

## BAPTISM IN MARK: DYING AND RISING WITH CHRIST

ROBIN SCROGGS

THE CHICAGO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, CHICAGO, ILL. 60637

AND

KENT I. GROFF

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, WAYNESBORO, PA. 17268

THE new perspectives and methodological approaches to the Gospels which are becoming increasingly clarified in redaction criticism hold out the promise of new and better solutions to seemingly insoluble cruxes. One such crux, which has never been satisfactorily laid to rest, concerns the meaning of the story about the young man who flees the scene of arrest in Mark 14:51-52, leaving behind his linen garment. "And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body; and they seized him, but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked." Probably not many scholars have been content with proposed solutions, such as they exist; but believing the pericope unimportant they have not wasted too much time over what seems to be a simple Marcan whimsy.

The usual solution has been to accept the story as reporting an actual incident that happened to an unknown or unnamed follower of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes Mark himself has been suggested as the person involved.<sup>2</sup> The main alternative to this interpretation is the claim that the story was created to show the fulfillment of Scripture in a way not dissimilar to the use of other scriptural allusions or references in the passion narrative.<sup>3</sup> Either Amos 2:16 or Gen 39:12 is the basis for the story.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> E.g., B. Weiss, *Das Marcusevangelium* (Berlin: Hertz, 1872) 408-9; E. Gould, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (New York: Scribner, 1896) 276; A. E. J. Rawlinson, *St. Mark* (London: Methuen, 1925) 215-16; H. Branscomb, *The Gospel of Mark* (New York: Harper, 1937) 270-71; E. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Markus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959) 323-24; V. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan, 1959) 561-62; M.-J. Lagrange, *Evangile selon Saint Marc* (Paris: Gabalda, 1947) 396-97; C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1959) 438-39; P. Carrington, *According to Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1960) 321; E. Haenchen, *Der Weg Jesu* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1968) 502; E. Schweizer, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968) 182-83.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., Rawlinson, *Mark*, 215-16; Lagrange, *Marc*, 396-97.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., the use of Psalm 22 to create details in the crucifixion account.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., C. G. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels* (London: Macmillan, 1927) 1. 349-50; F. C. Grant, *Interpreter's Bible* (New York: Abingdon, 1951) 7. 886.

Neither of these solutions can be accepted today. What is described makes no sense as an actual incident. 1. Why were not others seized as well? 2. Would it be likely that on an early spring night one would have on only one article of clothing? 3. In and of itself it is a trivial scene, and the Marcan author clearly is not interested in reporting trivial scenes. 4. It is incredible that the moment signaled by the narrative itself as most important, the loss of the garment, would have been considered an important historical fact by the framers of the tradition. 5. No one today can take seriously the suggestion that the author of the Gospel was an eyewitness.

The possibility that Amos 2:16 and/or Gen 39:12 have contributed to Mark 14:51-52 cannot be denied. Even so, those passages cannot serve as sufficient explanations for the creation of the story. When Scripture is incorporated into the Marcan narrative, it usually serves to interpret an act of or about Jesus, on occasion the twelve disciples, but never an isolated instance about an unnamed person. In this interpretation, the pericope remains a trivial interruption of the Marcan narrative.

When present solutions seem inadequate, one way of dealing with the impasse is to pursue what at first may appear a fantastic alternative, but which upon close and careful study of literary context and structure may become not only possible but compelling. Such we believe is our proposed solution, based on redaction criticism, for Mark 14:51-52. Redaction criticism operates on the principle that Mark, or a pre-Markan collector, has chosen or created the material in his Gospel for reasons important to his broad theological concerns. The individual units assume their meaning, in part, from the *location* of the story within the broader structure (which might, in effect, be either Marcan or pre-Markan). Thus the critic must take seriously the likelihood that 14:51-52 belongs integrally within the structure of the passion narrative and contributes meaning to that structure.

The problem here, of course, is the apparent isolation of the event. It bears no relation to anything or anyone past, and afterwards the young man seems to disappear forever. While it is thus easy to doubt that any integral relation exists between the story and its context, we believe the doubt to be unwarranted. Mark has, in fact, left certain clues which point to the function of 14:51-52 within the structure. The most important of these clues is found in the resurrection-announcement story at the end of the Gospel (16:1-8). There again a young man appears and there also some attention is focused on his garment. The relationship which might exist between these stories has been noted by a number of scholars, but their very tentative suggestions about a solution indicate that a great deal of perplexity remains. *That* there is a relation has become clear, but what the *nature* of that relationship is still needs clarification.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> For J. Knox, 14:51-52 is "an anticipation of the empty tomb" ("A Note on Mark 14:51-52," *The Joy of Study* [ed. S. Johnson; New York: Macmillan, 1951] 29). S. Johnson thinks there is undoubtedly some connection, but is unsure just what it might be (*A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark* [London: Blackwell, 1960] 238). N. Hamilton believes the two figures are the same person, serving as a witness to tie to-

We believe a solution is possible once the baptismal theology and praxis of the early church is used as the principle of interpretation. The matter is complex because the symbolization is by nature indirect, and, on occasion, palimpsest. Nevertheless, viewing the crux from this perspective results in the discovery of a coherent and meaningful thought structure that fits well within the passion narrative and gives the narrative a significant, added dimension. The task of interpretation must begin, however, not with 14:51-52 but with 16:1-8.

### 1. *The Youth (Νεανίσκος) as a Representation of Christ*

According to most interpreters the young man who greets the women in the tomb is an angel.<sup>6</sup> This is not, of course, explicitly stated, and the angel has probably won more by default than by demonstration. For if the man is not an angel, who might he be? To support the usual interpretation appeals are sometimes made to the Marcan tendency to understatement and the use of the related word, *νεανίας*, to denote angels in other documents.<sup>7</sup> These arguments, however, do not really hold. (1) The word "angel" occurs six times in Mark. The evangelist thus does not seem to have had any embarrassment or hesitation about using the term. If he had understood the figure to be an angel, he would probably have said so. (2) Where *νεανίας* denotes an angel, the context makes it clear beyond doubt that an angelic figure is meant.<sup>8</sup> In 1 Mac 3:26-34 God presents "a great epiphany" (*ἐπιφάνεια μεγάλη*) to Heliodorus. The description signifies that this is a divine epiphany. The first figure — a terrible horseman — is obviously a supernatural portent. Thus when "two other young men" are

