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II THE EARLY CHRISTIAN BOOK

Discussions of early Christian literature are usually concerned with the contents of documents, their generative historical circumstances, their chronological and theological matrices, and similar questions. Rarely is the question raised: in what physical form(s) was this literature known and used by the early church? The failure to consider the extent to which the physical medium of the written word contributes to its meaning—how its outward aspects inform the way a text is approached and read—perpetuates a largely abstract, often unhistorical, and even anachronistic conception of early Christian literature and its transmission. To be sure, every text has literary and historical dimensions, but no less important are its bibliographic aspects, for it is the physical presentation of the text that is most immediately evident and effective for its readers. There are, of course, good reasons why historians of early Christian literature have tended to neglect its purely bibliographic dimensions. In the first place, early Christian writers intimate little or nothing about how Christian documents were written or in what tangible form(s) they were available. Inferences from the larger context are difficult, since non-Christian writers of the period allude only occasionally to the subject of book production. Such matters were taken for granted by Christian and non-Christian alike. Second, no early Christian text is extant in its original form. The copies we possess are, at best, several stages removed from the originals. As recently as the beginning of the twentieth century there were no known copies of a Christian book older than the two famous biblical codices, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, both from the fourth century. Modern archaeological discoveries, however, have dramatically altered the situation. Copies of Christian scriptural and nonscriptural

documents from the second and third centuries have been recovered, the oldest dating to the early second century. Of course, these earlier texts are copies, not originals, and most are only fragmentarily preserved. Yet because we now possess manuscripts from the earliest period of Christian literature, we are in a far better position than ever before to describe the physical form of early Christian books. It is unfortunate that the close study of these manuscripts has remained almost exclusively the preserve of paleographers and textual critics, historians of early Christian literature having taken little interest in exploiting them for the history of Christianity and its literature.[1]

There is, however, much to be learned from these ancient manuscripts, not only about the form of the early Christian book but also about the circulation and use of literature within the ancient church. Indeed, the materials invite something like a sociology of early Christian literature, or at least of early Christian texts. Whatever else a text may be or may signify, it is a physical object, and as such it can be described, deciphered, and bibliographically located. Yet the physical object is also a social artifact. Its content was composed, its vehicle selected, and the words transcribed in a particular way. The book was made accessible to an audience or readership, and the text was subsequently reproduced to enable its further transmission and reading in varying circumstances. All aspects of the production, distribution, and use of texts presuppose social functions and forces—functions and forces that are given representation, or inscribed, in the design of the text as a concrete, physical object. Hence the careful physical evaluation of a manuscript. By observing precisely how the text was laid out, how it was written, and what it was written on or in one has access not only to the technical means of its production but also, since these are the signs of intended and actual uses, to the social attitudes, motives, and contexts that sustained its life and shaped its meaning. From this perspective a clean distinction between textual history and the history of literature is neither possible nor desirable.[2]

THE GRECO-ROMAN BOOK

The modern book and its reader are removed from antiquity not only in time and culture but also by two major developments in the history of books: the change from the roll book (scroll) to the leaf book (codex), which transpired between the second and the fourth centuries, and the change from the handwritten to the printed book, which occurred in the fifteenth century. Ancient books, then, were fundamentally different from modern ones. Yet we can appreciate the nature and significance of early Christian books

only if we first examine the nature of books in the larger environment of the ancient church. I begin by considering the books of the Greco-Roman world.[3]

The standard form of the book in Greco-Roman antiquity was the roll book or scroll, designated in Greek as a *biblos* or *biblion* and in Latin as a *volumen*.[4] Book rolls might be made either of papyrus or parchment. In the Hellenistic and Roman periods they were usually made of papyrus, but in the later Roman period parchment came increasingly into use.

Papyrus was produced from a plant of the same name (Latin: *Cyperus papyrus*). In antiquity, the plant was widely found in the shallow lakes and marshes of the near East but was especially abundant in the Nile valley, where it was systematically cultivated under close government regulation. Thus Egypt became the center of manufacture and trade in papyrus products. A great deal is known today about the diverse uses of papyrus in antiquity, but my concern is with its primary use as a writing material.[5]

In *Natural History* Pliny the Elder gives a valuable though not altogether lucid account of the manufacture of papyrus for writing. Careful studies of one passage (13.74–82), together with modern experiments, have cleared up long-standing obscurities and misconceptions and yielded a good understanding of the process. The papyrus plant, a reed that grows to 2¼ to 5 meters, has a long, jointless, three-sided stalk approximately the thickness of the human wrist. The stalk was cut into sections, the husk removed, and the pith peeled into thin, tapelike strips. It has traditionally been supposed that sections of the stalk were peeled or sliced along the length of the stem. In this view, these strips were then laid side by side on a hard, smooth surface, and another layer of strips was placed over them at right angles. The two layers were then fused by using a press to break down the cellular structure of the fibers and release the juice of the pith, which served as an effective adhesive.[6] Recent experiments have led to the alternative suggestion that the pith was peeled in a wide strip around the section and "unrolled" with a needle. The two wide strips thus obtained were laid one on top of the other at right angles and compressed to form the sheet.[7] Although this explanation cannot be ruled out, the first explanation envisions a less delicate and time-consuming procedure, which was probably more feasible for mass production. Whichever the actual method, the papyrus sheet was then dried and trimmed and the surface smoothed with pumice and polished with shell. Single sheets of papyrus might range from ten to twenty-nine centimeters in breadth and

from twenty to thirty centimeters in height, but ordinarily a sheet was twenty-five centimeters high and eighteen to twenty centimeters wide.[8]

