., 1902.
- Hoskyns, E. C. "Adversaria Exegetica." *Theology* 7 (1923): 147–55.
- Jackson, Howard M. "Why the Youth Shed his Cloak and Fled Naked: the Meaning and Purpose of Mark 14:51–52." *JBL* 116 (1997): 273–89.
- Jaeger, W. *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1961.
- Jenkins, A. K. "Young Man or Angel?" *ExpTim* 94 (1983): 237–40.
- Jeremias, Joachim. *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*. 3rd ed. Translated by Norman Perrin. London: SCM Press, 1966.
- . *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus: An Investigation into Economic and Social Conditions during the New Testament Period*. Translated by F. H. and C. H. Cave. London: SCM Press, 1969.
- Johnson, E. S. "Mark VIII. 22–26: The Blind Man from Bethsaida." *NTS* 25 (1979): 370–83.
- Johnson, Sherman E. "The Mystery of St Mark." *History Today* 25 (1975): 89–97.
- Johnson, Steven R. "The Identity and Significance of the Neaniskos in Mark." *Forum* 8 (1992): 123–39.
- Kaestli, Jean-Daniel. "L'Évangile secret de Marc. Une version longue de l'Évangile de Marc réservée aux chrétiens avancés dans l'Église d'Alexandrie?" and "Fragment d'une lettre de Clément d'Alexandrie au sujet de l'Évangile secret de Marc" (author's translation). In *Le Mystère apocryphe. Introduction à une littérature méconnue*, edited by J.-D. Kaestli and D. Marguerat, 85–106. Genève: Labor et Fides, 1995.

- . “Introduction de l’Évangile secret de Marc” and “L’Évangile secret de Marc.” In *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*. Vol. 1, edited by François Bovon and Pierre Geoltrain, 55–69. 2nd ed. Gallimard, Paris: 1997.
- Kaye, John. *Some Account of the Writings and Opinions of Clement of Alexandria*. London: Griffith Farran Okeden and Welsh, n.d.
- Kee, Howark Clark. “Aretalogy and Gospel.” *JBL* 92 (1973): 402–22.
- . *Community of the New Age: Studies in Mark’s Gospel*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977.
- . “The Terminology of Mark’s Exorcism Stories.” *NTS* 14 (1968): 232–46.
- . “The Transfiguration in Mark: Epiphany or Apocalyptic Vision?” In *Understanding the Sacred Text: Essays in Honor of Morton S. Enslin on the Hebrew Bible and Christian Beginnings*, edited by John Reumann, 137–52. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1972.
- . *What Can We Know About Jesus? Understanding Jesus Today*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Kelber, Werner H. “Conclusion: From Passion Narrative to Gospel.” Chapter 9 in *The Passion in Mark: Studies on Mark 14–16*, edited by Werner Kelber. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976.
- . *The Kingdom in Mark: A New Place and a New Time*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974.
- . *Mark’s Story of Jesus*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979.
- . *The Oral and the Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983.
- Kermode, Frank. *The Genesis of Secrecy: On the Interpretation of Narrative*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979.
- Kingsbury, Jack Dean. *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989.
- Kinukawa, Hisako. *Women and Jesus in Mark: A Japanese Feminist Perspective*. The Bible and Liberation Series. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994.
- Kittel, Gerhard. “λόγιον.” *TDNT* 4 (1967): 137–41.
- Klijn, A. F. J. “Jewish Christianity in Egypt.” In *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity. Studies in Antiquity and Christianity*, edited by Birger A. Pearson and James E. Goehring, 161–75. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.
- Knox, John. “A Note on Mark 14:51–52.” In *The Joy of Study: Papers on New Testament and Related Subjects Presented to Honor Frederick Clifton Grant*, edited by Sherman E. Johnson, 27–30. New York: Macmillan, 1951.