gether the arrest and the empty tomb ("Resurrection Tradition and the Composition of Mark," *JBL* 86 [1965] 415-21). H. Waetjen also believes the two are the same, basing his argument on the Joseph cycle of stories, where Joseph flees leaving his clothes but later is exalted ("The Ending of Mark and the Gospel's Shift in Eschatology," *Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute* 4 [Leiden: Brill, 1965] 120). The most recent attempt to relate the two pericopae is by Albert Vanhoye ("La fuite du jeune homme nu (Mc 14, 51-52)," *Bib* 52 [1971] 401-6). He believes that the youth represents "une sorte de préfiguration énigmatique du sort de Jésus" (p. 405). There is one scholar who appears to have reached the conclusions of the present authors, but the language makes his work inaccessible to us and to most western scholars. J. Klinger has seen the baptismal implications of the two passages under consideration, although he builds his argument on the Joseph typology, as does Waetjen (see "Zagubiona egzegeza dwóch wierszy zEwangelii Marka 14, 51-52," *Roczniki Teologiczne Chrześcijańskiej Akademii Teologicznej* 8 [1966] 126-49. For a summary of the article see *Internationale Zeitschriftenschau für Bibelwissenschaft und Grenzgebiete* 16 [1969-70] 111).

<sup>6</sup> So Rawlinson, *Mark*, 244; D. Nineham, *Saint Mark* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1963) 444; Johnson (*Mark*, 264) thinks it probable; Cranfield, *Mark*, 465; Lohmeyer, *Evangelium*, 354; Haenchen, *Weg*, 547; Schweizer, *Evangelium*, 215-16; and many others.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. e.g., the discussion in Taylor, *Mark*, 606. The two passages cited with *νεανίας* are 2 Mac 3:26-34 and Josephus, *Ant.* 5. §227. In Tob 5:5, 7, 10, the angel is called *νεανίσκος* because he is disguised. Only the reader is told that he is an angel; i.e., *νεανίσκος* in no way communicates to anybody that the figure is angelic.

<sup>8</sup> Waetjen has correctly emphasized this (*Annual*, 116).

manifested (*ἐφάνησαν*), there can be no doubt as to who they are. The case is equally clear in Josephus, *Ant.* 5.227. The angel is first introduced as an "apparition" (*φάντασμα*), then as an "angel of God" (so most texts), and only after that is he called *neanias*. Throughout the rest of the story he is identified simply as *angelos*. Perhaps the closest that *νεανίσκος* comes to denoting an angel without further clarification is in Herm Vis 3. In 1.6 six *νεανίσκοι* are introduced. Only in 4.1, in answer to a question by Hermas, is it revealed that they are six angels. In general, however, *neaniskos* does not seem sufficient by itself to carry the meaning of angel, and nowhere else in the NT does it do so.<sup>9</sup> Thus despite the nearly unanimous judgment of scholarship, there is absolutely nothing in the description of the one who announces the resurrection that compels the conclusion: he is an angelic being.<sup>10</sup> Mark has, in effect, been interpreted out of Matthew and Luke.

But who else might one possibly expect to see in the tomb? The most obvious answer is Jesus himself. Indeed, the only other white garments mentioned in the Gospel are those of Jesus in the transfiguration story. "And his garments became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them" (Mark 9:3). Many scholars have seen in this account an actual resurrection story, now transferred to the earthly life of Jesus.<sup>11</sup> Whatever the original meaning of the story might have been, however, the transformed Jesus can be none other than Jesus in the resurrection mode of being. The amazement of the women in the resurrection-announcement story has always been seen as their response to angelic presence. Even more proper would it be if they were facing the resurrected Christ.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> The word appears in Matt 19:20, 22; Luke 7:14; Acts 5:10; 23-18, 22; 1 John 2:13-14. It is true that *ἀνῆρ* sometimes appears without qualification to denote angelic existence, e.g., Luke 24:4.

<sup>10</sup> Those who oppose the interpretation of the *neaniskos* as an angel include K. Lake (*The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ* [New York: Putnam, 1907] 190, 251-52); Waetjen (*Annual*, 120); less certainly Hamilton (*JBL* 86 [1965] 417), and Knox (*Joy*, 29).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. the most recent discussion by T. Weeden (*Mark: Traditions in Conflict* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971] 118-21).

<sup>12</sup> The word *ἐκθαμβέω* occurs elsewhere in Mark at 14:33 and 9:15, in the latter instance to indicate the great amazement of the crowd when Jesus appears to them. Here the amazement seems out of place. Jesus has returned from the Mount of Transfiguration to see the crowd arguing among themselves. Seeing Jesus, the people are astonished and run to meet him. Nowhere else in the Gospel does this kind of movement of the crowd to Jesus happen, and here it is quite unmotivated. Why are they amazed just because they see him? And why does the story go out of its way to show the people running to greet him? It is possible that this verse is related to an apparent anomaly of the story of Transfiguration. The retransformation of Jesus back to earthly existence is never described there. In the present context, of course, the reader assumes the retransformation. If, however, this was originally a resurrection story, there would have been no retransformation, for Jesus would have remained in his resurrection mode of existence. Could 9:15 be a displaced connection between the original resurrection story and some succeeding narrative which described Jesus' appearance to the crowd? This would explain the great amazement

That the exalted Christ *could* be imagined as a youth is amply evidenced in the apocryphal acts literature. Peterson has shown how frequently words denoting youthful persons, *παῖς*, *νεανίσκος*, *νεανίας*, and *παιδίον*, are used to describe Jesus, as he suddenly and mysteriously appears to the apostles and others.<sup>13</sup> While in this literature the youth, who is usually present at baptismal events, is not often explicitly said to be Jesus, Peterson demonstrates clearly that this is how the symbolization must be understood. For example, in the Acts of John (87), Drusiana, who had been imprisoned in a tomb because she would not submit sexually to her husband, says that Jesus (*ὁ κύριος*) appeared to her in the tomb "as a youth" (*ὡς νεανίσκος*). Thus the resurrected Jesus not only could be, but actually was, described as a youth, at least in certain circles.

What most directly suggests that the *neaniskos* has something to do with the resurrected Jesus, however, is the apparently most superfluous detail in the story. The young man is seen "sitting on the right side" (*καθήμενον ἐν τοῖς δεξιοῖς* — 16: 5). As a topographical detail this is either meaningless or irrelevant. As a christological symbol, it would carry great significance, for it is the exalted Christ who is seated at the right side — in heaven before the Father. Even if the reader of the Gospel were not acquainted with the seemingly universal appropriation of Psalm 110 in early Christianity, he would have encountered the "right hand" motif twice in the previous pages of the book he was reading, at 12:36, where the psalm is explicitly quoted, and at 14:62: "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power." This is very close to what the women in ch. 16 see. "They saw a young man sitting on the right side." It is now widely held that many early Christians understood the resurrection of Jesus not in terms of appearance on earth, but rather as exaltation to heaven and enthronement there as the eschatological and cosmic ruler.<sup>14</sup> The author of the Gospel surely shares

(they see him in his resurrection nature) and their desire to greet him (they had thought him dead). P. Minear points in this direction when he says: "Their immediate reaction to Jesus' appearance in vs. 15 suggests an awareness of his divine power and compassion, as if this were in fact a resurrection appearance." See "Audience Criticism and Markan Ecclesiology," *Neues Testament und Geschichte* (eds. H. Baltensweiler and B. Reicke; Tübingen: Mohr, 1972) 85.