The next step of the manufacturing process was to paste the individual sheets together to form a longer strip, which was then rolled up. Each sheet had fibers running horizontally on one side and vertically on the other. These sides are commonly designated by papyrologists as recto and verso, respectively.[9] To form the roll, the sheets were arranged with the recto side facing up and joined together by gluing a small overlap (one or two centimeters wide) of the right edge of each sheet onto the left edge of the next in the series. The join thus formed is called a *kollesis,* and the individual sheet thus joined a *kollema.* Instead of the natural juice of the plant, a flour paste was used at this stage. The joins were smoothly made and scarcely noticeable, so that when the roll was inscribed the pen encountered no obstacle in moving across them. A roll of papyrus manufactured in this way could theoretically be of any length, but it appears that the standard manufactured length comprised twenty sheets and ran to about 3½ meters.[10] The strip of glued papyrus sheets was then rolled up with the recto, the intended writing surface, on the inside of the roll for protection. It was in the form of such a manufactured roll, known as a *chartes* (Latin: *charta* or *volumen*), that papyrus was shipped, stored, and marketed for retail sale. Rolls of any length might then be fashioned by cutting or joining the manufactured units.[11]

The result of this process was a serviceable writing material—smooth, light-colored, flexible, strong, and not much inferior to modern paper.[12] In explaining the eventual replacement of papyrus by parchment for the making of books it has often been said that papyrus was a fragile material liable to early discoloration and disintegration. This impression, however, drawn from papyrus documents nearly two thousand years old, is certainly mistaken. It is true that papyrus, when exposed for long periods to dampness, becomes friable. Yet all the evidence suggests that in its original condition papyrus was a high-quality product, which, when preserved and used under normal circumstances, was remarkably durable.[13]

Papyrus was by far the prevalent writing material during the Hellenistic and early Roman imperial periods, but parchment was also used. In some areas and for some purposes parchment was clearly preferred to papyrus, and later, in the medieval period, it altogether superseded papyrus. Animal skins, from which parchment is made, had been used from great antiquity for writing. Rolls made of skin

were occasionally used by the Egyptians, and Persians and Jews appear to have had a clear preference for skin.[14] The term *parchment* is often used to include leather and vellum as well as parchment proper, but though all these are made from animal skins, there are important differences between them. Because it is not tanned, parchment is thinner, softer, and whiter than leather and was produced so as to allow the hair side as well as the flesh side to be used for writing. Vellum is a finer parchment made from the skin of calf or kid. The manufacture of parchment seems to have begun about the third century B.C.E. Legend falsely traced its invention to the city of Pergamum in western Asia Minor.[15] Owing perhaps to a refinement of the process or to the city's role as a major producer, Pergamum furnished one of the ancient names for parchment, the Greeks calling it *pergamene*, the Romans *pergamena*. Yet these terms are relatively late; before the fourth century C.E. the Greeks called parchment *diphthera*, the Romans *membrana*, "skin."

The manufacture of parchment was more complex than the making of papyrus.[16] The flayed skin of the animal, ordinarily a calf, goat, or sheep, was soaked in a solution of lime. The epidermis was then carefully scraped off the outer side, and the flesh was scraped from the inner side. After the skin was washed and set to dry on a stretcher, its thickness was further reduced by shaving the outside and smoothing the inside by rubbing with stone or bone. To produce high-quality parchment, these operations had to be carried out quickly and efficiently. The sheet, stretched and dried, was then smoothed, whitened with chalk, and trimmed to the desired size. Like papyrus, the two sides of a sheet of parchment differed: the flesh side was lighter and smoother and thus the better side for writing (and so constitutes the recto), though the rougher, more absorbent hair side held ink better. Parchment could be fashioned into rolls by stitching sheets together, usually with animal or vegetable fibers, but the joins were never as smoothe as those in a papyrus roll and could not be written on.

Efforts to account for the eventual replacement of papyrus by parchment as the preferred material for books have often led to comparisons of the merits of the two materials. The superior quality of parchment is clear, even when misconceptions about the strength and durability of papyrus are dispelled. Still, for mass production and general use, papyrus was preferable because it was more plentiful than animal skins and easier to manufacture. For the same reasons papyrus may have been less expensive than parchment, but there is not enough evidence to judge the relative costs of the two.[17] However that may be,

among the Greeks and Romans papyrus was for many centuries the preferred material for the book roll, and parchment did not begin to displace it until the fourth century C.E.