- Knox, Sanka. "A New Gospel Ascribed to Mark." *New York Times*. 30 December 1960, pp. 1 and 17.
- Koester, Helmut. *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development*. Philadelphia: SCM, 1990.
- . "Apocryphal and Canonical Gospels." *HTR* 73 (1980): 105–30.
- . "From the Kerygma-Gospel to Written Gospels." *NTS* 35 (1989): 361–81.
- . "History and Development of Mark's Gospel (From Mark to *Secret Mark* and 'Canonical' Mark)." In *Colloquy on New Testament Studies: A Time for Reappraisal and Fresh Approaches*, edited by Bruce Corley, 35–57. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983.
- . *Introduction to the New Testament*. Vol. 1, *History, Culture, and Religion of the Hellenistic Age*. Vol. 2, *History and Literature of Early Christianity*. Hermeneia—Foundations and Facets. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982.
- . "The Text of the Synoptic Gospels in the Second Century." In *Gospel Traditions in the Second Century: Origins, Recensions, Text, and Transmission*, ed. William L. Petersen, 19–73. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989.
- Koester, Helmut, and J. M. Robinson. *Trajectories through Early Christianity*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971.
- Koester, Helmut, and Stephen J. Patterson. "The Secret Gospel of Mark" (draft translation, introduction and notes). In *The Complete Gospels: Annotated Scholars Version*, edited by Robert J. Miller, 402–405. Sonoma: Polebridge Press, 1992. Also published as "Secret Mark." *The Fourth R* 4:3 (1991): 14–16.
- Kremer, Jacob. *Lazarus. Die Geschichte einer Auferstehung. Text, Wirkungsgeschichte und Botschaft von Joh 11, 1–46*. Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1985.
- Kümmel, W. "Ein Jahrzehnt Jesusforschung (1965–1975)." *ThR* n.s. 40 (1975): 289–336.
- Kurz, William S. "The Beloved Disciple and Implied Readers." *BTB* 19 (1989): 100–107.
- Kürzinger, Josef. "Das Papiaszeugnis und die Erstgestalt des Matthäusevangeliums." *BZ* 4 (1960): 19–38.
- Lampe, G. W. H. *The Seal of the Spirit: A Study in the Doctrine of Baptism and Confirmation in the New Testament and the Fathers*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1951.
- Lane, William L. *The Gospel according to Mark*. NICNT. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1974.

- Le Boulluec, Alain. "La Lettre sur L'Évangile secret' de Marc et le *Quis dives salvetur?* de Clément d'Alexandrie." *Apocrypha* 7 (1996): 27–41.
- Leclercq, "Nudité baptismal." *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*. Vol. 12. Part 2. Paris: Letouzey et Ane, 1936.
- Lee, G. M. "Eusebius on St. Mark and the Beginnings of Christianity in Egypt." In *Studia Patristica XII*. TU 115, edited by Elizabeth A. Livingston, 422–31. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1975.
- Levin, Saul. "The Early History of Christianity, in the Light of the 'Secret Gospel' of Mark." In *ANRW II* 25:6 (1988): 4270–92.
- Lightfoot, Robert Henry. *The Gospel Message of St. Mark*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1950.
- . *History and Interpretation in the Gospels*. The Bampton Lectures 1934. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1935.
- . *Locality and Doctrine in the Gospels*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., 1938.
- Lilla, Salvatore R. C. *Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Platonism and Gnosticism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Lincoln, Andrew T. "The Promise and the Failure: Mark 16:7, 8." *JBL* 108 (1989): 283–300.
- Lockhart, Douglas. *Jesus the Heretic: Freedom and Bondage in a Religious World*. Shaftesbury: Element Books, 1997.
- Lohr, Charles H. "Oral Techniques in the Gospel of Matthew." *CBQ* 23 (1961): 403–35.
- Luz, Ulrich. "The Secrecy Motif and the Marcan Christology." In *The Messianic Secret*, translated by R. Morgan; edited by Christopher Tuckett, 75–96. 1983. Reprint. Edinburgh: T and T Clark, Ltd., 1990. Originally published as "Das Geheimnismotiv und die markinische Christologie." *ZNW* 56 (1965): 9–30.
- Macgregor, G. H. C. *The Gospel of John*. The Moffatt New Testament Commentary. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1928.
- Mack, Burton L. *A Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988.
- Mahoney, Robert. *Two Disciples at the Tomb: The Background and Message of John 20. 1–10*. Theologie und Wirklichkeit 6. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1974.
- Malbon, Elizabeth Struthers. "Echoes and Foreshadowings in Mark 4–8: Reading and Rereading." *JBL* 11 (1993): 211–30.
- . "Galilee and Jerusalem: History and Literature in Marcan Interpretation." *CBQ* 44 (1982): 242–55.

