

## The order of the Gospels in the parent of Codex Bezae.

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Certain phenomena in Codex Bezae show that the Gospels are not given in the order of its archetype. They may be exhibited in the form of five arguments. It is to be remembered that the Gospels appear in the MS in the usual old Latin order: *Mt Jo Lc Mc*.

1. The punctuation of the MS consists "chiefly of a blank space between the words, or of a middle, sometimes of an upper, very seldom of a lower single point, usually placed in the middle of a verse or *crīxoc*, and found (as in most other copies) much more thickly in some parts than in others: such a point is often set in the middle of a line, in passages where it is hard to see its use." So far Scrivener, p. xviii. Dr. Rendel Harris, on the other hand, has shown that the points, and perhaps the spaces, are traces of the original colometry of the archetype, thus marked by the scribe, when he did not preserve the lines of his copy. Dr. Harris has pointed out their similarity to the points in the Curetonian Syriac and in the old Latin MS *k* (*Study of Cod. Bezae*, ch. xxiii; but contrast Burkitt, *Evang. Da-Meph.* ii, p. 14).

An examination of the points shows that they are very numerous in Matthew and in the early part of John. From Jo IX, however, they diminish in number, or rather disappear, most columns being entirely free from them, and only one, two, or at the most three, occasionally showing themselves in any column. In Luke they may be almost said not to exist, but in Mark they are regularly used throughout as in Matthew. In the five surviving verses of 3 John not one appears, and in Acts there are again none. This capricious appearance of the dots suggests at once that Mark (dotted) is not in its right place between the end of John (not dotted) and 3 John and Acts (not dotted). If we place it between Matthew (dotted) and the beginning of John (dotted), we get dots consecutively throughout Matthew, Mark and half John, and then none in the rest of John, 3 John and Acts.

To make this clear, I give the two lists:

<i>Present order</i>	<i>Suggested original order</i>
Mt dotted	Mt dotted
{ <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> Jo dotted	Mc dotted
{ <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> Jo	{ <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> Jo dotted
Lc	{ <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> Jo
Mc dotted	Lc
3 Jo	3 Jo
Acts	Acts

We shall then conclude that the scribe of the parent codex got tired of marking his divergence from the original stichometry, and ceased to put in the dots after the middle of John, except here and there by habit, or as a note of interrogation after a question.<sup>1</sup>

2. The resultant order of the Gospels will be the same as that of Mommsen's list and of the Curetonian Syriac: Mt Mc Jo Lc. Now Mommsen's list is a catalogue of the Western Collection (see my article in *Expositor*, Aug. 1905), and the Curetonian Syriac is an almost purely Western text. This order—Mt Mc Jo Lc—seems therefore to be the original Western order. To this point we shall recur later.

On the other hand the present order of Codex Bezae is the Old Latin order, and it is probably *exclusively* a Latin order. The change of order in Codex Bezae will therefore be simply another instance of the *Latinizations* so frequently observed in this MS,—the substitution of the Old Latin order for the Western order.

3. Scrivener's description of the irregularity of the colometry of Codex Bezae is given in his edition, p. xvii. A reference to it will remind us that, while Matthew is somewhat irregular, the beginning of John shows a sudden lapse into worse dissolution of the original  $\kappa\rho\iota\gamma\omicron\iota$ .

<sup>1</sup> A conjecture may be hazarded with regard to his reason for ceasing the punctuation. The purpose of writing *per cola et commata* in short sense lines was evidently for the facilitation of reading in public. It is not easy to read *fluently and without mistake from a manuscript which has no divisions between the words*. The short sentences made the difficulty much less. The introduction of the punctuation obviated the necessity of keeping to the lines of the original. But Codex Bezae seems never to have been used for liturgical purposes until the IX<sup>th</sup> century. We may perhaps suggest that its parent also was intended for private use. The scribe of the parent may have realized this when he arrived about the middle of St. John, and have thought it not worth his while, in consequence, to continue the points. On the other hand it is equally possible that the  $\delta\iota\omicron\rho\theta\omega\tau\eta\varsigma$  of the parent inserted the points when revising it by the grandparent, but was too lazy to carry on the marking of the  $\kappa\rho\iota\gamma\omicron\iota$  beyond the middle of John. But we shall shortly see that there are reasons for preferring the former hypothesis.

