

DAVID E. AUNE

Jesus, Gospel Tradition  
and Paul in the Context of  
Jewish and Greco-Roman  
Antiquity

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen  
zum Neuen Testament*

303

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**Mohr Siebeck**

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David E. Aune

Jesus, Gospel Tradition and Paul  
in the Context of Jewish and  
Greco-Roman Antiquity

Collected Essays II

Mohr Siebeck



To Hans Dieter Betz  
Scholar, Mentor,  
Friend

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## Preface

Twenty-one of the following twenty-two essays collected in this volume were originally published between 1991 and 2012 and reprinted here with the permission of the respective publishers (the original publication information and the permission information are included on the first page of each essay). The essay entitled “The Forgiveness Petition in the Lord’s Prayer: First century Literary, Liturgical and Cultural Contexts,” the only one not previously published, was originally presented at the Conference on Forgiveness sponsored by the University of Notre Dame at the Tantur Ecumenical Center in Jerusalem in May, 2005. Ten of these essays originated as papers delivered at conferences or seminars and have gone through various stages of revision, while eleven are Festschrift articles honoring friends in the field of New Testament (one of the benefits of ageing).

While the earlier collection of twenty essays focused on apocalypticism, prophecy and magic in early Christianity,<sup>1</sup> published between 1981 and 2006, the present volume focuses on a variety of issues in the interpretation of the Gospels, Gospel traditions, Paul and the Pauline letters.

Nine of the following essays center on the interpretation of passages in the Gospels, Acts and the Pauline letters that I saw as particularly challenging or problematic. These include two essays on the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew 6:9–13 and Luke 11:2–4, “The Forgiveness Petition in the Lord’s Prayer” (pp. 57–74) and “Apocalyptic and the Lord’s Prayer” (pp. 75–93), the latter originally published with a different title as a contribution to the Festschrift honouring Harold W. Attridge. The history and function of a problematic antithetical saying of Jesus is discussed in “The Spirit is Willing, but the Flesh is Weak (Mark 14:38b and Matthew 26:41b),” (pp. 94–106), which appeared in the Festschrift honouring my esteemed *Doktorvater* at the University of Chicago, Robert M. Grant, on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday. A long-time interest in the preface of Luke found expression in “Luke 1:1–4: Historical or Scientific *Prooimion*,” (pp. 107–115), an essay I contributed to the Festschrift honouring Alexander J.M. Wedderburn, centered on a critique of a stimulating monograph by Loveday Alexander. “Luke 20:34–35: A ‘Gnosticized’ Logion of Jesus?” (pp. 116–129) was originally contributed to the multi-volume Festschrift honouring Martin Hengel. During

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<sup>1</sup> David E. Aune, *Apocalypticism, Prophecy and Magic in Early Christianity: Collected Essays* (WUNT 199; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006).



a year as Annual Professor at the Albright Archaeological Institute in Jerusalem in 2002–2003, I became interested in the archaeological and ritual purity issues surrounding the interpretation of a complex passage in Acts explored in “Paul, Ritual Purity and the Ritual Baths South of the Temple Mount (Acts 21:15–27),” (pp. 414–441), originally a PowerPoint presentation at a conference at the Tantur Ecumenical Institute in Jerusalem in the spring of 2003 that was later expanded into an essay for the *Festschrift* honouring Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, O. P. and Joseph Fitzmyer, S. J. Another problematic passage in the Pauline letters that shows striking Hellenistic influence is discussed in “Anthropological Duality in the Eschatology of 2 Corinthians 4:16–5:10,” (pp. 353–380), originally presented at a conference organized by Troels Engberg-Petersen entitled “Paul between Judaism and Hellenism” held at Rolighed in Denmark in 1997. I revisited part of that passage in “The Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10),” (pp. 398–413), an essay that originally appearing in the *Festschrift* for Calvin J. Roetzel. Finally I contributed an essay to a volume on Christianity and Human rights on “Galatians 3:28 and the Problem of Equality in the Church and Society” (pp. 524–549), a longer version of which appeared in the *Festschrift* for Thomas H. Tobin, S. J.).

Three essays discuss problematic aspects of Paul’s conception of the human person, one of which has been mentioned above in connection with the interpretation of problematic passages. In “Two Pauline Models of the Person” (pp. 331–352), I explored Paul’s use of what I called the “irrational behaviour model” and the “macrocosm-microcosm model.” In “Anthropological Duality in the Eschatology of 2 Corinthians 4:16–5:10,” (pp. 353–380), I focused on the implications of Paul’s adaptation of Hellenistic views of the human person. Finally, in “Human Nature and Ethics in Hellenistic Philosophical Traditions and Paul: Some Issues and Problems” (pp. 381–397), I again discuss some fascinating aspects of Paul’s view of human nature, including his use of the philosophical tradition of *commentatio mortis*, (“the practice of death”).

In three essays, I explored important aspects of the problem of oral tradition in the ancient world, the first two were initially presented at meetings that grew out of the International Symposium on Interrelations among the Gospels held in Jerusalem in 1984. The first, presented at a conference at All Hallows Pastoral Centre in Dublin in 1989, is entitled “Prolegomena to the Study of Oral Tradition in the Hellenistic World” (pp. 220–255). The second, “Oral Tradition in the Aphorisms of Jesus” (pp. 256–302), containing a complete catalog of the aphorisms of Jesus, was presented at a meeting of the same group at the Villa Cagnola in Gazzada, Italy a year later. Among the fifteen or so participants in these two meetings, chaired by Henry Wansbrough, were Philip Alexander, Øivind Andersen, James D. G. Dunn, William Farmer, Birger Gerhardsson, Traugott Holtz, Ben F. Meyer, Rainer Riesner, Semaryahu Talmon and Willy Rordorf. In the third essay, published in a *Festschrift* honoring Birger Gerhardsson, I dealt with a subject that linked Gospel tradition with the Paul letters: “Jesus Tradition

in the Pauline Letters” (pp. 303–327). In this essay I discussed the significant contribution of Gerhardsson to the subject, then critiqued other approaches to detecting the presence oral of Jesus traditions in the Pauline letters (Werner Kelber, Traugott Holtz and Paul D. Harvey), and finally I proposed an approach to reading Paul’s letters as “*aides-mémoire*” (i.e., as mnemonic devices that aid to communal memory and as “*lieux de mémoire*” (i.e., “sites” or “artifacts of memory,” texts that later served both to generate and transform communal memory), models for understanding the function of oral tradition proposed by the French historian Pierre Nora.

In two essays I treated the knotty problem of the genre of some New Testament texts, a longstanding interest of mine, particularly reflected in a monograph on The problem of gospel genre was discussed in “Genre Theory and the Genre-Function of Mark and Matthew” (pp. 25–56), initially presented at a conference at Aarhus University on Matthew and Mark in 2008 organized by Eve-Marie Becker and Anders Runesson. The second, “Romans as a *Logos Protreptikos* in the Context of Ancient Religious and Philosophical Propaganda” (pp. 442–471), was first presented at a meeting at the Eberhard Karls Universität in Tübingen on 26–28 September 1988 as part of the Durham-Tübingen Symposium honouring the memory of Adolf Schlatter on the fiftieth anniversary of his death.