<sup>13</sup>E. Peterson, *Frühkirche, Judentum und Gnosis* (Rome: Herder, 1959) 191-96. Cf. Acts of John 73, 76, 87, 88; Acts of Thomas 27; Acts of Andrew and Matthew 18, 33; Acts of Paul 3:13, 28, 4:2 (the last text cited according to the *Acta Pauli*, ed. Schmidt [Glückstadt: Augustin, 1936]). The apocryphal acts are currently dated in the late second or early third century C.E.; see Hennecke-Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965), vol. 2. Obviously great caution must be used in adducing evidence from these texts for first century materials. Nevertheless, in some instances, especially those connected with baptism, they may reflect much earlier tradition. In the present instance they at least show it was possible for Christians to use these words of the resurrected Jesus without embarrassment or any feeling that they did not show adequate respect for the Son of God.

<sup>14</sup>Many scholars have suggested this. Among recent literature one might consult H. Conzelmann, *An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Harper, 1969) 67; W. Marxsen, *The Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970) 159; C. F. Evans, *Resurrection and the New Testament* (Naperville: Allenson,

this interpretation of the resurrection.<sup>15</sup> Mark 16:1-8 is in fact seriously misnamed when it is called an "empty tomb" story. It is rather a resurrection-announcement story, pointing to heavenly exaltation, not earthly manifestation, as Matthew and Luke chose to understand it.<sup>16</sup> If Mark is to portray the resurrection of Jesus, he must do it symbolically.

So far we have seen that nothing in the story compels the *neaniskos* to be interpreted as an angel. The appearance as a youth, the white garment, and the amazement of the women are equally consonant with a view which would claim that the young man is the risen Christ. His "sitting at the right" in fact much more favors the latter interpretation. *And yet the figure obviously cannot be Jesus.* He announces to the women that Jesus is not in the tomb; he knows that Jesus has risen to heaven. Thus the figure of the *neaniskos* is, at least on the surface, ambiguous. He points to, yet he is not, the resurrected Christ. How might this ambiguity be explained? Some inspection of the ritual of baptism in early Christianity may provide the answer and will also show the importance of these christological characteristics of the *neaniskos*.

## 2. Early Christian Baptismal Imagery and Practices

A. *Baptism as Dying and Rising with Christ.* Immersion into water as a participation in the death of Jesus and the emerging from it as participation, either now or guaranteed for the future, in the resurrection of Christ was apparently a widespread motif in hellenistic Christianity. The fullest early explanation is found in Romans 6, and many scholars have taken Paul's approach to the ideas to indicate that he knew he could count on the Romans' familiarity with them.<sup>17</sup> Certainly the post-Pauline literature knows the motif, and in a slightly different form from Paul himself (e.g., Col 2:11-12; Eph 2:5-6; and perhaps by implication 1 Pet 3:18-22). In the synoptic tradition the motif appears only once, but that, significantly enough, is in Mark (10:38-39). In reply to the sons of Zebedee, Jesus asks if they are able to drink the cup which Jesus is to drink

1970) 135-41; R. H. Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives* (New York: Macmillan, 1971) 18-19, 56-57; U. Wilckens, "The Tradition-History of the Resurrection of Jesus," *The Significance of the Message of the Resurrection for Faith in Jesus Christ* (ed. C. F. D. Moule; Naperville: Allenson, 1968) 68-69.

<sup>15</sup> So Schreiber can write, "Für das markinische Verständnis von Mk 16,6f ist zu beachten, dass Auferstehung und Erhöhung ursprünglich ein und dasselbe sind" ("Die Christologie des Markusevangelium," *ZTK* 58 [1961] 178 n. 1).

<sup>16</sup> The resurrection-appearance stories in the other gospels have misled us too long in our views of the beliefs of earliest Christianity. The story in Mark 16:1-8 is entirely consonant with the understanding of Jesus as exalted to heaven and in no way needs to be considered secondary to the appearance stories — or the resurrection faith in early Christianity. Mark 16 and Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 are at one with each other. Bickerman's article still has much to say to us ("Das leere Grab," *ZNW* 23 [1924] 281-92). See especially the comments of Weeden (*Mark*, 103-11).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. the discussion in R. Tannenhill, *Dying and Rising with Christ* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1967) 12-13.

and to be baptized with that baptism which Jesus is to undergo. The context makes it clear that Jesus' suffering and death is *his* cup and baptism in which the disciples are to participate. Although the cup is a recognized OT symbol of suffering, there is no pre-Christian evidence to suggest that this was also the case with baptism. Thus there can scarcely be doubt that Mark 10:38-39 makes oblique reference to the sacraments and that, furthermore, the baptism is seen as a dying in relation to the dying of Christ. It can hardly be accidental that Matthew, while he retains the symbol of the cup, omits that of baptism in his version of the story.<sup>18</sup> In our judgment Mark 10:38-39 proves the author's acquaintance with this interpretation of Christian initiation.

B. *Baptism as a Change of Garments.* Christian baptismal practice in the early centuries normally involved the actual stripping off of the clothes of the candidate before immersion and the robing in a white garment after he had emerged from the water. Evidence for this has recently been presented by Jonathan Smith, and the reader is directed to his excellent article for full substantiation.<sup>19</sup> Daniélou writes: "Baptism by immersion obviously involved stripping off the tunic and dressing again afterwards. It seems, however, that in the Jewish Christian period this simple action was given a ritual significance, in particular through the symbolization of re-clothing with a white tunic after Baptism."<sup>20</sup> Evidence from the later patristic times is fulsome, and an example from Jerome should suffice. "And when ready for the garment of Christ, we have taken off the tunics of skin, then we shall be clothed with a garment of linen which has nothing of death in it, but is wholly white, so that, rising from baptism, we may gird our loins in truth and the entire shame of our past sins may be covered."<sup>21</sup>

The question for us concerns how early this practice can be dated. Can it reasonably be expected that in Mark's church the change of garment was part of the baptismal praxis? To this question two things must be said: (1) The earliest texts which explicitly describe the removal of the clothes are probably no earlier than the latter half of the second century. But these texts all seem to assume the praxis as known and accepted by the church. There is no feeling that the act is novel or controversial. (2) While those texts may seem too late to be of use for our purposes, it needs to be added that there are almost no earlier texts of any

<sup>18</sup> Matthew seems to be opposed to this interpretation of baptism, perhaps as reflecting too much a pagan influence. While there are differences between Matt 20:20-28 and the Marcan version, there seems to be no substantial evidence that Matthew was following a tradition other than Mark.