- . “How Does the Story Mean?” In *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, edited by Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore, 23–49. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.
- . “Mark: Myth and Parable.” *BTB* 14 (1986): 8–17.
- . *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986.
- Mann, C. S. *Mark: A New Translation and Commentary*. The Anchor Bible 27. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1986.
- Marchadour, Alain. *Lqzare: Histoire d'un récit, récits d'une histoire*. Lectio Divina 132. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1988.
- Marcus, Joel. “Mark 4:10–12 and Marcan Epistemology.” *JBL* 103 (1984): 557–74.
- . *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God*. SBLDS 90. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986.
- . *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992.
- Marsh, H. G. “The Use of *Μυστήριον* in the Writings of Clement of Alexandria with Special Reference to his Sacramental Doctrine.” *JTS* 37 (1936): 64–80.
- Marshall, Christopher D. *Faith as a Theme in Mark's Narrative*. SNTSMS 64. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Marxsen, Willi. *Mark the Evangelist: Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel*. Translated by James Boyce et al. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969.
- Matera, Frank J. “He Saved Others; He cannot Save Himself: A Literary-Critical Perspective on the Markan Miracles.” *Int* 47 (1993): 15–26.
- . “The Incomprehension of the Disciples and Peter's Confession (Mark 6,14–8,30).” *Bib* 70 (1989): 153–72.
- . *Passion Narratives and Gospel Theologies: Interpreting the Synoptics Through Their Passion Stories*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1986.
- . “The Prologue as the Interpretative Key to Mark's Gospel.” *JSNT* 34 (1988): 3–20.
- McGiffert, Arthur Cushman, trans. *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. Second Series. Vol. 1, *Eusebius: Church History, Life of Constantine the Great, and Oration in Praise of Constantine*. Edinburgh: T and T Clark; Grand Rapids, MI: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991.

- McGuckin, John Anthony. *The Transfiguration of Christ in Scripture and Tradition. Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 9.* Lewiston and Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986.
- McIndoe, J. H. "The Young man at the Tomb." *ExpTim* 80 (1968–69): 125.
- McKinnis, Ray. "An Analysis of Mark X 32–34." *NovT* 18 (1976): 81–100.
- McVann, Mark. "Destroying Death: Jesus in Mark and Joseph in 'The Sin Eater.'" In *The Daemonic Imagination: Biblical Text and Secular Story.* AARSR 60, edited by Robery Detweiler and William G. Doty, 123–35. Alanta: Scholars Press, 1990.
- Meagher, John C. *Clumsy Construction in Mark's Gospel: A Critique of Form- and Redaktionsgeschichte.* Toronto Studies in Theology, 3. New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1979.
- Mearns, Christopher L. "Parables, Secrecy and Eschatology in Mark's Gospel." *SJT* 44 (1991): 423–42.
- Meeks, Wayne A. "Hypomnēmata from an Untamed Sceptic: A Response to George Kennedy." In *The Relationships Among the Gospels: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue.* Trinity University Monograph Series in Religion 5, edited by William O. Walker, Jr., 157–72. San Antonio, TX: Trinity University Press, 1978.
- . "The Image of the Androgyne: Some Uses of a Symbol in Earliest Christianity." *HR* 13 (1973): 165–208.
- Méhat, André. "Clément d'Alexandrie et les sens de l'Écriture: *Ier Stromate, 176, 1 et 179, 3.*" In J. Fontaine and C. Kannengiesser, *Epektasis: Mélanges patristiques offerts au Cardinal Jean Daniélou,* 355–65. Paris: Beauchesne, 1972.
- Meier, John P. *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus.* Vol. 1, *The Roots of the Problem and the Person.* New York: Doubleday, 1991.
- Mellon, John C. *Mark as Recovery Story: Alcoholism and the Rhetoric of Gospel Mystery.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995.
- Merkel, Helmut. "Auf den Spuren des Urmarkus? Ein neuer Fund und seine Beurteilung." *ZTK* 71 (1974): 123–44.
- . "Appendix: the 'secret Gospel' of Mark." In *New Testament Apocrypha.* Vol. 1, *Gospels and Related Writings.* 2nd rev. ed. Edited by Wilhelm Schneemelcher. English translation edited by R. McL. Wilson, 106–109. Cambridge: James Clarke and Co. Ltd.; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991.
- Meye, Robert P. *Jesus and the Twelve: Discipleship and Revelation in Mark's Gospel.* Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968.
- Meyer, Marvin W. "The Beginning of the Gospel of Thomas." *Semeia* 52 (1991): 161–73.