The length of a papyrus book roll (as distinct from the standard unit of manufacture) was to some extent variable, with a mean of seven to ten meters. Short works took less space, but the upper limit was rarely transgressed. The maximum length was a function not of manufacture, since rolls of any length could be constructed, but of convenience to the reader. A roll of more than ten or eleven meters was too cumbersome for the reader to handle.[18] The reader grasped the roll in both hands, the left hand progressively rolling up what had been read, the right unrolling what was yet to be read. The procedure is shown in many ancient artistic depictions of readers with roll books.[19] The ordinary length came to be closely prescribed by custom. In the Hellenistic period and later, the subdivision of extensive works of literature into books *(tomoi, libri)* was determined as much by the conventional length of the book roll as by considerations of content. Older long works (such as those of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Homer) had divisions imposed on them, and authors of long new works made their own divisions by taking the customary length of rolls into account. Thus the physical unit of the roll tended to function also as a literary unit.[20]

The papyrus roll was inscribed on one side only, the side where the fibers ran horizontally, offering less resistance to the scribe's pen.[21] The book was rolled up so that the text was on the inside, protected. The first sheet of a roll (the *protokollon*) was not ordinarily inscribed. Both it and the last sheet *(eschatokollion)* were commonly affixed—probably by the writer or user of the book rather than by the manufacturer of the roll—with fibers running at a right angle to the rest of the roll. This too was for protection, since the beginning or end of a roll, being on the outside when the roll was closed, was especially liable to damage.[22] The text was written left to right in columns six to nine centimeters wide and fifteen to twenty-four centimeters high. In prose works the columns were usually tall and narrow, sometimes with only eight to ten letters on a line. Poetic works were inscribed to the length of one line of hexameter verse (sixteen syllables, thirty-four to thirty-eight characters). Like the length of a roll, the width of the columns also served the convenience of the reader: they were relatively narrow, since the roll was more easily handled if it needed to be opened only a little at a time. In Greek the column of a roll was called a *selis*, and the line of a column a *stichos* (the corresponding Latin terms were *pagina*

and *versus*). Columns were not ordinarily numbered in literary texts, although they often were in documentary texts. The margins between columns and at the top and bottom of the roll were usually ample.[23] Greek texts were written in *scriptio continua,* that is, without divisions between words, without punctuation or accents, and without paragraphing, so that each column presented a monolith of characters. It is uncertain whether this practice was owing to the persistence of antique (inscriptional?) practice or was devised by scribes for ease of writing or uniformity of appearance. The Romans, who were accustomed to dividing words in writing Latin, gave up that habit in literary texts in order to conform to the Greek custom. Punctuation marks, accents, and other lectional aids, when they did occur, are normally found only in texts used by scholars and students.[24]

In roll books the title and the name of the author typically appeared not at the beginning but at the end, beneath or to the right of the last column of the text.[25] This convention may have developed because the end of a book was the best-protected, innermost part of a closed roll, or it may have arisen as a concession to the bad habit of not rerolling books after reading, so that on picking up a book the end was often the immediately accessible part. These are only guesses, however. Some rolls were also supplied with a papyrus or parchment tag (Greek: *syllabos* or *sittubos*; Latin: *titulus* or *index*) that was glued to the outside of the roll at a right-angle to the top margin and carried a short title. When the roll was stored on a shelf this tag would hang down and face outward, identifying the book.[26] Such tags could easily become detached. Sometimes the title was written on the outside of the roll.[27]

Book rolls could also be furnished with accessories. Often the ends of the roll were attached to wooden dowels that served as rollers, called navels (Greek: *omphaloi,* Latin: *umbilici*), and these were often tipped with decorative knobs or "horns" *(cornua).*[28] Sometimes rolls had protective parchment wrappers (*membrana, capsa),* which might be colorfully dyed.[29] Such refinements were probably not standard but depended on the value of the book and the taste of its owner.

The book roll is well attested in Judaism. It was the standard form of the book in biblical times and is mentioned in many connections in Jewish scripture. Although it is unclear whether in the preexilic period such rolls were constructed principally of skin, papyrus, or both, by the time of Christian beginnings Judaism had developed a strong preference for skins. Skins were prescribed for copies of the Torah and seem to have been more commonly used than papyrus for other books as well.[30]

THE TRANSITION FROM THE ROLL TO THE CODEX

Given the ubiquity of the roll book in the Greco-Roman and Jewish traditions, one would expect early Christian books to have taken the same form. Remarkably, they did not. Almost without exception, the earliest Christian books known have the form not of the papyrus roll but of the papyrus codex, or leaf book, which is the model of the modern book. The evidence of this fact has been furnished by archaeological discoveries of the twentieth century. Time and again both systematic excavations and lucky finds in Egypt have yielded papyrus texts ranging in date from the third century B.C.E. to about the eighth century C.E. Some of these appear to have been stored away, but most have been retrieved from ancient rubbish heaps. It is not surprising that the vast majority are only fragmentarily preserved or represent highly diverse materials. Most are documentary texts—accounts, receipts, inventories, school exercises, and the like—but there are many private letters, magical texts, copies of Greek and Latin literary works, and Jewish and Christian texts. The earliest of the Christian texts belong to the second century.[31] Privilege of age belongs to P 52, a small fragment of the Gospel of John, paleographically dated to the first half of the second century. A number of other Christian papyrus fragments are not much later: P Egerton 2 (=Ap 14) from a codex of an apocryphal Gospel; P 4 + P 64 + P 67 from a codex of Matthew and Luke; P 77 from a codex of Matthew; P 66 and P 90 from codices of John; and P 32 from a codex of Pauline epistles. All these, not to mention some Christian copies of Jewish scripture, may be placed in the second century.