In Luke "an entire breaking up of the stichometry becomes rather the practice than the exception: about Luke viii the dissolution seems adopted almost in preference . . . As the work proceeds from the middle of St. Luke onwards (however we may account for the fact), the arrangement of the  $\sigma\iota\chi\omicron\iota$  becomes less broken and careless, though some of the chief anomalies are met with even to the last." Thus we gather that there is a *crescendo* and *diminuendo*, broken only by the sudden change when "with the first page of St. John the dissolution becomes much more marked."

This one break in the smoothness of development is removed if Mark, yet more careless than Matthew, is removed from its position between the equally careless end of Luke and the rather more regular Acts, and if it is placed to bridge the gap between the sober end of Matthew and the 'dissolute commencement of John. We have then a gradual *crescendo* up to Luke viii, with a *decrecendo*, less marked, down to Acts. If there seems still to be a contrast left between the delirious Luke and the more regular Acts, (which will then immediately follow it) we will remind ourselves that the Apocalypse and 1 2 3 John originally stood between them.<sup>1</sup>

The reason for this irregularity of the  $\sigma\iota\chi\omicron\iota$  is obviously the desire to secure uniformity of length by avoiding very short lines, thus obtaining economy of parchment.<sup>2</sup> In Matthew and Mark the scribe economizes but little. In John he becomes aware (as we have seen) that he need not even record the primitive stichometry by punctuation. The punctuation dwindles, and ceases about John ix. Dr. Scrivener tells us that about John vi. 32 the dissolution becomes complete, "though only one line (i. 16) ends with the article before ch. vi. 32, yet such irregularity occurs no less than 48 times from that place to the end of the Gospel." So that the final neglect of the stichometry just a little precedes the final omission even to draw attention to this neglect by punctuation. We can hardly hesitate to ascribe both forms of neglect to the same scribe,—not the scribe of Codex Bezae, but the scribe of its parent, which had the order *Mt Mc Jo Lc*. We arrive at the same

<sup>1</sup> I have shown in the *Expositor* (July, 1905) that the original contents of Codex Bezae were: *Mt Jo Lc Mc Apoc 1 2 3 Jo Acts*, (and perhaps 1 Peter at the end). The Apocalypse and 1 2 3 John just fill up the space (66 leaves) between the end of Mark and the last verses (still remaining) of 3 John.

<sup>2</sup> A simple inspection of the printed pages in Scrivener's edition will demonstrate this.

result if we take the average number of syllables in a column by dividing the number of syllables in each book by the number of columns the book originally occupied in Codex Bezae:<sup>1</sup>

Mt 372	[Apoc. c. 385]
Mc 386	Acts ( <i>beginning</i> ) 329 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Jo 394	( <i>later</i> ) 356 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Lc 396	( <i>end</i> ) 360

Between Lc and Acts the Apocalypse shows a diminution. We gather that towards the end of that book the scribe discovered that he had plenty of vellum to spare, and reduced the lines roughly to the stichometry of his copy. He had probably engaged to provide a given number of sheets, and at the beginning of Acts he appears actually to shorten the lines in order to eke out the matter, for he had economized too much in Luke and John.

4. A further confirmation of this restoration of the original order is found in an interesting passage of Blass, founded on a discovery made by his pupil Ernest Lippelt, *Adulescens studiosissimus*:

"*Videbamus in codice D ἰωάννης nomen, quod est et in euangelii omnibus et in Actis frequentissimum, modo uno N modo duobus scriptum exstare; non videbamus, quod acute vidit Lippelt, diversum esse in ea rationem Lucæ scriptorum atque reliquorum, quanquam in illo codice Acta non statim excipiunt euangelium, sed intercedit Marcus. Nempe apud Matthæum est in D ἰωάννης vicies quinquies, ἰωάννης semel (c. 9, 14), apud Iohannem illud decies septies, hoc quater (5, 36, 10, 40, 41 bis), item apud Marcum illud vicies quater, bis hoc (1, 29, 6, 25); at apud Lucam ἰωάννης semel (9, 7), ἰωάννης vicies septies, pariterque in Actis bis illud (11, 16, 13, 5), vicies semel hoc. Fuit igitur antiquus quidam liber hæc duo scripta complexus, unde ea in D vel eius archetypum non*