- . Precis to “The *neaniskos* in Canonical and Secret Mark.” *In Abstracts: American Academy of Religion, Society of Biblical Literature, 1983*, 185. Chico: Scholars Press, 1983.
- . “The Youth in the *Secret Gospel of Mark*.” *Semeia* 49 (1990): 129–53.
- . “The Youth in Secret Mark and the Beloved Disciple in John.” In *Gospel Origins & Christian Beginnings: In Honor of James M. Robinson*, edited by J. E. Goehring, et al., 94–105. Sonoma: Polebridge Press, 1990.
- Michaelis, W. “λευκός, λευκαίνω.” *TDNT* 4 (1967): 241–50.
- Milavec, Aaron. “The Identity of ‘the Son’ and ‘the Others’: Mark’s Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen Reconsidered.” *BTB* 20 (1990): 30–37.
- Miner, Paul S. *The Gospel according to Mark*. The Layman’s Bible Commentary 17. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1962.
- Molland, Einar. *The Conception of the Gospel in the Alexandrian Theology*. Oslo: 1 Kommisjon hos Jacob Dybwad, 1938.
- Moore, W. Ernest. “‘Outside’ and ‘Inside’: A Markan Motif.” *ExpTim* 98 (1986–87): 39–43.
- Mortley, Raoul. *Connaissance religieuse et herméneutique chez Clément d’Alexandrie*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973.
- . “The Theme of Silence in Clement of Alexandria.” *JTS* 24 (1973): 197–202.
- Moule, C. F. D. *The Gospel according to Mark*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965.
- Mullins, Terence Y. “Papias and Clement and Mark’s Two Gospels.” *VC* 30 (1976): 189–92.
- Munro, Winsome. “Women Disciples: Light from Secret Mark.” *JFSR* 8 (1992): 47–64.
- Murgia, Charles E. “Secret Mark: Real or Fake?” In *Longer Mark*, edited by Wilhelm H. Wuellner, 35–40.
- Musurillo, Herbert. “Morton Smith’s Secret Gospel.” *Thought* 48 (1973): 327–31.
- Myers, Ched. *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark’s Story of Jesus*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis books, 1988.
- Myers, Ched, et al. “*Say to This Mountain*”: *Mark’s Story of Discipleship*, edited by Karen Lattea. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1996.
- Nineham, Dennis Eric. *The Gospel of St. Mark*. Pelican Gospel Commentary. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1967.

- Neiryck, F. "The Apocryphal Gospels and the Gospel of Mark." In *Evangelica II 1982-1991 Collected Essays by Frans Neiryck*. BETL, edited by F. van Segbroeck, 715-72. Leuven: Leuven University Press; Uitgeverij Peters, 1991. Originally published in *The New Testament in Early Christianity*. BETL 86, edited by Jean-Marie Sevrin, 123-75. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1989.
- . *Duality in Mark: Contributions to the Study of the Markan Redaction*. Revised Edition with Supplementary Notes. BETL 31. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988.
- . "La fuite du jeune homme en Mc 14,51-52." In *Evangelica: Gospel Studies-Études d'évangile. Collected Essays*. Leuven: Leuven University Press-Uitgeverij Peters, 1982, 215-38. Originally published in *ETL* 55 (1979): 43-66.
- . "The Minor Agreements and Proto-Mark: A Response to H. Koester." In *Evangelica II 1982-1991 Collected Essays by Frans Neiryck*. BETL. Leuven: Leuven University Press-Uitgeverij Peters, 1991, 59-73. Originally published in *ETL* 67 (1991): 82-94.
- . "The 'Other Disciple' in Jn 18,15-16." *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 51 (1975): 113-41.
- Neusner, Jacob. *Are there really Tannaitic parallels to the Gospels? A Refutation of Morton Smith*. SFSHJ 80. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993.
- . "Who Needs 'the Historical Jesus'? Two Elegant Works Rehabilitate a Field Disgraced by Fraud." In *Ancient Judaism: Debates and Disputes*. Third series. SFSHJ 83, 171-84. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993.
- Nock, A. D. "Hellenistic Mysteries and Christian Sacraments." *Mnemosyne* ser. 4, vol. 5 (1952) 177-213.
- . "Mysterion." *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 60 (1951) 201-204.
- Orchard, B. "Mark and the Fusion of Traditions." In *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neiryck*. Vol. 2, edited by F. van Segbroeck et al., 779-800. Uitgeverij Peeters Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992.
- Osborn, Eric F. "Clement of Alexandria: A Review of Research, 1958-1982." *Second Century* 3 (1983): 219-44.
- . *The Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957.
- . "Teaching and Writing in the First Chapter of the Stromateis of Clement of Alexandria." *JTS* n.s. 10 (1959): 335-44.
- Parker, Pierson. "On Professor Morton Smith's Find at Mar-Saba." *ATR* 56 (1974): 53-57.
- Patten, P. C. "The Form and Function of Parables in Select Apocalyptic Literature and their Significance for Parables in the Gospel of Mark." *NTS* 29 (1983): 246-58.