<sup>19</sup> J. Smith, "The Garments of Shame," *History of Religions* 5 (1966) 217-38. Cf. also H. Leclercq, "Nudité baptismale," *DACL* 12. 1801-05; G. W. H. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit* (London: SPCK, 1967) 111-12; A. Hamman, *Baptism: Ancient Liturgies and Patristic Texts* (Staten Island: Alba, 1967) 9-10.

<sup>20</sup> J. Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1964) 326.

<sup>21</sup> Cited from J. Smith, *History of Religions*, 5. 232-33. The source is the *Epistle to Fabiola* 19.

sort which describe baptismal praxis.<sup>22</sup> The two documents which might be expected to mention disrobing but do not are the Didache and the First Apology of Justin. Those that do mention the removal of clothes are the Gospel of Philip, Gospel of Thomas, Acts of Thomas, Hippolytus, Acts of Xanthippe, and the Didascalia Apostolorum.<sup>23</sup> Daniélou and Lampe would add to this list the Odes of Solomon, and Daniélou and de Jonge what they consider to be a Christian interpolation in the Testament of Levi.<sup>24</sup> To the evidence of these texts should be added that from archaeology — paintings and reliefs of baptism, which always show the initiate as nude.<sup>25</sup> The conclusion to be drawn first is that we just have no way of demonstrating that the praxis was in effect in the first century; but, secondly, the widespread and non-controversial character of the references, plus the very common sense of the matter, suggest that one should hold as completely open the possibility that the practice dates back to the early decades of the church's existence.<sup>26</sup> It would seem that similar rites were practiced in some of the hellenistic cults of this period, and Smith argues that in Jewish proselyte baptism the candidate was nude.<sup>27</sup>

Whatever might be the case with the actual practice of a change of garments in the initiation of baptism, the use of the *metaphor* of dressing and undressing in association with baptism *is* primitive. The earliest allusion may be Gal 3:27.

<sup>22</sup> Convenient collections of texts relating to baptism are found in Hamman, *Baptism*, and E. Whitaker, *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy* (London: SPCK, 1960).

<sup>23</sup> Gos Phil 123. 21-25; Gos Thom 37; Acts of Thomas 121, 133, 157; Hippolytus, *Apostolic Tradition* 21.3, 20; Acts of Xanthippe 21; *Didascalia Apostolorum* 16. One might also add the *Testamentum Domini nostri* 2.8 and, according to A. Maclean, also the Egyptian Church Order 46 (see J. Cooper and A. Maclean, *The Testament of Our Lord* [Edinburgh: Clark, 1902] 214). Tertullian may imply the practice when he speaks of the flesh being washed in baptism, *De res. carnis* 8. He certainly assumes a baptism of immersion, *De corona* 3.

<sup>24</sup> See Daniélou, *Theology*, 326 and Lampe, *Seal*, 111-13 for the Odes (11:9-10; 15:8; 21:2), and Daniélou, *Theology*, 324-26, and M. de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1953) 44-45 for Test Levi 8:4-5.

<sup>25</sup> See the evidence collected by L. de Bruyne, "L'imposition des mains dans l'art chrétien ancien," *Rivista di archeologia cristiana* 19 (1942) 212-47.

<sup>26</sup> C. F. D. Moule (*Worship in the New Testament Church* [Richmond: John Knox, 1961] 52) believes it likely that this practice did exist in NT times.

<sup>27</sup> For hellenistic rites, see J. Leipoldt, *Die urchristliche Taufe im Lichte der Religionsgeschichte* (Leipzig: Dörffling & Franke, 1928) 38-56; for Jewish baptism, see J. Smith, *History of Religions*, 5. 219-20.

J. Smith emphasizes (in a private communication) that the evidence suggests that Syria is the main geographical area where such practices were known, and Daniélou claims that the practice is Jewish-Christian (*Theology*, 326). If the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus really does reflect Roman church praxis, however, it is not so certain that the geographical provenance can be limited to the East. On this issue it should be noted that the Roman origin of Mark has been seriously called into question in recent years. Syria/Galilee may be a more likely place for the *Sitz-im-Leben* of the Gospel. See e.g., W. Marxsen, *Der Evangelist Markus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), esp. p. 41; J. Schreiber, *ZTK* 58 (1961) 183 n. 2; and the discussion in Feine, Behm, Kümmel, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1964), 55.



"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on (*ἐνεδύσασθε*) Christ." While *ἐνδύω* can mean activities other than dressing, that is one primary meaning and makes the most sense in the context of the passage. In another baptismal allusion, the author of Colossians writes: "Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off (*ἀπεκδυσάμενοι*) the old man with its practices and have put on (*ἐνδυσάμενοι*) the new."<sup>28</sup> For our purposes the most important passage is Col 2:11-13. "In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off (*ἀπεκδύσει*) the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ: and you were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith. . . ." Here the metaphor of undressing is placed in explicit relation to the motif of dying and rising with Christ, and both are used to interpret the meaning of baptism.<sup>29</sup>

The question then arises: Which comes first, the act or the metaphor? The fact that the act of undressing is a practical necessity in any baptism by immersion, coupled with the rather unusual, if not awkward nature of the metaphor (there are surely easier linguistic ways of talking about new existence), suggests that the metaphor is probably derived from the praxis. Should that be so, the early metaphorical use is *prima facie* evidence for the early existence of the act of disrobing. Thus, despite the absence of explicit evidence, it must be considered possible, indeed probable, that the author of Mark was well aware of the change of garments both as actual event and as metaphor of baptism.

*C. Relation of the Baptized to the Resurrected Christ.* To be raised with Christ and to put on Christ: both of these images claim that the believer has come into some relation with the exalted Lord. Various segments of early Christianity understood that claim in different ways, some ontologically, some ethically, some in a present tense, some in future only. But that this claim presupposed that ultimately at least the existence-nature of the believer and the exalted Christ would be similar is basic to all its forms. "But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body . . ." (Phil 3:20-21). "Beloved, we are God's children now. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2).<sup>30</sup> At least proleptically, in so far as one has put on Christ or risen with him, he already reflects the nature of Christ (2 Cor 3:18). Thus the baptismal affirmations not only speak of the new existence of the believer; they also suggest that that new existence is a Christ-existence.