The remaining essays deal with a variety of issues and problems that had attracted my attention. The longest essay in the volume reviews recent scholarship on justification by faith in Paul, such as the New Perspective on Paul and the role of Pauline texts in recent ecumenical dialogue on the doctrine of justification entitled “Recent Readings of Paul Relating to Justification by Faith,” (pp. 472–523), part of a collection of essays that I edited which developed out of a conference on Protestant and Catholic Perspectives on Justification by Faith held at the University of Notre Dame on February 1–2, 2002. An essay that appeared in the Festschrift honoring James C. VanderKam, my colleague at the University of Notre Dame, gave me the opportunity to investigate the meaning of *euaggelion* in the *inscriptions* and *subscriptions* of the four Gospels, important paratextual features of those texts, entitled “The Meaning of Εὐαγγέλιον in the *Inscriptions* of the Canonical Gospels” (pp. 3–24). An essay I wrote at the invitation of Jens Schröter gave me the opportunity to critically compare the methodologies of two prominent historical Jesus scholars, my Notre Dame colleague John P. Meier and a friend I met long ago in Chicago, John Dominic Cross entitled “Assessing the Historical Value of the Apocryphal Jesus Traditions: A Critique of Conflicting Methodologies” (pp. 182–206). As a result of a longstanding interest in understanding the Fourth Gospel in its Jewish context found expression in an essay contributed to the Peder Borgen Festschrift entitled “Dualism in the Fourth Gospel and the Dead Sea Scrolls: A Reassessment of the Problem” (pp. 130–148). Unlike most of the essays in this volume, the one I contributed to the Festschrift of my Notre Dame colleague Jerome Neyrey, S.J. made use of social science

methods in the investigation Christian origins, entitled “Christian Beginnings and Cognitive Dissonance Theory” (pp. 149–181), an issue I had worked on some twenty years earliest. At the invitation of James H. Charlesworth, I presented a paper on “Jesus and Cynics in First-Century Palestine: Some Critical Considerations” (pp. 207–219) at a conference on Hillel and Jesus held in Jerusalem in 1992.

Finally I would like to thank both Jörg Frey, Professor of New Testament at the University of Zürich and editor of the series *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament*, published by Mohr Siebeck and Dr. Henning Ziebritski, the editor of theology at Mohr Siebeck, for their help and encouragement during the last several years when this collection was in the making. I also owe a debt of gratitude to two graduate assistants who helped me in scanning and reformatting many of the earlier essays in this collection as well as catching many errors, Matthew Bates, now Assistant Professor of Theology at Quincy University in Quincy, Illinois and Brian Lee, currently working on his PhD dissertation at the University of Notre Dame.

This book is dedicated to Hans Dieter Betz, who invited me, a new Ph. D. from the University of Chicago in 1970, to participate in three extensive *Corpus Hellenisticum Novi Testamenti* projects from 1970 on, supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Beginning in 1970, under the auspices of the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity in Claremont, Betz assembled a working group of scholars which convened annually, first in Claremont and beginning in 1978 at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago under the aegis of the Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion. Three substantial volumes resulted from these consultations, two volumes on Plutarch and the New Testament and early Christian literature,<sup>2</sup> and a volume containing English translations of the Greek and Coptic magical papyri.<sup>3</sup> Participating in the colloquia every spring was something like an intensive and extended post-doctoral fellowship for me. I learned an immense amount from Hans Dieter Betz himself, as well as from many of the other regular participants, including, William Beardslee, Jan Bergman, John Dillon, Jackson P. Hershbell, Hubert Martin, Jr., Edward N. O’Neil, John Scarborough and Morton Smith. Working on these projects determined, to a large extent, the trajectory of my subsequent scholarly career and I remain immensely grateful that Hans Dieter Betz made it possible for me to participate in this venture.

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<sup>2</sup> Hans Dieter Betz (ed.), *Plutarch’s Theological Writings and Early Christian Literature* (SCHNT 3; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975; Hans Dieter Betz (ed.), *Plutarch’s Ethical Writings and Early Christian Literature* (SCHNT 4; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978).

<sup>3</sup> Hans Dieter Betz (ed.), *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation including the Demotic Spells*, Volume 1: *Texts* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1986; second edition, 1992). Several additional volumes were planned but never published.

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## I. Jesus of Nazareth and Gospel Traditions



# 1. The Meaning of Εὐαγγέλιον in the *Inscriptiones* of the Canonical Gospels\*

## Introduction

The most common *inscriptiones* of the canonical Gospels in the vast majority of Greek manuscripts is εὐαγγέλιον κατά (+ personal name in the accusative), though in a very few uncial manuscripts containing all four Gospels, the shorter form κατά (+ personal name in the accusative) occurs. In trying to determine the meaning of εὐαγγέλιον in these *inscriptiones*, an important consideration is determining the approximate date when they were added to the text of the Gospels. Some maintain that the *inscriptiones* were added to the Gospels as early as the end of the first century or beginning of the second, while others argue that this paratextual addition occurred late in the second century.

## Εὐαγγέλιον in Early Christian Literature

### *A Lexical Overview*

In general, New Testament lexicographers have distinguished three meanings of εὐαγγέλιον that developed in antiquity by means of early Christian usage of the term (beginning with Paul), through the late second century. The pre-Christian meanings have been grouped in two categories by Liddell, Scott and Jones: (1) reward of good tidings [given to the messenger],” (2) “good tidings” or “good news” itself and (3) later the more specific Christian sense of “the gospel.”<sup>1</sup> Greek lexicography in the English language has been historically dependent on Henri Estienne (in Latinized form Robertus Stephanus), *Thesaurus Graecae Linguae*, first published in 1532 and revised and expanded nearly three centuries later, from 1816 to 1825.<sup>2</sup> In this later edition, the meanings of εὐαγγέλιον are placed

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\* Original publication: “The Meaning of Εὐαγγέλιον in the *Inscriptiones* of the Canonical Gospels,” *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James CD. VanderKam*, ed. E. F. Mason, K. Coblenz Bault, A. Kim Harkins and D. A. Machiela (2 vols.; JSJSup 153; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2012), 2.857–882. Reprinted by permission.

<sup>1</sup> Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott and Henry Stuart Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (9th edition; Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1940), 705.

<sup>2</sup> H. Estienne, *Thesaurus Graecae Linguae* (8 vols.; London: In Aedibus Valpianis, 1816–25).



in two categories. The first consists of pre-Christian meanings of the term, such as “laetum nuntium” or “faustum vel felix nuntium,” or “bonum nuntiam” (followed by many examples of this usage). The second focuses on the Christian meaning of the term, which is formulated in a highly theological manner (col. 367: “εὐαγγέλιον autem κατ’ ἐξωχὴν dicitur peculiaritatur a Christianis annuntiatio insignis illius beneficii a Christo in humanum genus collate, quum sua ipse morte illud a morte aeterna liberavit”), similarly followed by many examples. In this later edition, one of the basic meanings of εὐαγγέλιον is listed as “bonum nuntiam,” while the specific Christian meaning is defined as (col. 367): “illius beneficii a Christo in humanum genus collate, quum sua ipse morte illud a morte aeterna liberavit.”<sup>3</sup> In defining εὐαγγέλιον almost exclusively in terms of later Christological developments, the meaning of this important early Christian lexeme was skewed. G. W. H. Lampe, beginning with early second century Christian literature, proposes three categories of meaning: (1) probably without actual reference to a written gospel, (2) perhaps referring to written gospels, (3) referring to written gospels.<sup>4</sup> These categories are quite remarkable in their own way, since Lampe avoids actually proposing definitions of εὐαγγέλιον.