- . “Parable and Secret in the Gospel of Mark in the Light of Select Apocalyptic Literature.” *The Drew Gateway* 47:2-3 (1976-77): 135-36.
- Peabody, David. “The Late Secondary Redaction of Mark’s Gospel and the Griesbach Hypothesis: A Response to Helmut Koester.” In *Colloquy on New Testament Studies: A Time for Reappraisal and Fresh Approaches*, edited by Bruce Corley, 87-132. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983.
- . *Mark as Composer*. New Gospel Studies 1. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987.
- Pearson, Birger A. “Earliest Christianity in Egypt: Some Observations.” In *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*. Studies in Antiquity and Christianity, edited by Birger A. Pearson and James E. Goehring, 132-56. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.
- Perkins, Pheme. *Resurrection: New Testament Witness and Contemporary Reflection*. Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1984.
- . “The Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.” In *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research*, edited by Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans, 423-42. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994.
- Perrin, Norman. “The Literary *Gattung*, ‘Gospel’...Some Observations.” *ET* 82 (1970): 4-7.
- . *The Resurrection according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977.
- . “Towards an Interpretation of the Gospel of Mark.” In *Christology and a Modern Pilgrimage: A Discussion with Norman Perrin*, edited by Hans Dieter Betz, 1-78. Claremont: New Testament Colloquium, 1971.
- Perrin, Norman, and Dennis C. Duling. *The New Testament: An Introduction. Proclamation and Parenesis, Myth and History*. 2nd ed. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982.
- Pesch, Rudolf. *Das Markusevangelium*. II. Teil. *Kommentar zu Kap. 8,27-16,20*. Freiburg: Herder, 1977.
- Petersen, Norman R. “The Composition of Mark 4:1-8:26.” *HTR* 73 (1980): 185-217.
- . “When is the End not the End? Literary Reflections on the Ending of Mark’s Narrative.” *Int* 34 (1980): 151-66.
- Pokorný, Petr. “Das Markusevangelium: Literarische und theologische Einleitung mit Forschungsbericht.” *ANRW* II 25:3 (1985): 1969-2035.
- Prümm, K. “Mysterion von Paulus bis Origenes.” *ZKT* 61 (1937): 392-98.
- Pryke, E. J. *Redactional Style in the Marcan Gospel: A Study of Syntax and Vocabulary as guides to Redaction in Mark*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.

- Quasten, Johannes, *Patrology*. Vol 2, *The Ante-Nicene Literature after Irenaeus*. Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1953.
- Quesnell, Quentin. Letter to author. June 9, 1997.
- . “The Mar Saba Clementine: A Question of Evidence.” *CBQ* 37 (1975): 48–67.
- . *The Mind of Mark: Interpretation and Method through the Exegesis of Mark 6,52*. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969.
- . “A Reply to Morton Smith.” *CBQ* 38 (1976): 200–203.
- Räisänen, Heikki. *The “Messianic Secret” in Mark*. Translated by Christopher Tuckett. Edinburgh, Scotland: T and T Clark, Ltd., 1990.
- Reedy, Charles J. “Mk 8:31–11:10 and the Gospel Ending: A Redaction Study.” *CBQ* 34 (1972): 188–97.
- Rhoads, David, and Donald Michie. *Mark as Story*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982.
- Riedweg, Christoph. *Mysterienterminologie bei Platon, Philon und Klemens von Alexandrien*. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1987.
- Riesner, Rainer. “Bethany beyond Jordan (John 1:28): Topography, Theology and History in the Fourth Gospel.” *Tyndale Bulletin* 38 (1987): 29–63.
- Ritter, A. M. “De Polycarpe à Clément: Aux origines d’Alexandrie chrétienne.” In *ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΙΝΑ: Hellénisme, judaïsme et christianisme à Alexandrie*. Mélanges offerts au P. Claude Mondésert, 151–72. Paris: Cerf, 1987.
- Robbins, Vernon K. *New Boundaries in Old Territory: Form and Social Rhetoric in Mark*. Emory Studies in Early Christianity 3. Edited by David B. Gowler. New York: Peter Lang, 1994.
- . *Jesus the Teacher: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Mark*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.
- Roberts, Colin H. *Manuscript, Society and Belief in Early Christian Egypt*. The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy, 1977. London: the Oxford University Press, 1979.
- Roberts, Louis. “The Literary Form of the *Stromateis*.” *Second Century* 1 (1981): 211–22.
- Robinson, James M. *The Problem of History in Mark: And Other Marcan Studies*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982.
- Schenke, Hans-Martin. “The Function and Background of the Beloved Disciple in the Gospel of John.” In *Nag Hammadi, Gnosticism, and Early Christianity*. Edited by Charles W. Hedrick and Robert Hodgson, Jr. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1986, 111–25.