<sup>28</sup> In "Paul and the Eschatological Woman" (*JAAR* 40 [1972] 291-92), Scroggs suggests that in the three places in the NT where pair groupings of opposite categories of people occur (Gal 3:27-28; 1 Cor 12:13; Col 2:9-11), early baptismal liturgy is reflected.

<sup>29</sup> Early Christians used the metaphor of dressing in non-baptismal contexts as well, but it is possible that some of these passages were influenced by the original baptismal metaphor; so perhaps Eph 4:22-24.

<sup>30</sup> For the Pauline understanding, see Scroggs, *The Last Adam* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967) 92-112. For a late text, cf. 2 Pet 1:4.

Such ideas were not unique to Christianity. It is widely believed that mystery cults of the contemporary world also viewed their initiations as entrees into the divine world. A particularly clear example, which draws together a number of the motifs we have been discussing, is the initiation into the Isis cult as depicted by Apuleius in the *Golden Ass*. Several days prior to the actual initiation, Lucius is purified by a ritual bath (XI.23).<sup>31</sup> When the night arrives for the final ceremony, he is clothed in a new linen robe (XI.23). In the initiation he descends to the gates of Proserpine and views the subterranean world. When morning comes, he is dressed in an elaborate garment of linen and placed on a pedestal before the statue of Isis herself. "In my right hand I carried a lighted torch, and a garland of flowers was upon my head, with white palm leaves sprouting out on every side like rays; thus I was adorned like unto the sun, and made in fashion of an image, when the curtains were drawn aside and all the people compassed about to behold me."<sup>32</sup> Commenting on this moment, Willoughby writes: "This was essentially a rite of deification, and Lucius with his Olympian stole, his lighted torch, and his rayed crown was viewed as a personification of the sun-god. . . . Hitherto he had been treated as a human being. Now he was regarded as divine."<sup>33</sup> Lucius has been bathed ritually, dressed in the garments of initiation, both exalted himself and at the same time a representation of the god.<sup>34</sup>

### 3. *The Neaniskos as a Symbol of the Christian Initiate*

With the above ideas in mind, a new interpretation of the *neaniskos* in both 14:51-52 and 16:5 is possible. Our thesis is that, when seen against the backdrop of Christian baptismal practices, the appearance of the young man in both instances can best be explained as a symbolic pointer to the Christian initiate. The nakedness and flight in 14:51-52 symbolize dying with Christ; the reappearance of the young man in a new garment in 16:5 symbolizes rising with Christ.

<sup>31</sup> J. Smith (in private communication) has called our attention to a passage in Plotinus, which may be speaking about Isiac lustration rites. "Just as for those who go up to the celebrations of sacred rites there are purifications, and strippings off of the clothes they wore before, and going up naked. . ." (*Ennead* 1.6.7 [LCL]).

<sup>32</sup> 11.24 (LCL).

<sup>33</sup> H. Willoughby, *Pagan Regeneration* (Chicago: Chicago University, 1929) 191-92. For an opposing view, see M. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* (2d ed.; Munich: Beck, 1961) 2. 690.

<sup>34</sup> J. Smith (in private communication) suggests that the transformation of Lucius in the *Golden Ass* may be a "parody" of the initiation-deification scene. Lucius the ass (man blinded by the world?) is restored to humanity, is given a garment by the priest to cover his nakedness, and is acclaimed by the crowd in the procession as being blessed by the fortune of the goddess (11.13-15). Another possible relation of Isiac to Christian initiation might be hinted at by some words Apuleius uses to describe the Isiac initiation: "Ipsamque traditionem ad instar voluntariae mortis et precariae salutis celebrari" (11.21). Does this imply that the initiation was viewed in terms of death and rebirth? This is possible; but again Nilsson repudiates the suggestion (*Geschichte*, 2. 636).

A. *Mark 14:51-52*. Virtually all the details in the two sentences of this miniature can coherently be interpreted within the framework of baptism.

1. The youth is said to be following Jesus. While *συνακολουθέω* occurs only once in Mark outside of this passage, the simple *ἀκολουθέω* is clearly a key concept in the Gospel, used primarily to denote discipleship, even when the “following” is superficially a physical act.<sup>35</sup> In 14:51 the notice that the young man is following Jesus, if it has only a literal meaning, is unnecessary, even meaningless. If he is there to be arrested, he has obviously followed Jesus from Jerusalem. But when taken in its usual symbolic sense in Mark, it stresses that the youth is explicitly a disciple of Jesus. He is the initiate.

2. The reference to the garment, *περιβεβλημένος σινδόνα*, and its fate is the central moment of the story. *Περιβεβλημένος* is the same word and form that reappears in 16:5, also in reference to the garment of the young man. Corresponding to the change of garments in baptism, however, the garments are different in the two stories. As we will see, the white stole in 16:5 is the traditional Christian initiation garment worn after immersion. In 14:51 the garment is simply noted by the word *σινδών*, literally “linen.”<sup>36</sup> Scholars who interpret this account as a historical reminiscence have occasionally concluded that the young man was wealthy because of the expensiveness of linen in the ancient world.<sup>37</sup> But again it must be stressed that the synoptic tradition is not interested in such historical details. The meaning must rather be symbolic. The initiation garment of the Christians was at least sometimes made from linen, but the garment in vss. 51-52 symbolizes what the initiate takes off, not the robe he will later put on. Possibly a relationship exists with the story which contains the only other occurrence of *σινδών* in Mark—the account of the burial of Jesus (15:46). Joseph buys linen and wraps Jesus in it before placing him in the tomb. Thus the structure of the passion narrative reveals a contrast between the young man who is stripped of the linen and Jesus who is wrapped in it.<sup>38</sup> Within the baptismal theology the meaning of this relationship is clear. The death facing the young man is taken up by Jesus himself. Jesus dies for him, i.e., in his stead, and the young man is thus rescued—he escapes—from his own death.

3. From the perspective we are suggesting, the emphasis upon the nakedness of the *neaniskos* has an obvious meaning. As the candidate in baptism was stripped of his garments, so here as well.

4. The flight of the young man in the general context is related to the flight of the disciples. But specifically it probably also carries a reference, just as does

<sup>35</sup> E.g., Mark 8:34; 9:38; 10:32.

<sup>36</sup> Lohmeyer is probably right in viewing *ἐπὶ γυμνοῦ* which follows *σινδόνα* in vs. 51 as a scribal corruption (*Evangelium*, 323).