<sup>1</sup> The figures for Acts are obtained by actual counting. Those for the Gospel I obtain by using the number of syllables in the Gospels given by J. Rendel Harris, *Stichometry*, p. 51, as counted in Westcott and Hort's edition with some allowances. This cannot give an accurate result for our codex, which has actually fewer syllables, but it is sufficient for purposes of comparison. I give here the counted syllables of the first and second pages of each Gospel, and of the last remaining (or nearly so) of each. The first five pages of Mark are unusually crowded; I therefore give the 6th page instead of the 2<sup>d</sup>, as it is of typical length. They are only roughly counted:

Mt fol 3 <sup>b</sup> 345	Mc 285 <sup>b</sup> 414	Jo 104 <sup>b</sup> 407	Lc 182 <sup>b</sup> 382
4 <sup>b</sup> 332	290 <sup>b</sup> 366	113 <sup>b</sup> 370	183 <sup>b</sup> 405
99 <sup>b</sup> 370	347 <sup>b</sup> 328	180 <sup>b</sup> 410	283 <sup>b</sup> 384

It will be seen how out of place Mark (whose real average is about 350) is between John and Luke.

*sine cura, ut apparet, translata sunt.*" (*Ev. sec. Luc. secundum formam quae vid. Romanam*, Teubner, 1897, p. vii.)

Unfortunately Blass's statistics are incorrect. He gives the exceptions correctly, but in the larger figures he includes the occasions where the name would appear in Codex Bezae if the passage were not lost! In Matthew iii, 13 and 14 are lost, and we cannot tell how the name was spelt,—so John i, 19, 26, 28, 29, 32, 35, 41; iii, 23, 24, 25, 26 are missing. In Mark the name is not given in vi, 16, nor in Luke iii, 16 and vii, 19. Yet it occurs 29 times in Luke altogether, and not 28 as Blass has it. He should have added that in the *incipit* of St. John's Gospel we find Ἰωάννης and in the *explicit* Ἰωάνης, and similarly in the Latin. It was further misleading to give the Greek statistics only and not those of the Latin columns. It may be added that in Acts iv, 6 D reads Jo(n)athas for John, both in Greek and Latin. The following table is as accurate as I can make it. I add the *Iohanes* of the heading and *explicit* of the Latin fragment of 3 John:

	GREEK		LATIN	
	Ἰωάνης	Ἰωάννης	<i>Iohanes</i>	<i>Iohannes</i>
Mt	2	23	—	25
Jo	5	6	2	11
Lc	28	1	25	4
Mc	2	23	1	24
3 Jo	—	—	2	—
Acts	21	2	1	22

In the Latin, Mt iii, 13 and 14 exist, and so do John iii, 23, 24, 25, 26, but Mt iii, 1 and 4, John i, 6 and 15 are lost. The Latin exceptions are *Iohanes* in John x, 40 and in the *explicit*, Mc vi, 20, 3 John, heading and *explicit*, Acts iii, 2; *Iohannes* in Lc vii, 20, 24 (once) ix, 7, xx, 6. The Greek exceptions have been given in the quotation from Blass, the *incipit* and *explicit* of John and Mt xiv, 2 have been added. The other passages can be found with the help of any concordance.

The correct statistics enable us to see that Luke and Acts do not stand alone in their witness to Ἰωάνης, for 3 John is with them, and the Gospel of John is divided, *having* Ἰωάννης in the first six places viz. i, 6, 15; iii, 27; iv, 1; v, 33 and the *incipit*, but Ἰωάνης in the remaining five, v, 36; x, 40, 41 *bis*, *explicit*. In this we recognize the same phenomenon which we have observed in the irregularity of the stichometry

and in the omission of punctuation, namely a change appearing in the middle of John, the first half of which goes with Matthew and Mark, while the second half agrees rather with Luke, Acts and 3 John. I give the diagram once more in the order of the parent manuscript, dividing the Gospel of St. John in chapter v:

	GREEK		LATIN	
	'Ιωάνης	'Ιωάννης	<i>Iohanes</i>	<i>Iohannes</i>
Mt	2	23	—	25
Mc	2	23	1	24
Jo (1)	—	6	—	8
Jo (2)	5	—	2	3
Lc	28	1	25	4
3 Jo	—	—	2	—
Acts	21	2	1	22

The sudden change from 'Ιωάννης to 'Ιωάνης in John v is very striking, when combined with the evidence of the stichometry and of the punctuation. It is supported by the Latin, which has, however, fallen into the ordinary *Iohannes* in Jo v, 36 and x, 41 *bis*, and has committed the same lapse in Luke four times, against the once of the Greek. Only the Latin of Acts is a surprise. It has clearly been carefully altered to *Iohannes* by some corrector earlier than our present Codex.

The conclusion is certain that, with however much disappointment, we must abandon Dr. Blass's deduction that Luke and Acts were copied from an archetype different from that of the other books. We are bound to admit that this result was attractive, but it postulated two MSS of the Western text of quite similar character, one of which, nevertheless, had a different system of spelling from the other,—a not impossible hypothesis, but not a particularly probable one. Instead, we have to confess that the difference is due simply to a director of the scribe of the parent MS, who obliged the scribe to change the primitive 'Ιωάνης to 'Ιωάννης, and *Johanes* (the servile but unusual transliteration he found in the grandparent MS) to *Johannes*. When the director's back was turned, the scribe neglected stichometry, punctuation and orthography alike.

Or, (if this be too imaginative an explanation) we may suppose a corrector, who by a strange coincidence happened to stop correcting at about the point where the scribe grows most careless. In any case we need the less regret the supposed proof of the union of Luke and Acts in a single volume, as other proofs are at hand as the result of our rejection of that of Blass. But this by the way.

It is interesting to find that the older spelling was Ἰωάνης. We may infer that this was the spelling of the name in the Western New Testament of the second century, as it is also the spelling of the neutral text. In this case it is certainly the first century orthography.

5. Just as the change of order in the Gospels from the 'Western' order to the Latin order was a Latinization of our present MS, so we have been tracing the latinizing of its parent.

α. The latest of our points is the correction of the Latin text of Acts, *Johanes* to *Johannes*, no notice being taken of the Greek. This was probably the work of a Latin owner, who did not care about the Greek side of the book. The parent-codex was then in Latin hands.

β. But the previous correction of both Greek and Latin in Mt, Mc and half John shows again the work of a Latin, in all probability. Ἰωάνης is bearable, though later scribes preferred Ἰωάννης; but *Johanes* is rare, and was not likely to be left. The correction is on the whole more likely to be due to a Latin than to a Western owner. It may have been made in the parent-codex at the time of writing, (as I have suggested), or afterwards, (or even in the yet earlier grandparent).

γ. The neglect of the stichometry both in the line-divisions and in the substituted punctuation indicates private ownership, rather than intended use in a Church. This is all the more obvious in a Latin country, for the Latin text has become of so unusual a character by the repeated corrections it has obviously undergone that it would be unfit for public use.

In fine, the various alterations seem to agree in character and to confirm one another, and to make it a safe conclusion that the parent MS of Codex Bezae gave the ancient 'Western' order of Gospels, as in Mommsen's list and in the Curetonian Syriac, viz. Mt, Mc, Jo, Lc.

Further, that the parent MS was probably written for a Latin owner for private use.

This may perhaps have some bearing on the date of the Codex.

It is not likely that the minute details we have observed should have come down from the grandparent of our codex unaltered, so that

we may look upon it as fairly certain that the change of order was made in Codex Bezae itself. The MS was therefore written in a Latin country where the old Latin order was considered a matter of course, and before the Greek order introduced by St. Jerome had become well-known. Such conditions are most unlikely in South Italy, Sardinia or Gaul after c. 450, one might say after 420. The beginning of the fifth century seems the most probable date, and this harmonizes with the result obtained on other grounds by Mr. Burkitt.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Journal of Theol. Stud.* July, 1902. The Vulgate Gospels were published in 383. By 430 they were used in Gaul by Prosper and Vincent of Lerins. In Italy their adoption, or familiarity with their order, would not be behindhand.