The comparative evidence is instructive. Of the remains of Greek books that can be dated before the third century C.E., more than 98 percent are rolls, whereas in the same period the surviving Christian books are almost all codices. Among Greek books the codex does not show up significantly until the third century (when less than 20 percent are codices), and only near the beginning of the fourth century does the codex come to be used almost as often (48 percent) as the roll.[32] Christian texts from the earliest examples of the second century, however, occur almost always as codices. Together the relevant evidence indicates that early Christianity had an almost exclusive preference for the codex as the medium of its own writings and thus departed early and widely from the established bibliographic conventions of its environment.[33]

To appreciate how peculiar this step was one must realize that a codex or leaf book was not recognized in antiquity as a proper book. It was regarded as a mere notebook, and its associations were strictly

private and utilitarian. The humble origin of the codex is enshrined in its name: the Latin *caudex* means "a block of wood" and referred to a wooden tablet used for writing (among the Greeks such a tablet was called a *deltos* or *pinax*). From an early time it was customary to link two or more of these together by passing a string or thongs through holes along one edge, thus constructing a series of loose leaves of wood. The proper Latin name for such a collection of wooden tablets was *codex*.[34] The thinly cut wood, its surfaces smoothed and whitened, could be written on with pen and ink. More often the surface of the wood was slightly hollowed and filled with wax, which was often colored, and could be written upon with a metal stylus.[35] The size and weight of the tablets limited the number that could be conveniently assembled and used in this way. A codex of two leaves forming a *diptych* was fairly standard. Though more leaves were often used, no known example exceeds ten leaves. The Romans distinguished between large tablets *(tabellae)* and smaller ones that could be held in one hand *(pugillares)* and used in larger aggregates (see fig. 1). Tablets could be reused after they were washed or smoothed and were handy for recording ephemera of all sorts—school exercises, accounts, notes, first-drafts, and so forth.[36] Among the Romans they also had archival uses, being inscribed with birth certificates, wills, edicts, and other matter of legal consequence. Nevertheless, in format and use the codex was a long way from anything that might be regarded as a book.

This remained true when wooden tablets were replaced by sheets of parchment or papyrus folded and fastened together. The parchment or papyrus codex was lighter and easier to handle. It could contain many more leaves, and it remained reusable although writing on parchment and papyrus required ink, because the leaves could be washed or rubbed down to give a clean surface.[37] The earliest certain reference to a parchment notebook was made near the end of the first century C.E. by Quintillian (*Inst. Or.* 10.3.31–2), who refers to it as *membranae*.[38] How much earlier than that the parchment notebook had appeared cannot be determined, but it was certainly a Roman innovation. This is shown by a Christian text. The author of 2 Timothy requests (4:13) that Timothy, when he comes, should "bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books *(ta biblia)*, and above all the parchments *(tas membranas)*" (RSV). The Greek term *membranai*, translated by the RSV as "parchments," is the Latin word *membranae* transliterated into Greek. There was no Greek name for the intended object. If parchment rolls had been meant, the standard Greek designation, *diphtherai*, would surely have been used. The



1. A fresco from Pompeii depicting a Roman woman holding a set of wax tablets *(pugillares)* and a stylus. Courtesy of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples.

Latinism, *membranai*, has the specific sense of "parchment codex," and its use in this Greek-Christian document indicates that the object, like the word, had a Roman origin.

The substitution of parchment or papyrus sheets for wooden tablets did not in itself alter the status or the use of the codex: it remained a notebook, nothing else. Eventually, however, it occurred to someone to use it in another way, namely, as a medium of literature, and thus as a substitute for the roll. Who took this important step, why, or to what immediate result, is not known. The first evidence of the development is found in the *Epigrams* of the Roman poet Martial in 84 to 86 C.E.[39] Martial recommends that readers who wish to carry his poems on journeys should purchase "those that parchment confines in small pages" (*Epigr.* I.2: *quos artat brevibus membrana tabellis*) so that they can be held in one hand. He gives the name and location of the bookseller from whom they can be obtained. In enumerating gift ideas for the Saturnalia, Martial mentions various well-known authors whose works were available *in membranis* or *in pugillaribus membranis*.[40] These works must have been in parchment codices. Though Martial does not use the word *codex*, he emphasizes both the capacity and the convenience of these editions, presumably in contrast to the conventional roll. Martial's comments imply that editions of literature in the codex format were novel to Roman readers, but we have no indication whether this innovation was actually made in Rome or how much it caught on there.