<sup>37</sup> Lohmeyer, *Evangelium*, 323-24.

<sup>38</sup> Seen by Knox, *Joy*, 29, and A. Farrer, *A Study in St. Mark* (London: Oxford University, 1951) 141.

the linen, to the fact that only Jesus can really die that death. What is impossible for man, Jesus does for him. As a result the believer escapes the fate of death. This paradox of dying and rising with Christ is described elsewhere in the NT, especially in Romans 6. The believer dies, symbolically, with Christ, and precisely because he "dies," he is freed from his own real, eternal death. So with the *neaniskos* in Mark. Only Christ really dies so that the believer may escape and be freed from death.

5. The word *neaniskos* is just possibly a quasi-technical term denoting the class of initiates, although the evidence is extremely tenuous. In 1 John 2:12-14 three groups of people are addressed—children, fathers, and *neaniskoi*. This tripartite address is repeated, giving the section a formal, almost liturgical, ring, and it may be that specific classes of people within the Christian community are being distinguished from one another.<sup>39</sup> That the *neaniskoi* might be recent initiates is supported by the fact that in each address the characteristic assigned the young men is their victory over evil or, more likely, Satan. Since one of the key moments in baptism was the exorcism of the devil and his subordinates,<sup>40</sup> the passage in John might be calling to mind that dimension of the initiation rite.<sup>41</sup>

*Summary.* At the last moment that is possible within the structure of the passion narrative, Mark portrays the near arrest and escape of the follower. Through this means he points to the participation of the believer in the death of Jesus. The coherence of the story is strained to the limit because of the presence of the many symbols needed to communicate the significance of the story to his readers. 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.

B. *Mark 16:1-8.* Only in 16:5 does the word *neaniskos* appear again in Mark. As we have seen, this in itself has led some interpreters rightly to suspect that the two stories have some relationship to each other. But the parallelism involves more than just the repetition of the word *neaniskos*. There is similarity also in that pointed attention is given to the clothing of the figures, and in both instances περιβεβλημένος is used: Mark 14:51, νεανίσκος . . . περιβεβλημένος

<sup>39</sup> Perhaps it is more accurate to say, with several commentators, that only two classes are meant, since "children" is a term used elsewhere in the Epistle to denote the entire Christian community. Cf. e.g., R. Bultmann, *Die drei Johannesbriefe* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969) 36-37.

<sup>40</sup> On this, see H. Kirsten, *Die Taufabsage* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1960).

<sup>41</sup> Waetjen appeals also to the *neaniskoi* who appear in Acts 4 (*Annual*, 129, n. 26). At this point it is perhaps instructive to note how closely Mark ties together the baptism of Jesus with his encounter with Satan in ch. 1. Is the baptism of Jesus a prototype of that of the believer?

σινδόνα; Mark 16:5, νεανίσκον . . . περιβεβλημένον στολήν λευκὴν. The close parallelism of language strongly suggests the reader is intended to relate the two stories to each other. We have further suggested that the young man in ch. 16 is in some way a representation of the risen and exalted Christ. We can now show how these various threads are to be woven together. The *neaniskos* is a representation of the exalted Christ *because he symbolizes the believer who, now baptized, participates in the resurrection of Christ.*

Both the garment and the sitting at the right apply equally as well to the newly baptized as to the exalted Christ. The white robe in which the young man is clothed is the traditional garment put on the person just emerging from the baptismal waters.<sup>42</sup> It symbolizes the new existence of the believer, in effect, his resurrection. The phrase describing the garment in 16:5 is, in fact, precisely the expression used by the author of Revelation to depict the faithful who have already reached the heavenly rest. They too are "clothed in white garments" (περιβεβλημένους στολὰς λευκάς).<sup>43</sup> In Herm Sim VIII. 2, 3 all those entering the tower (i.e., heaven) are wearing garments white as snow.<sup>44</sup> That the appearance of angels is sometimes described similarly to that of resurrected men is no anomaly, for man in heaven has in effect become an angel.<sup>45</sup>

Explicit description of the baptized already sitting in heaven with Christ is found in both Colossians and Ephesians. "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col 3:1-3). "But God . . . made us alive together with Christ . . . and raised us up with him and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph 2:4-6). Here is a commentary on Mark 16:5! Romans 6 suggests that these ideas emerged very early in the life of the church; Paul certainly knew them and just as certainly criticized them.<sup>46</sup>

Occasionally the suggestion has been made that Mark 16:1-8 is, or was originally, a cult and/or etiological legend, a proposal most recently defended in de-

<sup>42</sup>The evidence is late, but consistent. Cf. A. Hamman, *Baptism*, 9-10; J. Smith, *History of Religions*, 5. 224-25. For evidence from Theodore of Mopsuestia, Jerome, and John the Deacon, see pp. 227, 232, and 235 of the article just cited; for Zeno of Verona, see Hamman, *Baptism*, 66.

<sup>43</sup>Rev 7:9, 13; cf. also 3:4-5, 18, and 6:11 where the same idea occurs. R. H. Charles comments here: "These garments are the spiritual bodies in which the faithful are to be clothed in the resurrection life" (*The Revelation of St. John* [New York: Scribner's, 1920], 1. 82). One should consult the impressive amount of evidence Charles collects here to document the pervasiveness of the motif in early Christianity.

<sup>44</sup>This motif has its roots in Jewish apocalyptic, e.g., 2 Enoch 22:8-10.

<sup>45</sup>Cf. 2 Enoch 22:8-10; 2 Apoc Bar 51:10; and Mark 12:25. Also the discussion in R. Scroggs, *Adam*, 28.