- . “The Mystery of the Gospel of Mark.” *Second Century* 4:2 (1984): 65–82.
- Schmidt, K. D. “προάγω.” *TDNT* 1 (1964): 130–31.
- Schneck, Richard. *Isaiah in the Gospel of Mark, I–VIII*. Bibal Dissertation Series 1. Vallejo, CA: Bibal Press, 1994.
- Schneemelcher, Wilhelm, ed. *New Testament Apocrypha*. Vol. 1, *Gospels and Related Writings*. 2nd rev. ed. English translation edited by R. McL. Wilson. Cambridge: James Clarke and Co. Ltd.; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991.
- Schüssler Fiorenza, E. *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*. Tenth Anniversary Edition. New York: Crossroad, 1994.
- Schweitzer, Albert. *The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede*. 3rd Eng. ed. Translated by W. Montgomery. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1954.
- Schweizer, Eduard. *The Good News according to Mark*. Translated by Donald H. Madvig. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1970.
- . *Lordship and Discipleship*. Studies in Biblical Theology. London: SCM Press Ltd., 1960.
- . “The Question of the Messianic Secret in Mark.” In *The Messianic Secret*. Issues in Religion and Theology 1, edited and translated by C. M. Tuckett, 65–74. 1965. Reprint. Philadelphia: Fortress Press; London: SPCK, 1983.
- Scroggs, Robin, and Kent I. Groff. “Addendum” to “Baptism in Mark: Dying and Rising with Christ.” *JBL* 92: (1973): 531–48 (47–48).
- Seeley, David. *Deconstructing the New Testament*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994.
- Sellew, Philip. “Secret Mark and the History of Canonical Mark.” In *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester*, edited by Birger A. Pearson, 242–57. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.
- Selvidge, Marla J. “‘And Those Who Followed Feared’ (Mark 10:32).” *CBQ* 45 (1983): 396–400.
- Shepherd, Tom. *The Definition and Function of Markan Intercalation as Illustrated in a Narrative Analysis of Six Passages*, Diss. Andrews University, 1991.
- . “Intercalation in Mark and the Synoptic Problem.” In *Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers*. SBLSP 30, edited by Eugene H. Lovering, Jr., 687–97. Missoula: Scholars, 1991.
- Shiner, Witney Taylor. *Follow Me! Disciples in Markan Rhetoric*. SBLDS 145. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995.

- Smith, Jonathan Z. "The Garments of Shame." *HR* 5 (1966): 217–38.
- Smith, Morton. "Ascent to the Heavens and the Beginning of Christianity." In *Studies in The Cult of Yahweh*. Vol. 2, *New Testament, Early Christianity, and Magic*, edited by Shaye J. D. Cohen, 47–67. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996. Originally published in *Eranos* 50 (1981): 403–29.
- . "On the Authenticity of the Mar Saba Letter of Clement." *CBQ* 38 (1976): 196–99.
- . *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973.
- . "Comments on Taylor's Commentary on Mark." *HTR* 48 (1955): 21–64.
- . "Clement of Alexandria and Secret Mark: The Score at the End of the First Decade." *HTR* 75 (1982): 449–61.
- . *Jesus the Magician*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978.
- . "The Jewish Elements in the Gospels." *JBR* 24 (1956): 90–96.
- . "Mark 6:32–15:47 and John 6:1–19:42" In *Society of Biblical Literature 1978 Seminar Papers*. Vol. 2, edited by Paul J. Achtemeier, 281–87. Missoula: Scholars Press, 1978.
- . "Mark's 'Secret Gospel'?" *America* 129 (August 4, 1973): 64–65.
- . "Merkel on the Longer Text of Mark." *ZTK* 72 (1975): 133–50.
- . "Monasteries and their Manuscripts." *Archaeology* 13 (1960): 172–77.
- . "The Origin and History of the Transfiguration Story." *USQR* 36 (1980): 39–44.
- . "Palestinian Judaism in the First Century." In *Studies in The Cult of Yahweh*. Vol. 1, *Studies in Historical Method, Ancient Israel, Ancient Judaism*, edited by Shaye J. D. Cohen, 104–15. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996. Originally published in *Israel: Its Role in Civilization*, edited by M. Davis, 67–81. New York: Harper and Brothers, for the Jewish Theological Seminary, 1956.
- . "Pauline Problems: Apropos of J. Munck. *Paulus und die Heilsgeschichte*." *HTR* 50 (1957): 107–131.
- . "Pauline Worship as Seen by Pagans." *HTR* 73 (1980): 241–50.
- . "Paul's Arguments as Evidence of the Christianity from which He Diverged." *HTR* 79 (1986): 254–60.
- . "A Rare Sense of *προκόπτω* and the Authenticity of the Letter of Clement of Alexandria." In *God's Christ and His People: Studies in Honour of Nils Alstrup Dahl*, edited by Jacob Jervell and Wayne A. Meeks, 261–64. Oslo: Universitetsforl, 1977.