Some evidence is at hand from Egypt about the early use there of the codex for literature. There are remains of eighteen non-Christian manuscripts, datable to the second century, that both are in codex form and contain literary works.[41] The number is very small in comparison with literary rolls of the same period (less than 2 percent of the total) and shows the limited use of the codex. One of these codices, however, is particularly interesting: P. Oxy. 30 contains an otherwise unknown historical work, now usually called *De bellis Macedonicis*. It is the only Latin text in the group of eighteen and one of only four on parchment. Its chief interest lies in these facts, together with its early date near the beginning of the second century.[42] Although this is the earliest known codex and although it carries a literary text, E. G. Turner remarked that "this codex does not seem to be an experimental type of book, and its mere existence is evidence that this book form had a prehistory."[43] The prehistory of the parchment codex is not much illuminated by this manuscript, but an early Latin text on parchment in Greek-speaking, papyrus-rich Egypt is arresting and

tends to support the earlier evidence from Martial that the parchment codex is connected with Rome.[44]

Another intriguing piece of Egyptian evidence is provided by P. Petaus 30, a fragment of a private letter dating to the second century.[45] It is brief enough to quote entirely: "Julius Placidus to his father Herclanus, greeting. Dius came to us and showed us six parchment codices *(tas membranas hex)*. We selected none of those, but we collated eight, for which I paid on account 100 drachmas. You will be on the lookout in any case. . . . I hope you are well . . . by Julius Placidus." We get a glimpse here of the ancient counterpart of the door-to-door bookseller. Among his offerings are parchment codices. These were apparently inscribed with texts but were perhaps not well inscribed, since six were not bought. It is not clear whether the eight others that were collated and purchased were rolls or codices (they seem to be differentiated from the codices by being outside the total of six).[46] However that may be, the mere mention of parchment codices may imply that Julius and his father had a special interest in acquiring codices. Here the name of the letter writer, Julius, may be a further indication of a Roman connection for the codex.

There is evidence, then, that by the late first and early second centuries the parchment codex was beginning to be used not merely as a notebook but as an alternative to the traditional roll, though its literary use was limited and would remain at best sporadic and tentative until the fourth century, when it finally came into its own. Yet there is considerably more physical evidence in the earlier period for papyrus rather than parchment codices. This may be owing to the Egyptian provenance of the evidence—papyrus being the favored and more abundant material there—but the question remains whether it was parchment or papyrus that was first employed for the codex. This question is sharpened by the fact that the codex takes distinctive formats depending on which material is used: the parchment codex consistently tends toward square dimensions (breadth = height), whereas the papyrus codex is more typically rectangular (2 × breadth = height).[47] No definite answer can be given, however, and it is possible that neither papyrus nor parchment was originally or exclusively associated with the codex form. Both may have been used, with papyrus gaining an early dominance among those who made the most use of the codex.

Given the evidence of surviving manuscripts and the dates paleographically assigned to them, Roberts and Skeat have maintained that those who made the earliest and most extensive use of the codex for

literature were Christians and that in this practice Christianity swam against the strong tide of the bibliographic tradition of antiquity. This claim has not gone unchallenged. Joseph van Haelst has countered that the second-century dates assigned by Roberts and Skeat to a number of early Christian manuscripts—some of which they place in the early second century—are too early and that virtually all the earliest Christian codices belong rather to the second half of the second century or to the beginning of the third.[48] The later dates he assigns to some manuscripts enables van Haelst to suggest that, since we also encounter non-Christian codices at this time, the phenomenon of the transition from roll to codex is not *itself* uniquely Christian and that what distinguishes Christian usage is only the *rapidity* of the changeover.[49] Paleographic dating is, to be sure, an inexact business, and the judgments of paleographers commonly differ, though usually not widely. In the cases that are immediately relevant to the problem of the origin of the (literary) codex there remain—even for van Haelst's revised dating—a good number of Christian manuscripts that may be firmly placed in the second century and a few in the early second century. Apart from the problem of determining the absolute number of manuscripts that can be dated to the first half of the second century, it cannot be gainsaid that the *proportion* of codices among the earliest Christian manuscripts remains extremely high, while among non-Christian manuscripts it remains extremely low. This suffices to show that Christians had a stronger and more effective preference for the codex at an earlier time than did non-Christians, which is all that Roberts and Skeat wished to claim. Thus, the Christian use of the codex is a genuine anomaly that needs an explanation. Why did the codex come so early to be the favored format for Christian literature but take much longer to gain a similar status among non-Christians?

The answer has often been sought in particular features of the codex that are supposed to have been specially advantageous to Christians.[50] It has been claimed, for example, that the codex commended itself to Christianity for reasons of economy. Because the leaves of a codex were inscribed on both sides, whereas the roll was written on only one side, a codex could accommodate almost twice as much text on the same amount of writing material. Certainly, there were savings to be achieved in using the codex form, so far as the writing material itself was concerned, but the cost was not halved. The codex required more space for margins than a roll did, and whereas a roll came virtually ready-made, there were costs associated with the construction of a codex—cutting the sheets from a roll and then stacking and

binding them. A careful estimate of the relative costs suggests that a codex may have been about 25 percent less expensive than a roll.[51] The appeal to economy as a peculiarly Christian motive entails the larger assumption that Christians belonged to the lower classes of Greco-Roman society, and that the codex, as a humbler type of book, was more familiar to them and more affordable than the roll.[52] Yet a preference for the codex over the roll as a matter of social class cannot be shown. For one thing, as we have seen, the assumption that Christianity was a thoroughly proletarian movement is much less plausible than it once was.[53] Further, it does not appear from early Christian books themselves that their makers were unusually parsimonious. Although no really early Christian texts were produced in de luxe copies, we do not find among them such patently economical measures as cramped hands, unusually narrow margins, or a frequency of opisthographs or palimpsests.