There is widespread agreement among New Testament scholars that the noun τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, first used in a Christian context by Paul with the meaning “the [content of the] good news [about Jesus],” takes on a more explicitly literary meaning by the mid-second century CE.<sup>5</sup> Hans von Campenhausen, followed by Helmut Koester, argued that τὸ εὐαγγέλιον was not used of a book until Marcion (died ca. 154 CE), who called his revision of what was later called the Gospel according to Luke, simply “Gospel.”<sup>6</sup> The use of εὐαγγέλιον as a designation for a written text becomes particularly clear when the plural form εὐαγγέλια occurs. J. K. Elliott understands this use of εὐαγγέλιον as a “distinct genre of literature recounting Jesus’ ministry.”<sup>7</sup> But this understanding of εὐαγγέλιον as a genre designation is anachronistic. The first time that the plural form εὐαγγέλια occurs in early Christian texts is in Justin *1 Apol.* 66.3, where the phrase ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν ἀποστολῶν (a term for the gospels that emphasizes their historical value) is accompanied by the appositional phrase ἃ καλεῖται εὐαγγέλια.<sup>8</sup> Justin generally

<sup>3</sup> Estienne, *Thesaurus Graecae Linguae*, 1.366–68.

<sup>4</sup> G. W. H. Lampe (ed.), *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1961), 555.

<sup>5</sup> J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (2 vols.; New York: United Bible Societies, 1988), 1. § 33.217.

<sup>6</sup> H. von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*, trans. J. A. Baker (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 147–63, esp. p. 159; Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), 35–36; A. von Harnack, *Marcion: Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1924), 184\*.

<sup>7</sup> “Mark 1.1–3 – a Later Addition to the Gospel?” *NTS* 46 (2000), 585.

<sup>8</sup> O. Piper, “The Gospel according to Justin Martyr,” *JR* 41 (1961), 159.

appears to avoid using the term εὐαγγέλιον of written texts.<sup>9</sup> Marcion was one of the first to use the singular form εὐαγγέλιον to refer to a written gospel, in this case the Gospel of Luke, based on his view that the Pauline phrase “my gospel” (Rom 2:16; 16:25) referred specifically to Luke.<sup>10</sup>

### *Εὐαγγέλιον in Paul*

The term εὐαγγέλιον first appears in a Christian context in the writings of Paul, where it occurs 48 times in the genuine letters (12 times in the pseudo-Pauline letters).<sup>11</sup> According to Koester, the absolute use of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in Paul is a theological abbreviation for “the good news [of the saving significance of the death and resurrection of Jesus];” when Mark used εὐαγγέλιον in the incipit to his narrative about Jesus, he employed “already well-established technical terms for the Christian message and its proclamation,” as known from Paul.<sup>12</sup> Paul’s most extensive explication of the content of the gospel is found in Rom 1:1–3, and elsewhere he frequently uses the theological abbreviation “gospel of Christ” with “of Christ” as an objective genitive, i.e., “the gospel about Christ” (cf. Rom 15:19; 1 Cor 9:12; 2 Cor 2:12; 4:4; Gal 1:7; Phil 1:27; 1 Thess 3:2).

When Paul uses the term τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in an absolute sense, i.e., without genitival qualification, he “presupposes that the content is understood and requires no further definition or explication” and that content is “the complex of traditions about the words and deeds of Jesus.”<sup>13</sup> In defining what Paul means by τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in Galatians, J. Louis Martyn includes such features as the salvific death of the Son (Gal 3:1), the call for Gentiles to turn from idols to the living God and his Son (4:8), the coming of the Spirit (3:2; 4:6) and the assurance of future deliverance (5:5, 21), which he later expresses succinctly as “the salvific event of the Son’s death and resurrection.”<sup>14</sup>

### *Εὐαγγέλιον in Mark*

There is general agreement that the term εὐαγγέλιον in the *inscriptioes* of Matthew, Luke and John was ultimately derived from the *incipit* of the Gospel

<sup>9</sup> Piper, “The Nature of the Gospel,” 155, 162–3; A. Y. Reed, “Orality, Textuality and Christian Truth in Irenaeus’ *Adversus Haereses*,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 56 (2002), 11–46.

<sup>10</sup> Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 36

<sup>11</sup> This figure is the result of adding up the statistics for individual Pauline letters found in R. Morgenthaler, *Statistik des neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes* (Zurich and Frankfurt am Main: Gotthelf Verlag, 1958), 101. Those Pauline letters considered genuine include Romans, 1–2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians and Philemon.

<sup>12</sup> Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 4.

<sup>13</sup> Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 5.

<sup>14</sup> *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997), 129–30.

of Mark (1:1): Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.<sup>15</sup> While there are many issues surrounding this short clause and its syntactical relationship to vv. 2–3, our focus is necessarily restricted to the meaning of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. Mark used this lexeme seven times (1:1; 1:14, 15; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10; 14:9; with the exceptions of 1:1 and 1:14, all in the sayings of Jesus),<sup>16</sup> all in Markan redactional material.<sup>17</sup> The term occurs in unmodified form five times (1:15; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10; 14:9), but is twice more closely defined by accompanying genitives: ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, “The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ” (1:1) and κηρύσσω τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ, “proclaiming the good news about God” (1:14). The articular use of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in Mark (and the rest of the New Testament) is a theological abbreviation meaning “good news relating to God’s action in Jesus Christ” or “the message about Christ.”<sup>18</sup> The unmodified uses of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον are reminiscent of Paul’s use of the term, with the exception of the phrase πιστεῦν ἐν τῷ εὐαγγέλιῳ, which is clearly non-Pauline.<sup>19</sup> The use of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in Mark 14:9 is particularly instructive, where it occurs in a saying of Jesus at the end of the story of Jesus’ anointing in Bethany: “Amen, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed [κηρυχθῆ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον] to the whole world,

<sup>15</sup> The two major modern critical editions of the Greek New Testament (UBSGNT<sup>4</sup> and Nestle-Aland<sup>27</sup>) bracket the concluding phrase υἱοῦ θεοῦ in Mark 1:1 to indicate the uncertainty of its originality. However, arguments for the later addition of the phrase are more convincing than arguments for its originality; see P.M. Head, “A Text-Critical Study of Mark 1.1: ‘The Beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,’” *New Testament Studies* 37 (1991), 621–29; see also B. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 72–75 and Adela Yarbro Collins, “Establishing the Text: Mark 1:1,” *Texts and Contexts: The Function of Biblical Texts in Their Textual and Situational Contexts*, eds. T. Fornberg and D. Hellholm (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1995), 111–127. This view is also held by some recent commentators, including J. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, (AB 27; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 141 and A. Yarbro Collins, *Mark, Hermeneia* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 130. The best set of arguments for the originality of the phrase υἱοῦ θεοῦ is presented by A. Globe, “The Caesarean Omission of the Phrase ‘Son of God’ in Mark 1:1,” *Harvard Theological Review* 75 (1982), 209–218. While the evaluation of the textual evidence by B. M. Metzger in *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition; Stuttgart: German Bible Society; New York: American Bible Society, 1994), 62, is balanced and accurate (he reflects the committee’s decision to bracket the phrase), the discussion of R.L. Omanson, *A Textual Guide to the Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006), 56, is both inaccurate and misleading.