- . “The Reason for the Persecution of Paul and the Obscurity of Acts.” In *Studies in The Cult of Yahweh*. Vol. 2, *New Testament, Early Christianity, and Magic*, edited by Shaye J. D. Cohen, 87–94. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996. Originally published in *Studies in Mysticism and Religion Presented to G. G. Scholem on his Seventieth Birthday*, edited by E. E. Urbach, R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, and C. Wirszubski, 261–68. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967.
- . “Regarding *Secret Mark*: A Response by Morton Smith to the Account by Per Beskow.” *JBL* 103 (1984): 624.
- . *The Secret Gospel: The Discovery and Interpretation of the Secret Gospel according to Mark*. New York: Harper and Row, 1973.
- . *Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels*. JBLMS 6. Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature, 1968.
- . “Transformation by Burial (I Cor 15.35–49; Rom 6.3–5 and 8.9–11).” *Eranos* 52 (1983): 87–112.
- . “Two Ascended to Heaven—Jesus and the Author of 4Q491.” In *Studies in The Cult of Yahweh*. Vol. 2, *New Testament, Early Christianity, and Magic*, edited by Shaye J. D. Cohen, 68–78. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996. Originally published in *Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, edited by J. H. Charlesworth, 290–301. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
- Stählin, Otto, ed. *Clemens Alexandrinus*. Reedited by Ludwig Früchtel. 4 vols. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1972.
- Stanton, Graham. *Gospel Truth?: New Light on Jesus and the Gospels*. Valley Forge: Trinity Press, 1995.
- Steely, John E. *Gnosis: The Doctrine of Christian Perfection in the Writings of Clement of Alexandria*. Louisville, KY: The Microcard Foundation for the American Theological Library Association, 1954.
- Stein, Robert H. “The Cleansing of the Temple in Mark (11:15–19).” In his *Gospels and Tradition: Studies on Redaction Criticism of the Synoptic Gospels*, 121–33. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991.
- . *The Proper Methodology for Ascertaining a Marcan Redaktionsgeschichte*. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1968.
- . “A Short Note on Mark XIV. 28 and XVI. 7.” In his *Gospels and Tradition*, 135–45. Originally published in *NTS* 20 (1974): 445–52.
- Stock, Augustine. *Call to Discipleship: A Literary Study of Mark’s Gospel*. Good News Studies 1. Wilmington, DL: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1982.
- Swartley, Willard M. “The Structural Function of the Term ‘Way’ (*Hodos*) in Mark’s Gospel.” In *The New Way of Jesus: Essays Presented to Howard Charles*, edited by William Klassen, 73–86. Newton, KS: Faith and Life Press, 1980.

- Talbert, C. H. *What is a Gospel? The Genre of the Canonical Gospels*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977.
- Talley, Thomas. *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*. New York: Pueblo Publishing Co., 1986.
- . "Liturgical Time in the Ancient Church: The State of Research." *Studia Liturgica* 14 (1982): 34–51. English Translation of "Le Temps Liturgique dans l'Église ancienne." *La Maison-Dieu* 147 (1981): 29–60.
- Tannehill, Robert C. "The Disciples in Mark: the Function of a Narrative Role." In *The Interpretation of Mark*. Issues in Religion and Theology 7. 2nd rev. ed., edited by William Telford, 169–95. Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1995. Originally published in *JR* 57 (1977): 386–405.
- Tate, W. Randolph. *Reading Mark from the Outside: Eco and Iser Leave their Marks*. San Francisco: International Scholars Publications, 1994.
- Taylor, Vincent. *The Gospel according to St. Mark*. 2nd ed. London: Macmillan, 1966.
- Telford, William R. *The Barren Temple and the Withered Tree: A Redaction-Critical Analysis of the Cursing of the Fig-Tree Pericope in Mark's Gospel and its Relation to the Clearing of the Temple Tradition*. JSNTS 7. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980.
- . *Mark*. New Testament Guides. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.
- Tolbert, Mary Ann. *Sowing the Gospel: Mark's World in Literary-Historical Perspective*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989.
- Trocmé, Etienne. *The Formation of the Gospel according to Mark*. Translated by Pamela Gaughan. [1963; ET.] Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1975.
- Trompf, G. W. "The First Resurrection Appearance and the Ending of Mark's Gospel." *NTS* 18 (1972): 308–30.
- Tuckett, C. M. "Mark's Concerns in the Parables Chapter (Mark 4,1–34)." *Bib* 69 (1988): 1–26.
- Turck, A. "Aux origines du Catéchuménat." In *Conversion, Catechumenate, and Baptism in the Early Church*. Studies in Early Christianity 11, edited by Everett Ferguson et al., 266–77. New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1993.
- Ulansey, David. "The Heavenly Veil Torn: Mark's Cosmic *Inclusio*." *JBL* 110:1 (1991): 123–25.
- Uro, Risto. "'Secondary Orality' in the Gospel of Thomas? Logion 14 as a Test Case." *Forum* 9 (1993): 305–29.