Alternatively, it has been suggested that convenience of use was the primary advantage of the codex, and under this head various facets of the codex have been highlighted as especially appealing to Christians. The codex was easier to use: unlike the roll, it could be held in one hand, and it was not reversed in the reading so as to require rerolling. The modern reader accustomed to the leaf book may think this an obvious convenience, but it is not clear that the ancient reader experienced any great frustration with the roll book.[54] Besides, any inconvenience would surely have been experienced generally, no more by Christians than others. Yet there are still other aspects of the convenience of the codex that are thought to have had special value for Christians. For one, the codex was compact, less bulky than a roll of the same text because the writing material was reduced by almost half. Martial emphasized the value of this to people who traveled with books, as early Christian missionaries probably did.[55] Another convenience was the comprehensiveness of the codex: it could compass in one physical entity a single text long enough to have required several rolls or several shorter texts that might normally be found in separate rolls. This advantage, however, seems not to have been exploited at an early time even by Christians, as all the really early Christian codices are of modest size. Besides, the early technology of codex manufacture placed limits on size.[56] Third, it has often been stressed that the convenience of the codex to Christians consisted above all in its ease of reference. Christians from the beginning engaged in discussions and debates in which points were scored by citing texts from Jewish and Christian writings. Arguments from scripture would supposedly have

been easier to make from codices, in which it was possible to turn quickly to individual passages and perhaps to mark pages. Yet this view overlooks the fact that, with the exception of the possibility of placing bookmarks between the leaves of a codex, features that might have provided ease of reference were as rare in the codex as in the roll. Neither had divisions of chapters or verses, and pagination was not common in ancient codices, but when it was present it was of limited help since in books written by hand pagination varied from copy to copy of the same text.[57] Furthermore, the appeal to convenience of reference perhaps depends too much on modern scruples about exact quotation that did not obtain in antiquity, as quotations by Christian writers themselves show well enough.

In sum, although the codex had some small actual and some larger potential advantages over the roll, these cannot explain why the codex became the dominant form of the Christian book early on, yet required much longer to gain currency as the medium of non-Christian literature. Consequently, it has been thought that there must have been a material cause beyond practical considerations. In the words of C. H. Roberts, "So striking an effect must have had a cause of comparable weight."[58] In particular, it has been supposed that some early Christian document of high authority was originally issued in a codex and that the authority of its content carried over to the kind of book in which it was transcribed, and thus the codex was powerfully promoted as the standard form of the Christian book.

Roberts himself initially suggested that it was the Gospel of Mark that had this far-reaching result.[59] Relying on the tradition (Papias, in Eusebius, *H.E.* 3.39.15–16) that Mark had written down the reminiscences of Peter, Roberts supposed that Mark's Gospel was written in a parchment codex, the usual instrument for note taking. In support of this idea, Roberts pointed out that the parchment codex may have had a Roman origin (compare Quintillian and Martial) and that Mark's Gospel has often been associated with Rome. To explain why the earliest surviving Christian manuscripts are papyrus codices in Egypt he appealed to the tradition (Eusebius, *H.E.* 2.24) that associates Mark the evangelist with the founding of the Alexandrian church. Thus, according to Roberts, if the Gospel of Mark reached Egypt as a parchment codex, it would have been copied there onto papyrus, while the codex format would have been preserved because it had "a sentimental and symbolic value as well as a practical one" and because it usefully distinguished Christian from Jewish and pagan books.[60]

For all its ingenuity, this theory is liable to many objections. The

proposition that Mark's Gospel consists of Peter's recollections, that it has an original connection with Rome, and that Mark the evangelist had a real link with Alexandria, are all tenuous notions with little or no support in modern scholarship. So also, then, is the assumption that the Gospel of Mark was issued in a parchment codex. Besides, the fact that the Gospel of Mark is poorly represented among the Egyptian papyri in comparison with other Gospels confounds the claim of its early and authoritative use there.[61]

Acknowledging the weaknesses of his original hypothesis, Roberts, together with T. C. Skeat, has more recently proposed a different theory to account for the early and unusual prevalence of the codex in Christian circles.[62] Setting the Gospel of Mark aside, Roberts and Skeat begin by observing that in Judaism, in spite of a proscription against committing the oral Torah to writing, there is evidence that individual halachic decisions were occasionally noted for private study on wax tablets and possibly in papyrus codices.[63] Given this precedent, they suppose that primitive Christians may have used wax tablets to transcribe "the Oral Law as pronounced by Jesus, and that these tablets might have developed into a primitive form of codex."[64] They further suggest that when and as a collection of dominical sayings evolved into a full-blown narrative Gospel, that Gospel may well have been transcribed in a codex, thus perpetuating the format of earlier materials. Since such a Gospel would have had substantial authority, the argument goes, it could have served to establish in Christian usage the codex form in which it was known. In this revised view, the Christian use of the papyrus codex need not be related to the parchment codex or to Rome but could have arisen independently in a Christian setting with a strong Jewish heritage and constituency. Antioch, they venture, is the likely location of that Christian community.[65]