<sup>16</sup> An additional occurrence is found in 16:15 in the longer ending added by the mid-second century. According to J.A. Kelhoffer, the longer ending (Mark 16:9–20) was added ca. 120–150 CE; see his *Mission and Message: The Authentication of Missionaries and Their Message in the Longer Ending of Mark* (WUNT II 112; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000).

<sup>17</sup> W. Marxsen, *Der Evangelist Markus: Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Evangelium* (FRLANT; neue Folge, 49; 2<sup>nd</sup> Aufl.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), 77–101.

<sup>18</sup> On the former definition, see Bauer-Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 402. On the latter, see G. Strecker, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (ed. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider; 3 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 2.70.

<sup>19</sup> P. Stuhlmacher, *Das paulinische Evangelium, I. Vorgeschichte* (FRLANT 95; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), 234.

what she has done will be told in memory of her.” Here τὸ εὐαγγέλιον clearly refers to the oral proclamation *about* Jesus, which takes account of stories such as the one told in Mark 14:3–8 as well as the other stories about Jesus and sayings of Jesus found in Mark, including the passion narrative.<sup>20</sup>

The incipit in Mark 1:1, ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, is syntactically independent, since it is neither a sentence nor a main clause (it lacks both a verb and a predicate) and probably functions as the title of the entire ensuing narrative (this view is reflected in the punctuation of UBSGNT<sup>4</sup> and Nestle-Aland<sup>27</sup>).<sup>21</sup> The genitive phrase “of Jesus Christ,” as ambiguous in Greek as it is in English, is a plenary genitive,<sup>22</sup> i.e., a *double entendre* which the reader can construe as either a subjective genitive (Jesus Christ as the proclaimer of good news) or as an objective genitive (Jesus Christ as the one proclaimed in the good news).<sup>23</sup> Boring appropriately defines τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in Mark 1:1 as “... the contents and subject matter of Mark’s narrative as a whole, the story of Jesus, the saving act of God in his Son Jesus the Christ, his words, deeds, death and resurrection, as these are expressed in the following document and as they continue to be preached in Mark’s own time.”<sup>24</sup>

Since the term εὐαγγέλιον in the *incipit* of Mark was the source of the later *subscriptions* and *inscriptiones* of all four canonical Gospels, it is striking that both Matthew and Luke did not themselves appropriate εὐαγγέλιον as a way of describing the contents of their own narratives, assuming that Mark 1:1–3 was part of the Markan text available to them.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>20</sup> E. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Markus* (KEKNT; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), 295.

<sup>21</sup> N. C. Croy, “Where the Gospel Text Begins: A Non-Theological Interpretation of Mark 1:1,” *NovT* 43 (2001), 105–27, here 114.

<sup>22</sup> D. B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 119–21.

<sup>23</sup> M. Feneberg, *Der Markusprolog: Studium zum Formbestimmung des Evangeliums* (SANT 36; Munich: Kösel Verlag, 1974), 118; J. Marcus, *Mark 1:1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 27; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 146–47; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids and Cambridge: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002), 53; Collins, *Mark*, 135; U. Schnelle, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. M. E. Boring (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 400.

<sup>24</sup> Boring, “Mark 1:1–15,” 51.

<sup>25</sup> Some scholars have argued that Mark 1:1–3 (in whole or in part) is a later interpolation; see C. F. D. Moule, *The Birth of the New Testament* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1982), 131–32, n. 1. W. Schmithals maintains that Mark originally began with ἐγένετο, “it happened,” and that neither Matthew nor Luke read Mark 1:1, which must have been missing from the texts of Mark they read; Mark 1:1 (as well as vv. 2–3) is therefore an interpolation (*Das Evangelium nach Markus: 1,1–9,1* [2. Aufl.; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1986], 73–75). This case for Mark 1:1–3 as an interpolation has been argued in detail more recently by J. K. Elliott, “Mark 1.1–3 – A Later Addition to the Gospel?” *NTS* 46 (2000), 584–88 and Croy, “Where the Gospel Text Begins,” 119–20, nn. 37–38. Croy provides a fuller list of scholars who have entertained the possibility of an interpolation at the beginning of Mark; idem, *The Mutilation*

Matthew uses the phrase βιβλος γενέσεως in his opening sentence (1:1): Βιβλος γενέσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ Δαυιδ υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ, (“The book of the origin of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham”). Since this *incipit*, like one in Mark, lacks both a verb and a predicate, it also has a titular character and again like Mark, it can be construed as a title of the entire text (construing γενέσεως as “story”) or an initial segment of the text (construing γενέσεως as “birth”), e.g., Matt 1:2–17 or 1:2–25.<sup>26</sup> The nouns ἀρχή (Mark 1:1) and γένεσις (Matt 1:1) in fact share a semantic overlap; in appropriate contexts both can mean “beginning, origin.”<sup>27</sup> The word τὸ εὐαγγέλιον itself is used just four times in Matthew (4:23; 9:35; 24:14; 26:13), always with active or passive forms of the verb κηρύσσω and three times qualified by an objective genitive in the phrase τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας (4:23; 9:35; 24:14), referring to Jesus’ proclamation of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The word τὸ εὐαγγέλιον does not occur in the Gospel of Luke; the author describes the work as a διήγησις (1:1) which Bauer-Danker define as “an orderly description of facts, events, actions or words,” hence “narrative, account.”<sup>28</sup> In Acts 1:1, the author refers to his first volume as a λόγος, a term used for the separate books of a work.<sup>29</sup> Despite the absence of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, there may be a reminiscence of Mark 1:1 in Acts 1:1, where the author describes his first book as dealing with everything ὧν ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν τε καὶ διδασκεῖν (“which Jesus began to do and to teach”).

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*of Mark’s Gospel* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003), 113–36, 165–66. This monograph deals primarily with the problematic ending of Mark, while the section dealing with the beginning of Mark is a simplified version of the author’s earlier essay.

<sup>26</sup> Those who argue that Matt 1:1 functions as a title for the entire text include the following: W. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (THNT 1; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1968), 61; F. W. Beare, *The Gospel according to Matthew* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1981), 64; W. D. Davies and D. Allison, *An Exegetical and Critical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew (Vol. I, Chapters 1–7)*, (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), 1.149–55; J. D. Kingsbury, *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 10 n. 54; Moises Mayordomo-Marin, *Den Anfang Hören* (FRLANT 180; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 208–13; U. Luz, “Das Matthäusevangelium – eine neue oder eine neu redigierte Jesusgeschichte?” *Biblischer Text und theologische Theoriebildung* (ed. Stephen Chapman, Christine Helmer and Christof Landmesser; BThSt 44; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 2001), 54. Those who regard Matt 1:1 as introducing an initial section of text include W. C. Allen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to S. Matthew* (ICC; 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1912), 1–2; E. Lohmeyer and W. Schmauch, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (KEK; 2nd ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1958), 1; U. Luz, *Matthew 1–7* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), 103–4; D. Hagner, *Matthew 1–13* (WBC 33A; Dallas: Word Books, 1993), 5.

