CODEX 0269, A PALIMPSEST FRAGMENT OF MARK

BY

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It is an honored privilege for me to be able to contribute a chapter to a volume honoring Professor G. D. Kilpatrick. It was he who, at the very beginning of our acquaintance, introduced me to the study of palimpsest manuscripts of the Greek NT. It is therefore appropriate that my part in this volume should deal with a palimpsest fragment hitherto unpublished.

Soon after I had come to Oxford in 1950 for the purpose of working on Greek NT manuscripts, Prof. Kilpatrick indicated to me his interest in knowing the contents of certain passages in the text of the patristic catena on Luke which accompanied Cod. Zacynthius (Cod. ￡). Not only is Cod. ￡ a palimpsest, it is also the oldest extant Greek NT MS. which contains a patristic catena. As a result of Prof. Kilpatrick’s suggestion, I transcribed the legible portions of both the catena and the text of Luke of Cod. ￡. In this manner I was introduced to a hobby which has been fascinating and rewarding.

More recently, I had the occasion to examine the British Museum’s Add. MS. 31919, through the kindness of Mr. T. C. Skeat, then Keeper of Manuscripts. About 36 folios of this manuscript comprise the palimpsest Cod. 0133, containing portions of the Gospels. Cod. 0133 was too long to be included in the volume which I was at that time preparing, and it was only later that I realized that folio 23 of this manuscript was “patched out” by a fragment of still another palimpsest containing a portion of Mark. This small fragment had actually been known for many years, but it had not been assigned a number in the Gregory-Aland list and I had failed to notice it. Prof. Aland has now kindly assigned the number 0269 to this small piece at my request, and it is with this manuscript which I wish to deal. I acknowledge the kind

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permission of the authorities of the British Museum through Mr. T. S. Pattie to publish the text of this fragment.

Cod. 0269 is a parchment strip about 8-10 cm. wide by 33 cm. high, pasted to the outer portion of folio 23 of Add. MS. 31919 to fill out the width of a narrow leaf. The fragment overlaps the verso of folio 23. It contains Mark 6:14-21 in incomplete form. It was almost certainly a two-column MS., but the extant portion contains only one column on each side of the leaf. The text of 0269 is upside down relative to Cod. 0133.

Cod. 0269 is not a part of Cod. 0133. Folio 70 of 0133 contains Mark 6:11-22, thus including all that is contained in the extant portions of 0269. The handwriting of the two MSS. is quite distinct. Cod. 0269 contains 25 and 26 lines per column, while Cod. 0133 contains 20 lines per column. The columns of 0269 are somewhat trimmed, but were about 6.5 cm. wide and contained 9-13 letters per line. The columns of 0133 are wider and contain 12-17 letters per line.

Letters of Cod. 0269 such as α, τ, ω, are .5 cm. high. Two occurrences of φ are 1.5 cm. high. A tall Γ and H marking new sections and standing in the right margin are 1.5 cm. in height. In two instances the raised symbol (”) is used at the end of a line to represent the letter ν; at the end of one line the letters ῦν are written Ζ. The breathings (“”) and (“”) seem to be used freely, and the apostrophe form (’) occurs once. One grave accent can probably be identified. There may be other accents, but the erasure and the upper text make it difficult to locate them in the limited amount of text available. The raised point for punctuation (:) can be identified once, and was probably common in the MS; the double point (:) can evidently be identified once.

Cod. 0269 has not been identified as part of any other extant MS.

A puzzling feature was encountered on the verso of the fragment, in the form of an apparent twenty-sixth line at the bottom of the column, whereas the text of Mark continued without break at the top of the column of the recto. This additional line proved to be line 26 at the bottom of the recto, the letters having faded through the parchment and thus making visible some letters which were in the glued portion of the recto and hence not visible on the recto.

The transcription of the text of Cod. 0269 is taken from ultra-violet photographs of the MS. The fact that the verso (the first column) contains more letters per line than does the recto is due to the fact that it is the recto which is glued to the leaf of Cod. 0133. In the transcription, square brackets at the beginning or end of a line indicate that one or