This revised theory is less objectionable than the first only because it is less specific, but its general conjectures are still not plausible. To prove the use of papyrus codices in Judaism, Roberts and Skeat simply misinterpret some late and sketchy notices.[66] Further, to draw an analogy between the sayings of Jesus and oral Torah disregards the great difference between them in content, form, setting, and aim. Moreover, the idea that Jesus' teachings were originally inscribed on tablets, let alone papyrus codices, is completely speculative. Roberts and Skeat acknowledge that the use of tablets for writing elements of oral Torah did not result in any use of the codex in Judaism but counter that whereas in Judaism the use of rolls was "rooted in tradition and prescribed by the Law," Christians felt no such scruples.[67] Surely this

underestimates the Jewish self-consciousness of first-century Jewish-Christians in Palestine and Syria. In any case, it would be deeply incongruous if Christians had felt bound by informal conventions governing the writing of oral Torah but not by the far stronger, formal Jewish convention of the roll book. Since the theory appeals to no particular document, Roberts' and Skeat's claims about the literary history or theological valuation of the sayings of Jesus simply hang in the air. In short, this explanation does not work. This does not mean, however, that a good hypothesis is not available.[68]

Though the theories of Roberts and Skeat are unconvincing, the basic assumption behind them is sound: there must have been a decisive, precedent-setting development in the publication and circulation of early Christian literature that rapidly established the codex in Christian use, and it is likely that this development had to do with the religious authority accorded to whatever Christian document(s) first came to be known in codex form. There are good reasons to think that this distinction belonged to an early edition of the letters of Paul.[69]

Roberts and Skeat tacitly assumed that nothing short of a Gospel-type document that evoked dominical authority could have predisposed Christians to the codex. Yet this is neither self-evident nor plausible. No known Gospel can be said to have attained by the early second century a fixed and general esteem over either oral tradition or other Gospel documents.[70] The situation is completely different with the letters of Paul. From the period of Paul's own activity and in accordance with his own aims, his letters were the documentary instruments of his apostolic teaching and authority throughout the Pauline mission field. Not only were Paul's letters, so far as we know, the earliest Christian writings, they were also the earliest to be valued, imitated, to circulate beyond their original recipients, and to be collected. Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, and Polycarp of Smyrna all attest that Paul's letters were known and used over a broad geographic area by the end of the first and the beginning of the second centuries.[71] Paul's letters were also the earliest Christian writings to be considered apostolic in origin and authority and the only ones with a clear prima facie claim to that distinction. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that they were the first Christian writings to receive the epithet of "scripture" (2 Pet. 3.15–16). Hence, if it is a question what early Christian document(s) had the religious authority and breadth of circulation to establish the codex as the form of the Christian book by the early second century, the letters of Paul must be considered first. Indeed, in the relevant period they have no rivals. If,

however, these observations are suggestive, of themselves they prove nothing, and more particular points must be adduced.

The origins of the collected Pauline letters are obscure. Though theories about the agents, motives, shape, and provenance of the collection are diverse, there is broad agreement that a more or less full collection had come into existence by the late years of the first century.[72] There is no direct evidence about the content and order of the earliest collection, but important conclusions can be reached through a careful evaluation of later evidence.

During the second century there were two distinct editions of the collected letters of Paul. One was the edition used by Marcion, which consisted of ten letters of Paul arranged in the order Galatians, 1–2 Corinthians, Romans, 1–2 Thessalonians, Loadiceans (=Ephesians), Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon.[73] The other edition lies behind most early Greek manuscripts, including the earliest extant manuscript of Paul's collected letters, P 46, which is dated about 200 C.E. This edition offered the letters in a different order: Romans, Corinthians (1–2), Ephesians, Galatians, Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians (1–2). Manuscripts with this arrangement normally also include, after the letters to churches, the "personal letters," given in the order Timothy (1–2), Titus, and Philemon, although the letters to individuals probably did not originally belong to this edition, with the probable exception of Philemon.[74] The order of the letters in this edition (with or without the personal letters) is one of decreasing length, Romans being the longest and standing at the head, 1 Corinthians being the next longest and standing second, and so on. Both of these editions were already current by the middle of the second century. This is obvious for the edition of Marcion and hardly less so for the edition attested by P 46, which certainly did not originate in Egypt and which must have undergone development in order to include Hebrews.

There is also evidence, though less direct, of yet a third early edition of the letters of Paul. There is an old theory, mentioned in a number of ancient Christian sources, that the apostle had written to seven churches and that therefore, because the number seven symbolized totality or universality, Paul had addressed the church at large.[75] This idea almost certainly rests on an actual early edition of the letters that presented them as "letters to seven churches." Although no seven-churches edition has been preserved, we find its traces whenever the letters are enumerated by decreasing length, with letters to the same community reckoned as one unit: Corinthians, Romans, Ephesians,

Thessalonians, Galatians, Philippians, and Colossians (Philemon?).[76] This is an order of decreasing length because the two Corinthian letters are taken together as one length unit, and so also are the two Thessalonian letters. If Philemon were included, it would have been taken together with Colossians. Reckoning length in this way places the emphasis not upon the number of *letters* Paul wrote, but on the number of *churches* to which he wrote. This enumeration firmly indicates that there was once an edition of Paul's letters that contained ten letters presented as they are addressed: to exactly seven churches. This edition must go back to a very early time and indeed has the best claim to have been the most ancient edition of the Pauline letter collection.[77] Several observations serve to substantiate this.