<sup>27</sup> Bauer-Danker, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 111–12, 154.

<sup>28</sup> Bauer-Danker, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 245.

<sup>29</sup> Bauer-Danker, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 600.

*Εὐαγγέλιον in Second Century Christianity*

The term τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (always with the definite article, because early Christians are referring to a known entity), occurs several times in the Apostolic Fathers, all written within the first quarter of the second century, when all four Gospels were in circulation.<sup>30</sup> The focal lexicographical issue has often been whether or not the occurrences of εὐαγγέλιον in these early Christian writings refer to an oral message or a written text. Here is a list of the relevant texts with brief translations and followed by a discussion of the possible meanings of εὐαγγέλιον:

1. *Didache* 8:2: “But as the Lord commanded in his gospel [ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ], pray in this way: ‘Our Father in heaven ...’ [a version of the Lord’s Prayer very close to that found in Matt 6:11–13].”

2. *Didache* 11:3: “With respect to apostles and prophets, treat them in accordance with the command of the gospel [δῶγμα τοῦ εὐαγγελίου].”

3. *Didache* 15:3: “Do not reprove in anger, but in peace as you find in the gospel [ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ].”

4. *Didache* 15:4: “But say your prayers, give alms and engage in all your activities as you have found in the gospel of our Lord [ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν].”

5. Ignatius *Philad.* 5:1: “When I flee to the gospel [τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ] as to the flesh of Jesus and to the apostles as to the presbytery of the church.”

6. Ignatius *Philad.* 5:2: “And we should also love the prophets, because their proclamation anticipated the gospel [τὸ εὐαγγέλιον] and they hoped in him and awaited him.”

7. Ignatius *Philad.* 8:2: “For I heard some saying: ‘If I do not find it in the ancient records, I do not believe in the gospel [ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ].’ And when I said to them, ‘It is written,’ they replied to me, ‘That is just the question.’ But for me, Jesus Christ is the ancient records; the sacred ancient records are his cross and death, and his resurrection, and the faith that comes through him – by which things I long to be made righteous by your prayer.”

8. Ignatius *Philad.* 9:2: “But there is something distinct about the gospel [τὸ εὐαγγέλιον] – that is, the coming of the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, his suffering, and resurrection. For the beloved prophets made their proclamation looking ahead to him; but the gospel [τὸ εὐαγγέλιον] is the finished work that brings immortality.”

9. Ignatius *Smyrn.* 5:1: “They have been convinced neither by the words of the prophets nor the Law of Moses, nor, until now, by the gospel [τὸ εὐαγγέλιον] nor by the suffering each of us has experienced.”

<sup>30</sup> Εὐαγγέλιον occurs 76 times in the New Testament, just twice in an anarthrous form (Gal 1:6; Rev 14:6). In Gal 1:6, εὐαγγέλιον is anarthrous because Paul is referring to ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον, “another gospel,” which actually οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο (“is not another,” v. 7), and certainly not τὸ εὐαγγέλιον proclaimed by Paul.



10. Ignatius *Smyrn.* 7:2: “But instead pay attention to the prophets, and especially to the gospel [τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ], in which the passion is clearly shown to us and the resurrection is perfected.”

11. *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 4:1 [3]: “Because of this, brothers, we do not praise those who hand themselves over, since this is not what the gospel [τὸ εὐαγγέλιον] teaches.”

12. 2 *Clement* 8:5: “For the Lord says in the gospel [λέγω γὰρ ὁ κύριος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ], ‘If you do not keep what is small, who will give you what is great? For I say to you that the one who is faithful in very little is faithful also in much [cf. Luke 16:10].’”

Bauer-Aland categorizes all these early occurrences of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον as in a state of transition to the later Christian understanding of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον as a book whose content deals with the life and teaching of Jesus.<sup>31</sup> For Bauer-Danker (based in part on Bauer-Aland, but with considerable changes and additions made by Danker), the occurrences of εὐαγγέλιον in the *Didache*, Ignatius *Philad.* 8:2, *Smyrn.* 7:2, *Mart. Polyc.* 4:1 [3] and 2 *Clem.* 8:5 all mean “the good news of Jesus,” that is, “details relating to the life and ministry of Jesus” with the suggestion that τὸ εὐαγγέλιον perhaps has this meaning in Mark 1:1.<sup>32</sup> The entry concludes with the phrase “This usage marks a transition to” with the next subentry beginning “a book dealing with the life and teaching of Jesus.”

There are three passages in the *Didache* in which τὸ εὐαγγέλιον is linked to quotations or allusions that are arguably derived from the Gospel of Matthew: *Did.* 8:2; 15:4; 11:3. In *Did.* 8:2, the author introduces the Lord’s Prayer in a version very similar to that found in Matt 6:9–13, with the phrase ὡς ἐκέλευσεν ὁ κύριος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ (“as the Lord commanded in the gospel”). Similarly, in *Did.* 15:3–4, the phrases ὡς ἔχετε (“as you have in the gospel”) and ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν (“in the gospel of our Lord”), with surrounding allusions to the kind of material found in Matthew (cf. Matt 18:15–16). For Helmut Koester, *Did.* 8:2 is best understood as a reference to the (oral) preaching of the Lord, but he concedes that the reference can be construed as referring to the written gospel.<sup>33</sup> He also maintains that *Did.* 11:3 is based on oral tradition, while with regard to *Did.* 15:3–4 he considers 15:3 to refer to instruction drawn from a written source, though not the Gospel of Matthew,<sup>34</sup> while in evaluating 15:4 he follows W. Michaelis in arguing that a specific written gospel is not in view, even though such books existed at the time.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, Kurt Niederwimmer

<sup>31</sup> W. Bauer, *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur*, ed. Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland (6<sup>th</sup> ed.; Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988), col. 644.

<sup>32</sup> Bauer-Danker, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 403.

<sup>33</sup> H. Koester, *Synoptische Überlieferung bei den apostolischen Vätern* (Texte und Untersuchungen 65. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1957), 10, 203.

<sup>34</sup> Koester, *Synoptische Überlieferung*, 10–11.

<sup>35</sup> Koester, *Synoptische Überlieferung*, 210–11.

hesitates between whether the Didachist means the *viva vox evangelii* or a written gospel for *Did.* 8:2; 11:3,<sup>36</sup> while he thinks that *Did.* 15:3 and 15:4 may refer to a written gospel book, though it is not clear which particular one.<sup>37</sup> Robert H. Gundry argues persuasively, in my view, that in using the phrase ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ in *Did.* 8:2; 15:3–4 and 11:3, indicating that the Didachist has drawn material from a written copy of the Gospel of Matthew, he is not referring to Matthew as a written gospel, but rather to material orally preached and taught by Jesus and now by those who use Matthew as a source for the sayings of Jesus.<sup>38</sup> Irenaeus too continues this practice using the phrase ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ to refer to quotations or allusions to the Gospels; *Adv. haer.* 1.20.2 (Luke 2:49); 2.26.2 (Matt 10:24); 3.23.3 (Matt 25:41); 5.22.1 (Matt 4:7).<sup>39</sup> I would add that the phrase ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ can be used to refer to the teaching of Jesus, whether drawn from a written or oral source. It is *prima facie* likely that written Jesus traditions exerted an influence over oral Jesus traditions, much like the German folktales collected by Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm in *Deutsche Sagen* (1816–18) exerted an unexpected influence on oral folktales as German parents bought copies of the book and read the literary versions to their children rather than rely on memory as did their forbears.