<sup>46</sup>So R. Tannehill, *Dying*, 11-14. Not only Romans 6 but also 1 Cor 4:8-9 is instructive at this point.

tail by Lutger Schenke.<sup>47</sup> His conclusion is that the original cultic legend is found in vss. 2 (originally including the names of the women), 5, 6, and 8a. He conjectures that the Jerusalem *Urgemeinde* regularly held a service at a tomb accepted by them as that in which Jesus had actually been buried. The reference to the early hour at the rising of the sun in vs. 2 then indicates the time of day this service was held. Nothing in the legend proves how often the ceremony was observed, but Schenke speculates that it may have been only once a year, at the anniversary of the resurrection of Jesus.<sup>48</sup>

It is not in place here to investigate the plausibility of these intriguing suggestions. If, however, the basic story should have a cultic *Sitz-im-Leben*, our contentions would receive additional support.<sup>49</sup> Peterson has shown that the apocryphal acts literature implies that baptism took place at night or early dawn.<sup>50</sup> 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.<sup>51</sup> 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.<sup>52</sup> Our argument would in turn serve to strengthen the plausibility of the cultic *Sitz-im-Leben* of the resurrection-announcement story. The one moment in the legend which is basically unassimilable to a cultic ceremony is the young man, as long as he is held to be an angel. For if the story really reflects a cultic act, the words of the *neaniskos* must be said by some person. In our view, that person would be the newly baptized initiate.<sup>53</sup>

*Summary.* The cumulative evidence presented satisfactorily and coherently explains the details in both stories that have so long baffled scholars. In a cryptic yet clear fashion (to the readers of Mark who would have been familiar with such practices), the dying and rising of the believer is woven into a narrative which is ostensibly only about the dying and rising of Jesus. The initiate is

<sup>47</sup> L. Schenke, *Auferstehungsverkündigung und leeres Grab* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1968). See also G. Schille, "Das Leiden des Herrn," *ZTK* 52 (1955) 199; and W. Nauck, "Die Bedeutung des leeren Grabes für den Glauben an den Auferstandenen," *ZNW* 47 (1956) 261-63.

<sup>48</sup> Nauck thinks it was probably weekly (*ZNW* 47. 261-63).

<sup>49</sup> Schenke, however, assumes the *neaniskos* is an angel.

<sup>50</sup> Peterson, *Frühkirche*, 201.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. A. Hamman, *Baptism*, 9-10. This view is found in Tertullian, *De baptismo* 19; Hippolytus, *Apostolic Tradition* 21. 1; Basil of Cappadocia, *Protreptic on Holy Baptism* 1. For these texts, see Hamman, *Baptism*. According to Maclean the Egyptian Church Order 46 also contains the idea of a dawn baptism (*Testament*, 214). The *Testamentum Domini nostri* knows either a late night or early morning baptism (2. 8).

<sup>52</sup> The same sequence occurs in the Isis initiation, according to Apuleius.

<sup>53</sup> Another very curious connection seems to exist between Mark 16:1-8 and one particular motif in the Acts baptismal scenes. The exalted Lord appearing as the light is consistently said to be moving ahead or leading the people involved. In Acts of Thomas the

stripped of his garments at the death of Jesus, and he appears clothed in his white baptismal robe at the resurrection of Jesus. Thus robed he appropriately represents Jesus to the women. Jesus himself cannot appear, for he is already exalted to heaven and is already sitting at the right hand of God.<sup>54</sup>

#### 4. *Baptism and the Theological Concerns of Mark*

Our proposal still has a final and, from the standpoint of redaction criticism, crucial question to answer: Is this interpretation of the young man as the Christian initiate consonant with Mark's broad christological and anthropological perspectives? It might seem that an anthropology based on the dying and rising in baptism would hardly fit with the dominant and dark emphases of the Gospel. Mark calls his reader to a discipleship based on the suffering Son of Man as a model, rather than that of the spirit-filled divine man, powerful because already resurrected and in touch with super-human powers.<sup>55</sup> Mark does not seem to offer the church much hope of divine aid before the eschaton. Nothing is said about an exalted Christ who is to assist the believer in the world. Only once is the Spirit said to aid the believer, and that at a moment of extreme danger (Mark 13:11).

The symbolization of dying and rising is not, however, incompatible *in and of itself* with Marcan theological interests. In the first place, the present time for Mark is not entirely a time of privation as some scholars would have it.<sup>56</sup> Satan

words are προηγέομαι (ch. 118), προλαμβάνω and προτρέχειν (Τελείωσις θῶμα ch. 2), προάγω in the Heidelberg MS of Acts of Paul 3:29 and in Acts of Xanthippe, (cf. Peterson, *Frühkirche*, 193), and (in a slightly different context) χειραγωγέω in Acts of Thomas 154. In Mark 16:7 the word is also προάγω in the indication that Jesus is going before the disciples to Galilee. In the light of the connection of 16:7 with 14:28 and the great amount of discussion that these verses have generated, it might be extremely precarious to introduce a new consideration into the debate. Nevertheless it is intriguing to ponder the possibility that the going-before of the resurrected Christ might have something to do with the baptismal imagery and theology. As Christ is the leading light pointing the way for the initiate, is he in Mark 16 more broadly seen as a light pointing the way for the whole church? And could the seeing in Galilee then possibly have something to do with the eucharist as that event to which the believer is invited by virtue of his baptism (cf. Mark 14:25)?

<sup>54</sup> We have already seen how Matthew omits the references to baptism in the question of James and John to Jesus. Consistent with this omission is the omission of all of Mark 14:51-52 and the deliberate change of the young man in Mark 16 to an "angel of the Lord." It would seem that the author has deliberately set himself against any hint of the dying and rising motif in baptism.

<sup>55</sup> This is now seemingly universally accepted. For an excellent statement, see E. Schweizer, *Evangelium*, 101-2.

<sup>56</sup> Weeden takes an extreme point of view in his book (*Mark*, esp. pp. 52-69). Schenke adopts a more moderate position in a recent pamphlet (*Herrlichkeit und Kreuz* [Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1969]). His view is that Mark accepts in his *christology* both the suffering Son of Man and divine man models, but he rejects the divine man model in his *anthropology* (cf. esp. pp. 43-44). Even this does not take seriously enough the power invested in Jesus and the disciples.

has been overthrown; the church has been called into existence as the true people of God; the disciples can, at least on occasion, perform cures and exorcisms.<sup>57</sup> Jesus does not only suffer; he is as well the august and powerful Son of Man who rises victoriously from his death.<sup>58</sup> In the second place, the dying and rising motif does not have to be connected with a divine man anthropology. Paul is able to use the idea with appropriate safeguards, and nothing in Colossians or Ephesians suggests a run-away appropriation of power-filled and self-centered existence. In these writings the motif serves to lend assurance that *God's act* will not fail. It is directed toward the future in hope and confidence, not the present in boasting and pride. Just so, the motif in Mark does not focus attention on the believer; rather it points to Jesus as the one who acts on behalf of the believer. It is *Jesus* who dies and rises. Baptism assures the follower that he is one of the elect, but until the elect are gathered in the last day (Mark 13:27), they must face all the dangers "prophesied" in ch. 13.