- Vaage, Leif. "Bird-watching at the Baptism of Jesus: Early Christian Mythmaking in Mark 1:9-11." In *Reimagining Christian Origins: A Colloquium Honoring Burton L. Mack*, edited by Elizabeth A. Castelli and Hal Taussig, 280-94. Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1996.
- van Cangh, J. -M. "La Galilée dans l'Évangile de Marc: Un lieu théologique?" *RB* 79 (1972): 59-76.
- van den Hoek, Annewies. *Clement of Alexandria and his Use of Philo in the Stromateis: An Early Christian Reshaping of a Jewish Model*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988.
- van der Horst, Pieter W. "Het 'Geheime Markusevangelie.' Over een nieuwe vondst." *NedTTs* 33 (1979): 27-51.
- Vanhoye, Albert. "La fuite du jeune homme nu (Mc 14,51-52)." *Bib* 52 (1971): 401-406.
- van Iersel, B. M. F. "'To Galilee' or 'In Galilee' in Mark 14,28 and 16,7?" *ETL* 58:4 (1982): 365-70.
- . "The Reader of Mark as Operator of a System of Connotations." *Semeia* 48 (1989): 83-114.
- van Oyen, G. "Intercalation and Irony in the Gospel of Mark." In *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck*. Vol. 2, edited by F. van Segbroeck et al., 949-74. Uitgeverij Peeters Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992.
- Via, Dan O. Jr. *The Ethics of Mark's Gospel—In the Middle of Time*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985.
- Vorster, Willem S. "Meaning and Reference: The Parables of Jesus in Mark 4." In Bernard C. Lategan and Willem S. Vorster, *Text and Reality: Aspects of Reference in Biblical Texts*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985.
- Waetjen, Herman C. "The Ending of Mark and the Gospel's Shift in Eschatology." *ASTI* 4 (1965): 114-131.
- . *A Reordering of Power: A Socio-Political Reading of Mark's Gospel*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989.
- Wagner, Walter. "Another Look at the Literary Problem in Clement of Alexandria's Major Writings." In *Studies in Early Christianity*, Vol. 2. *Literature of the Early Church*, edited by Everett Ferguson et al., 165-74. New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1993. Originally published in *Church History* 37 (1968): 251-60.
- Warfield, Benjamin. "The Oracles of God." *Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 11 (1900): 217-60.

- Watts, Rikki E. *Isaiah's New Exodus and Mark*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe 88. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997.
- Wedderburn, A. J. M. *Baptism and Resurrection: Studies in Pauline Theology against its Greco-Roman Background*. WUNT 44. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1987.
- Weeden, Theodore J. *Mark—Traditions in Conflict*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971.
- Wenham, John. *Redating Matthew, Mark and Luke: A Fresh Assault on the Synoptic Problem*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1991.
- Wieder, N. *The Judean Scrolls and Karaism*. London: East and West Library, 1962.
- Williams, James G. *Gospel Against Parable: Mark's Language of Mystery*. Sheffield: Almond Press, 1985.
- Williams, Joel F. *Other Followers of Jesus: Minor Characters as Major Figures in Mark's Gospel*. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994.
- Williams, R. E. "Helmut Koester on Mark." *PSTJ* 40 (1987): 26–30.
- Wills, Lawrence M. *The Quest of the Historical Gospel: Mark, John, and the Origins of the Gospel Genre*. London and New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Wilson, R. McL. Review of *The "Secret" Gospel of Mark*, by F. F. Bruce. *SJT* 29 (1976): 197.
- Wilson, William. *Clement of Alexandria*. ANCL 4, 12, 22, 24. London: 1867–72. Reprinted in ANFa 2. New York: 1887.
- Wink, Walter. "Jesus as Magician." *USQR* 30 (1974): 3–14.
- Witherington III, Ben. *The Jesus Quest: The Third Search for the Jew of Nazareth*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995.
- Wortley, John, trans. *The Spiritual Meadow of John Moschos*. Cistercian Studies Series 139. Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1992.
- Wuellner, Wilhelm H., ed. *Longer Mark: Forgery, Interpolation, or Old Tradition? Protocol of the Eighteenth Colloquy: 7 December 1975*. Berkeley: Center for Hermeneutical Studies in Hellenistic and Modern Culture, 1976.