Ignatius uses the articular noun τὸ εὐαγγέλιον eight times, six times in *Philadelphians* and twice in *Smyrnaeans*. For Schoedel, followed by Brown, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in Ignatius regularly refers to the good news about Jesus rather than a written document.<sup>40</sup> Particularly with regard to *Smyrn.* 5:1 and 7:2, Schoedel indicates that there is no reason to think that Ignatius is referring to a written gospel; for Ignatius τὸ εὐαγγέλιον probably consisted of a collection of traditions such as those found in *Smyrn.* 1:1–2 and 3:2–3 that represented the fulfillment of prophecy as well as confirm the reality of the birth, death and resurrection of Christ.<sup>41</sup> According to Buschmann, in *Mart. Polyc.* 4:3, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον refers, not to a written gospel, but to the report about the suffering of Jesus in so far as it provides teaching and instruction for the imitation of the Lord.<sup>42</sup>

Though τὸ εὐαγγέλιον occurs just once in *2 Clement* (written ca. 150 CE) in the phrase ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ in 8:5, the author frequently cites sayings of Jesus elsewhere in his work, several of which are not found in the canonical Gospels.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>36</sup> K. Niederwimmer, *The Didache* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 135, 173.

<sup>37</sup> Niederwimmer, *The Didache*, 203–5.

<sup>38</sup> R. H. Gundry, “ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ: How Soon a Book?” *JBL* 115 (1996), 322–23.

<sup>39</sup> Reed, *ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ*, 32, n. 59.

<sup>40</sup> W. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 201; C. T. Brown, *The Gospel and Ignatius of Antioch* (Studies in Biblical Literature 12; New York: Peter Lang, 2000), 15–21.

<sup>41</sup> Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 234, 242.

<sup>42</sup> G. Buschmann, *Das Martyrium des Polykark* (KAV; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 127.

<sup>43</sup> See the following passages: *2 Clem.* 3:2 (cf. Q 12:8); 4:2 (cf. Matt 7:21); 5 (non-canonical saying); 5:2–4 (non-canonical dialog between Jesus and Peter); 6:1 (Q 16:13a), 2 (Mark 8:36; Matt 16:26; Luke 9:25); 9:11 (cf. Mark 3:35; Matt 12:50; Luke 8:21); 12:2 (cf. *Gos. Thomas* 22).



Koester argues that in 2 *Clem* 8:5, the author quotes a saying of Jesus from a written work, probably a sayings collection that was in turn based on the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.<sup>44</sup> In an earlier study, Koester entertained the possibility that the composite saying of Jesus in 2 *Clem* 8:5 was drawn from an apocryphal gospel, but in the final analysis it is impossible to determine the origin of the two sayings.<sup>45</sup> Both Lindemann and Pratscher argue that in 2 *Clem* 8:5b (which has verbal similarities with Luke 16:10), the phrase ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ probably refers to an apocryphal gospel,<sup>46</sup> while Donfried argues that εὐαγγέλιον here means “the oral message of salvation, rather than as a designation for a written book.”<sup>47</sup>

While here I am primarily concerned with the meaning of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in the Apostolic Fathers, the opinions of various scholars just surveyed generally agree with the detailed examination of possible traces of synoptic tradition in the Apostolic Fathers in the well-known study of Helmut Koester in which he concludes that in most cases allusions to words of Jesus in the Apostolic Fathers are not based on written gospels.

The use of the term τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in the selection of texts from the Apostolic Fathers briefly surveyed above, all dating to the first half of the second century, suggests that it is a false alternative to presuppose that τὸ εὐαγγέλιον must refer either to oral traditions about Jesus or a written text about Jesus. *Τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in these texts refers to an authoritative complex of traditional teachings and activities of Jesus with an implicit indifference toward the issue of whether this complex was transmitted in oral or written form.* In the case of Irenaeus, Reed argues that his use of the term τὸ εὐαγγέλιον exhibits polysemy, i.e., an “interplay between oral and written connotations,” i.e., “the two specialized Christian meanings that had been established” by the time of Irenaeus, the oral meaning found in Paul and the written meaning established by Marcion.<sup>48</sup> In its Pauline sense, Irenaeus could regard τὸ εὐαγγέλιον as the truth proclaimed (κηρύσσειν) by the apostles and transmitted (παραδιδόναι) to the Church (*Adv. haer.* 3.1.1; 3.12.12; 3.14.1).<sup>49</sup> For Irenaeus, the notions of εὐαγγέλιον / *evangelium* and παράδοσις / *tradition* were closely related (3.5.1):

Since, therefore, the tradition [*traditione*] from the apostles does thus exist in the Church, and is permanent among us, let us revert to the Scriptural proof furnished by those apostles who did also write the Gospel [*evangelium*] in which they recorded the doctrine regarding God, pointing out that our Lord Jesus Christ is the truth, and that no lie is in Him.

<sup>44</sup> Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 18.

<sup>45</sup> Koester, *Synoptische Überlieferung*, 99–102.

<sup>46</sup> A. Lindemann, *Die Clemensbriefe* (HNT 17; AV 1; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 224; W. Pratscher, *Der zweite Clemensbrief* (KAV; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 131–32.

<sup>47</sup> K. P. Donfried, *The Setting of Second Clement in Early Christianity* (NovTSuppl 38; Leiden: Brill, 1974), 72.

<sup>48</sup> A. Y. Reed, “ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ: Orality, Textuality, and the Christian Truth in Irenaeus’ *Adversus Haereses*,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 56 (2002), 18, 19, 47.

<sup>49</sup> Reed, “ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ,” 42.

In *Adversus haereses*, Irenaeus uses εὐαγγέλιον (Latin *evangelium*) 101 times, 94 times in the singular, but just seven times in the plural (2.22.3; 3.11.7; 11.8 [2x]; 11.9 [3x]).<sup>50</sup> He can use the singular εὐαγγέλιον / *evangelium* to refer to four written texts (e.g., 3.5.1; 3.11.9; 4.34.1).<sup>51</sup> In the judgment of von Campenhausen,<sup>52</sup>

The ‘Gospel’ to which appeal is normally made (in the first two-thirds of the second century) remains an elastic concept, designating the preaching of Jesus as a whole in the form in which it lives on in church tradition. The normative significance of the Lord’s words, which is the most important point, is thus directly dependent upon the person of the Lord, and is not transferred to the documents which record them.

The texts cited from the *Didache*, the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* and 2 *Clement* all refer to the teachings of Jesus found in τὸ εὐαγγέλιον; most of the texts from Ignatius consider τὸ εὐαγγέλιον as a comprehensive entity that embodies the Christian message; Ignatius *Philad.* 9:2 and *Smyrn.* 7:2 emphasize the coming, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus narrated in τὸ εὐαγγέλιον.