Whether Mark himself inserted these materials into the passion narrative or whether he found them already present is a question which does not appear to have a satisfactory answer in this stage of the investigation.<sup>59</sup> Suffice it to say that the discovery of the baptismal imagery in the passion account reveals an anthropological dimension to the passion story which up to now has seemingly been nearly absent. Elsewhere Mark has demonstrated strong anthropological interests. In the central section, 8:27-10:45, he develops an anthropology based on the suffering Son of Man as model for discipleship. The disciple must accept suffering just as obediently as does the Son of Man. Now we can see that Mark points the believer to the other side of that suffering, without in any way denying the necessity and reality of it. Just as the Son of Man has a future beyond death, so too the believer; but this future for the believer is inextricably tied up with the future of Jesus. Thus awareness of the baptismal symbolization in Mark leads us to an even deeper appreciation of the fruitful dialectic between christology and anthropology that so characterizes his work.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. R. Scroggs' unpublished paper circulated in the Marcan Task Force of the SBL at the annual meeting in 1970: "Mark: Theologian of the Incarnation."

<sup>58</sup> It is often forgotten that each passion prediction contains an announcement of the resurrection. Furthermore, the verb "to rise" is not in the passive voice, as is usual in kerygmatic statements. Thus the prediction is not that God will raise Jesus, but that Jesus will rise (by his own divine power?).

<sup>59</sup> The question as to whether there was ever a pre-Markan passion narrative has recently been raised in some quarters (notably by J. Schreiber, *Die Markuspassion* [Hamburg: Furche-Verlag, 1969], and E. Linnemann, *Studien zur Passionsgeschichte* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970]). For a review of the issues and arguments, see W. Kelber, A. Kolenkow, and R. Scroggs, "Reflections on the Question: Was There a Pre-Markan Passion Narrative?" *The Society of Biblical Literature One Hundred Seventh Annual Meeting: Seminar Papers* (1971) 2: 503-85. It is reasonably clear that Mark 16:1-8 (or parts thereof) had at some point an existence independent of the passion account. Schenke has argued convincingly that this story was not originally connected with the burial narrative in 15:42-47 (*Auferstehungsverkündigung*, 11-30). Nothing, however, militates against the possibility that it was so joined before Mark. Mark 14:51-52, however, could not have had



## ADDENDUM

After this paper was completed and in the hands of the editor, Morton Smith's *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1973) appeared. Smith publishes here for the first time a fragment of a letter purporting to be written by Clement of Alexandria. The letter attacks a falsification of the Gospel of Mark by the Carpocratians, in the process revealing that there was actually a secret and expanded form of Mark accepted by the mainstream church at Alexandria (we assume that that is the church the author is representing). The writer quotes one of the added passages in the "orthodox" expansion, which stood after 10:34 of canonical Mark. In this passage there are really two stories. The first describes Jesus bringing back to life a *neaniskos* (the word occurs four times in the passage) who has already been laid in a tomb. The youth loves Jesus and brings him home with him. Then follows the second story. "And after six days Jesus told him what to do and in the evening the youth comes to him, wearing a linen cloth over his naked body. And he remained with him that night, for Jesus taught him the mystery of the kingdom of God. And thence, arising, he returned to the other side of the Jordan" (Smith's translation, p. 447).

Here, obviously, is the youth of 14:51-52, clothed in the same garment and being with Jesus at the same time of day. But we learn further that the youth is there so that he might learn the "mystery of the kingdom of God." Smith argues strongly that this is an initiation ceremony, specifically a baptism, the garment being the initiation clothing (pp. 175-78) and the night time the baptismal vigil (p. 175). In the course of his discussion he supports many of the contentions presented in this paper, such as baptismal nudity (he thinks Paul's language shows that his church practices nude baptism, p. 176), the importance of the baptismal garment (pp. 176-77), and the relationship of 14:51-52 to the youth in 16:5 (pp. 109, 177), although he does not draw the conclusion we do. Perhaps the most problematic issue is that the letter says only that Jesus *taught* the youth the mystery. Smith has, thus, to suggest that the original story read, "Jesus gave him the mystery," an original *ἔδωκεν* being later altered into *ἐδίδασκε* (p. 183). On the other hand, Smith is very suggestive in maintaining that all of Mark 10:13-45 can be seen as baptismal catechesis (pp. 169-74); this is a possibility that needs further exploration.

He surely must be correct in concluding that the passage in the longer gospel points to some event which has ritual implications, and the obvious relation with 14:51-52 then means *at least* that the framers of the added story understood 14:

an independent existence, if our interpretation of its meaning is correct. It would have been created by someone who knew the resurrection-announcement story in its relation to the passion account. That is, 14:51-52 presupposes the resurrection-announcement story already placed in the context of the passion narrative. If prior to Mark there was no such narrative, then obviously Mark is responsible for 14:51-52. If the passion account in some form is pre-Marcian, as we still think most likely, then 14:51-52 might well have been inserted by a pre-Marcian scribe.

51-52 as also alluding to a ritual event. It is, further, hard to doubt that this event is, or is related to, baptism. Thus it would seem that the creator(s) of the orthodox expansion interpreted 14:51-52 as alluding to the baptismal event, as we have claimed it actually does.

To go further than this involves judgments about the date of emergence of the secret gospel, the date of the story itself, and what the story might tell us about the early church. Smith is not afraid to draw the most radical conclusions: the secret gospel antedates Matthew (pp. 102, 107, 145), the story itself is very primitive (pp. 192-94), and it reports what, in fact, Jesus, at least on some occasions, actually did (pp. 213, 236-37). Dust from the controversy sure to be created by these and other judgments in the book will not settle for years. All we need say here is that the secret gospel probably is no later than the second century. The baptismal interpretation of 14:51-52 is thus "orthodox" and fairly early.

Our interpretation of 14:51-52 in relation to 16:5 might conceivably offer Smith a way out of what seem to be two difficulties. While he claims the youth is clothed in a baptismal garment, he also sees the relation of the garment to the burial shroud of Jesus (p. 176). He solves this by saying that the baptismal robe is also the burial garment and the resurrection clothing as well (p. 177). But this does not take account of the *two* sets of clothes connected with baptism in church praxis. A second problem, already mentioned, is that Jesus is said to *teach* the youth, not baptize him. Why could not, however, the teaching be the pre-baptismal catechesis, necessarily preceding the actual baptism, which is itself not alluded to until 14:51-52? Then a very logical order follows. The youth is awakened from the dead (symbolically). He receives the pre-baptismal catechesis. In the canonical story that immediately follows, the sacraments of baptism and eucharist are promised for the future (through James and John). In 14:51-52 the believer is symbolically baptized; and in 16:5 he emerges clothed in his baptismal robe, symbolizing the resurrected self. This keeps one from having to identify the linen garment with the baptismal clothing *per se* and removes the embarrassment of the word *ἐδίδασκε* in the added story.