Bauer-Aland defines τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in the texts reviewed above as “Auf dem Übergang zu dem späteren christlichen Sprachgebrauch, für den εὐαγγέλιον Beziehung eines Buches ist, dessen Inhalt Leben und Lehre Jesu bilden.”<sup>53</sup> While this is apparently intended to reflect the ambiguity of whether εὐαγγέλιον refers to an oral message or a written text, semantically this definition is not very useful and for that reason I have tried to define the connotations of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in a more appropriate manner. Bauer-Danker tries to solve this problem by defining τὸ εὐαγγέλιον as “details relating to the life and ministry of Jesus, *good news of Jesus*,” and only at the end of this category, as a concession to Bauer-Aland is the phrase “This marks a transition to” inserted.<sup>54</sup>

The twelve texts from the Apostolic Fathers quoted and briefly discussed above all come from the first half of the second century (with the possible exception of 2 *Clem* 8:5), the period when it is likely that the longer form of the *subscriptions* and *inscriptiones* of the Gospels were affixed to them when they began to be aggregated. The meaning of εὐαγγέλιον in the *subscriptions* and *inscriptiones* is exactly the same as the meaning of εὐαγγέλιον in the twelve texts discussed above, namely “an authoritative complex of traditional teachings and activities of Jesus with an implicit indifference toward the issue of whether this complex was transmitted in oral or written form.” This means that the use of εὐαγγέλιον in the *subscriptions* and *inscriptiones* does not have a generic meaning. It also

<sup>50</sup> Reed, “ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ,” 19.

<sup>51</sup> Reed, “ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ,” 27.

<sup>52</sup> H. von Campenhausen, *Formation of the Christian Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 129.

<sup>53</sup> Bauer-Aland, *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, col. 644.

<sup>54</sup> Bauer-Danker, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 403.

means that the *subscriptio* “The Gospel according to Thomas” is an appropriate designation for a collection of sayings of Jesus even though it has no narrative framework.

### The Gospel *Subscriptiones* and *Inscriptiones*

Between the composition of the canonical Gospels (ca. 65–110 CE) and ca. 170, two paratextual features came to characterize the four Gospels:<sup>55</sup> the Gospels were subject to gradual aggregation and *subscriptiones* or *inscriptiones* were affixed to them, though when these two related developments occurred and in what order they occurred remains uncertain.

Discounting later expansions (*subscriptiones* and *inscriptiones* were often expanded by scribes), the forms of the *subscriptiones* and *inscriptiones* at issue exhibit two basic patterns: a short form (sometimes considered earlier than the longer form), e.g., κατὰ Μαθθαῖον, κατὰ Μάρκον, κατὰ Λοῦκαν and κατὰ Ἰωάν[ν]ην, and the longer and more familiar form, e.g., εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Μαθθαῖον, εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Μάρκον, εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Λοῦκαν and εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Ἰωάν[ν]η.<sup>56</sup> The stereotypical shorter and longer forms of both the *subscriptiones* and *inscriptiones* are unusual in that they use the preposition κατὰ as a periphrasis for a *genitivus auctoris*.<sup>57</sup> The stereotypical form of the *subscriptiones* and *inscriptiones* suggests that they were added at one point in time to all four Gospels to distinguish them from one another, probably when they first began to circulate as a collection.<sup>58</sup> The aggregation of gospels could have begun gradually with a collection of two or more papyrus rolls (much as Herodotus must have circulated as a collection

<sup>55</sup> The term “paratextual” is derived from G. Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. J. E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>56</sup> Nestle-Aland<sup>27</sup> and the UBSGNT<sup>3</sup> put the short form of each of the gospel *superscriptions* in the text. While the short form was included in earlier editions of Nestle-Aland, a brief list of variants was included in Nestle-Aland<sup>26</sup>. The laconic UBSGNT mentions no variants for the *superscriptions*. B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, *Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek with Notes on Selected Readings* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1882), 321: “In length and elaboration they [i.e., titles] vary much in different documents, we have adopted the concise and extremely ancient form preserved in  $\aleph$  B and some other documents, which is apparently the foundation of the fuller titles.”

<sup>57</sup> An example of this idiom is found in 2 Macc 2:13: ἐν τοῖς ὑπομνηματισμοῖς τοῖς κατὰ τὸν Νεεμῖαν, “in the memoirs of Nehemiah.” A different meaning of κατὰ is found in the *subscriptio* of Genesis in Codex Vaticanus: ΓΕΝΕCIC ΚΑΤΑ ΤΟΥC ΕΒΔΟΜΗΚΟΝΤΑ, “Genesis according to the Septuagint.” For discussions of the use of κατὰ as a periphrasis for the possessive genitive, see Bauer-Danker, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 513; W. Köhler, “κατὰ,” *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. H. Balz and G. Schneider (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 2.254; for papyrological examples of the use of κατὰ as a periphrasis for a possessive pronoun, see J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980; originally published in 1930), 322.

<sup>58</sup> Heckel, *Vom Evangelium des Markus zum viergestaltigen Evangelium*, 208–9.

of nine papyrus rolls) or as a group of two or more single-quire codices (P<sup>52</sup>, a fragment of John dating to the first half of the second century, is the earliest physical evidence for a codex presumably containing a single gospel).<sup>59</sup> Eventually the εὐαγγέλιον τετράμορφον was placed within a single codex, of which there are as many as three early examples, two from the end of the second century (P<sup>4</sup>–P<sup>64</sup>–P<sup>67</sup> and P<sup>75</sup>) and one from the mid-third century (P<sup>45</sup>).<sup>60</sup> The textual evidence for both forms at the beginning and end of each of the canonical gospels is tabulated in Tables A and B below.

The *subscriptions* are arguably earlier than the *inscriptioes* since, when literary works were written on papyrus rolls, the titles (typically a noun followed by the author's name in the genitive) were placed at the *end* of the work (as a *subscriptio*), but when copied in a codex, they were located at the beginning of a work (as a *superscriptio* or *inscriptio*).<sup>61</sup> Both *subscriptions* and *inscriptioes* were typically added later to literary works when they were copied for distribution; the *incipit* or first sentence of the work itself normally functioned as the author's title (e.g., Mark 1:1). When a work written in a papyrus roll was transferred to a codex, the *subscriptio* could be omitted (which for conservative reasons rarely happened) or replicated in the *superscriptio*, resulting in a work with the same (or a similar) title at the beginning and end.<sup>62</sup>

The 27<sup>th</sup> edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament regards the short forms of the Gospel superscriptions, κατὰ Μαθθαῖον, κατὰ Μᾶρκον, κατὰ Λουκᾶν and κατὰ Ἰωάν[ν]ην as more original, presumably on the basis of the text-critical principle *lectio brevior potior est*, despite the paucity of evidence (they cite only the two fourth century codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus). Additional evidence

<sup>59</sup> D. E. Aune, *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987), 117–18.

<sup>60</sup> Stanton, *Jesus and Gospel*, 71–75.

<sup>61</sup> R. P. Oliver, “The First Medicean MS of Tacitus and the Titulature of Ancient Books,” *TAPA* 82 (1951), 232–61; here 243, 245, 248; E. M. Thompson, *A Handbook of Greek and Latin Palaeography* (Chicago: Ares, 1966), 58; C. Wendel, *Die griechisch-römische Buchbeschreibung verglichen mit der des vorderen Orients* (Halle-Saale: Niemeyer, 1949), 24–29.

<sup>62</sup> The manuscripts of the *Gospel of Thomas* provide a partial example. Of the three extant Greek fragments of *Thomas*, POxy 1 is a single leaf from a papyrus codex (shortly after 200 CE), while POxy 654 and POxy 655 are papyrus fragments of two different papyrus rolls (both early 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE). The complete Coptic manuscript of the *Gospel of Thomas* (middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> cent. CE) discovered at Nag Hammadi has a *subscriptio* that reads ΠΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ ΠΚΑΤΑ ΘΩΜΑC, “the Gospel according to Thomas,” with no *superscriptio*, but rather the author-editor's *incipit*, i.e., opening words functioning as a title: “These are the secret sayings which the living Jesus spoke and which Didymus Judas Thomas wrote down. And he said, ‘Whoever finds the meaning of these words will not taste death.’” The reference to Thomas in the *incipit* was replicated in the author's name in the *subscriptio*, while the term “gospel” was probably derived from the *inscriptioes* (and / or *subscriptions*) of the four canonical gospels, which must already have existed as a fourfold collection. Even though the *Gospel of Thomas* was part of a papyrus codex (preceded by the *Apocryphon of John* and followed by the *Gospel of Philip*), the practice of putting a *subscriptio* at the end and not replicating it with a *superscriptio* at the beginning is based on the conventions associated with the papyrus roll.

for the short forms is also available in the *inscriptiones* of the 9<sup>th</sup> century codices F (010) and H (013), as well as the running titles that occur before 500 CE in three codices:  $\aleph$  B D.<sup>63</sup>

Table A: Gospel *Subscriptions*

<i>Subscriptio</i>	<i>Textual Evidence</i>
κατὰ Μαθθαῖον	B
κατὰ Μάρκον	B
κατὰ Λοῦκαν	B
κατὰ Ἰωάν[ν]ην	B
εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Μαθθαῖον	A D U 2 33 565 700 788
εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Μάρκον	$\aleph$ A C E L U Γ Δ Ψ 2 33 700
εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Λοῦκαν	P <sup>75</sup> $\aleph$ A (02) C L U W Δ Π Ψ 2 33 1582
εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Ἰωάν[ν]ην	$\aleph$ A E Δ Ψ 2 33 565 1582

Table B: Gospel *Inscriptiones*

<i>Inscriptio</i>	<i>Textual Evidence</i>
κατὰ Μαθθαῖον	$\aleph$ B
κατὰ Μάρκον	$\aleph$ B F
κατὰ Λοῦκαν	$\aleph$ B
κατὰ Ἰωάν[ν]ην	$\aleph$ B F H
εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Μαθθαῖον	P <sup>4</sup> -P <sup>64</sup> -P <sup>67</sup> C E K M S U Δ Π Ω 2 33 565 700 788 1346 1424
εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Μάρκον	A E H K L M S U W Γ Δ Θ Π Ω 1 2 13 28 33 124 565 700 1364 1424
εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Λοῦκαν	A C E K L M S P U W Δ Θ Π Ψ Ω f 13 1 2 28 33 565 700 1346 1424
εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Ἰωάν[ν]ην	P <sup>66</sup> P <sup>75</sup> A C E G K L M S U W Δ Θ Ψ Ω f 13 2 28 33 124 565 1424

Recently, a number of scholars have convincingly argued for the priority of the longer forms.<sup>64</sup> There are two major arguments for this: (1) The shorter forms,

<sup>63</sup> D. C. Parker, *Codex Bezae: An Early Christian Manuscript and Its Text* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 10–22, contains a discussion of the superscriptions, subscriptions and running titles of all Greek and Latin New Testament manuscripts dating before 500 CE; see particularly Table 2: “Running Titles in Greek New Testament Manuscripts Written before 500” (17–19).

<sup>64</sup> M. Hengel argues that the shorter titles are abbreviations of the originally longer titles in *Die vier Evangelien*, 87–95. See his earlier work on this subject: *Die Evangelienüberschriften*

such as KATA MAΘΘΑΙΑΝ, make sense only if they are considered abbreviations implying the antecedent ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ in a codex containing all four Gospels.<sup>65</sup> In fact, the short forms occur *only* in codices which contain all four Gospels: Ⲛ B F H (Ⲛ and B date to the fourth century, while F [010] and H [013] date to the ninth century). There is a close analogy in Westcott and Hort's critical edition of the New Testament, in which they printed ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ on a flyleaf, followed by each of the Gospels.<sup>66</sup> These were headed by what they considered the most original form of the superscriptions: KATA MAΘΘΑΙΑΝ, KATA ΜΑΡΚΟΝ, KATA ΛΟΥΚΑΝ and KATA ΙΩΑΝΗΝ, also used as running titles accompanying the texts of the four Gospels, with this comment: "In prefixing the name ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ in the singular to the quaternion of 'Gospels,' we have wished to supply the antecedent which alone gives an adequate sense to the preposition KATA in the several titles."<sup>67</sup> Westcott and Hort were presumably following the precedent of Codex Vaticanus by using such short forms as KATA MAΘΘΑΙΑΝ as running titles (in the case of Vaticanus, with KATA on the verso and MAΘΘΑΙΑΝ on the recto). In the case of those few manuscripts which have the short form for some or all of the *inscriptioes* (Ⲛ B F H; B alone has the short form in *subscriptiones*), all have a collection of all four Gospels, suggesting that the longer forms preceded the shorter forms and that the shorter forms are intentional abbreviations of the longer forms.<sup>68</sup>

(2) Prior to the aggregation of the four Gospels, the oldest form of the titles of the Gospels was probably the longer forms written as *subscriptiones*, though such *subscriptiones* would only have been necessary when two or more Gospels written on papyrus rolls were in proximity. Only when the text of the Gospels began to be written on codices (the first extant example of which is P<sup>52</sup> a codex fragment of the Gospel of John, which can be dated to the first half of the second century CE)<sup>69</sup> would the *subscriptiones* have been replicated at the beginning in the form of *inscriptioes*.

The priority of the long forms and their connection to the εὐαγγέλιον τετράμορφον constitute two linked paratextual features that have important implications for the generic understanding of the Gospels in the ancient church.

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(SHAW, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, 4; Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1984), 11–12, translated into English as "The Titles of the Gospels and the Gospel of Mark," *Studies in the Gospel of Mark* (trans. John Bowden; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 64–84, with notes on 162–83. P. W. Comfort and D. P. Barrett, *The Complete Text of the Earliest New Testament Manuscripts* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1999), 44; S. Petersen, "Die Evangelienüberschriften und die Entstehung des neutestamentlichen Kanons," *ZNW* 97 (2006), 268.

<sup>65</sup> Hengel, *Die vier Evangelien*, 87, n. 258.

<sup>66</sup> B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek* (2 vols.; London: Macmillan, 1881).

<sup>67</sup> Westcott and Hort, *Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek*, 321.

<sup>68</sup> Petersen, "Die Evangelienüberschriften," 254.

<sup>69</sup> B. Nongbri, "The Use and Abuse of P52: Papyrological Pitfalls in the Dating of the Fourth Gospel," *HTR* 98 (2000), 23–48.