First, an edition of Paul's correspondence as "letters to seven churches" is closely related to a problem that the ancient church had with Paul's letters, namely, their narrow particularity.[78] Paul wrote to individual Christian congregations about matters that were of immediate and local interest to them. This made it difficult for other congregations to appreciate the value and authority of the letters for them. How could such letters be relevant and useful to other churches even though they were written by an apostle? The textual tradition of Paul's letters preserves indications of an early, certainly first-century, effort to overcome the problem by deleting or generalizing the addresses of some of the letters and sometimes by omitting other locally specific matter as well, thus mechanically conferring on Paul's particular letters the appearance of general letters.[79] This was not, however, a really satisfactory solution, for the particularity of most of Paul's letters was too extensive to be obscured through textual emendation. An edition that presented the letters as written to seven churches solved the problem in another way: it demonstrated the universal value of Paul's letters in the form of the collection itself. Thus the problem of particularity was at once embraced and overcome. An edition of this type, then, is closely linked to a problem that arose in the first century, when the letters first began to circulate among churches to which they had not been addressed. This fact argues for its early date.

Second, although it is beyond my immediate purpose to argue for a genetic relation between all three editions of the collection attested for the second century, there is persuasive evidence of such a relation between two of them, namely, the edition used by Marcion and the seven-churches edition.[80] In the edition used by Marcion the letters are not arranged by decreasing length, for Galatians stands at the beginning, and Laodiceans (=Ephesians) follows the Thessalonian let-

ers. Nevertheless, with these exceptions, the order of Marcion's corpus *is* governed by decreasing length if the two Corinthian letters are taken together as one length-unit and the two Thessalonian letters as another.[81] Since the principle of decreasing length is not consistently followed and has no constitutive significance for the edition used by Marcion, the presence of its clear vestiges reveals the indebtedness of Marcion's edition to an earlier one that did adhere to this principle. And, since the two Corinthian letters were taken to form one length-unit and the two Thessalonian letters to form another, the earlier edition must have given special emphasis to the *number of communities* addressed by Paul and hence must have been an edition of Paul's letters to seven churches.[82] The edition used by Marcion did not contain the pastoral Epistles (1–2 Timothy, Titus). With the exception of Philemon, it consisted of community letters only, and Philemon, strictly speaking, is not a private letter because it too is addressed to a community. It is not only possible but probable that in Marcion's collection Philemon did not stand at the end as a private letter but followed Colossians and preceded Philippians, so that Colossians and Philemon were construed as companion letters addressed to the same community, like the Corinthian and the Thessalonian letters.[83] Thus the edition used by Marcion has every appearance of being a modified form of an older edition, an edition shaped by the idea that Paul wrote to precisely seven churches and in which the letters were arranged in a sequence of decreasing length.[84] If this edition was older than Marcion's time, it was early indeed and must go back to the beginning of the second century at the latest.

Third, it is intriguing that at the end of the first century and the beginning of the next there appeared in Christian circles two other groups of letters addressed to seven churches: the letters at the beginning of the Apocalypse (2:1–3:22) and the letters of Ignatius of Antioch. The group of seven letters in the Apocalypse is a literary creation of its author, while the group of seven letters of Ignatius is an editorial creation of Polycarp. Neither is an imitation of the other, but if their appearance in the same general area and period is not a mighty coincidence, each may well reflect an early edition of the Pauline letters presented as a collection of letters to seven churches.[85]

There is therefore substantial evidence that in the early second century (and probably earlier), there was a collection of ten Pauline letters arranged on the principle of decreasing length and counting together letters addressed to the same community, thus emphasizing that Paul had written to seven churches. Because of its interest in

demonstrating Paul's catholicity and because it seems to be presupposed by the edition Marcion used, this collection may be taken as the most primitive edition of the letters of the apostle.[86]

Now I can raise the question of immediate interest: in what kind of book was this edition of the Pauline letters published? The two outstanding features of the primitive edition of Paul's letters were, first, its emphasis on the number of churches addressed by Paul, and second, its arrangement of the letters by decreasing length. Neither feature could have been established or sustained unless the letters were contained in a *single* book. If the edition had consisted of a group of codices or rolls, even so small a group as two, it could not have signified Paul's catholic relevance, for nothing would prevent the individual codices or rolls from being taken separately and the sevenfold disposition of the letters thus being obscured or lost. Likewise, the order of the letters from longest to shortest would have been equally insecure, since the individual codices or rolls could have been reordered. The very nature of this edition therefore required its presentation as a physical unit, a single book. Yet was this book a codex or a roll?

Theoretically it could have been a roll, since a papyrus roll of any length could be constructed. As we have seen, however, a roll longer than eleven meters was cumbersome, and most were somewhat shorter. If the ten Pauline letters had been inscribed in a roll, what length roll would have been required? This question is not easy to answer because of transcriptional variables: the size of script, the height of the upper and lower margins, the width of intercolumniations, and the height of the roll itself would all have a bearing. Even so, it is possible to make a reasonable estimate. Theodore C. Skeat, in trying to determine the cost differential between a roll and a codex has derived figures that are useful for my purpose.[87] Taking the oldest extensive manuscript of the Pauline letters, P 46, as a basis, assuming the same size script, the same number of letters to the line, and the same number of lines to a column, he calculated an average column width of 1½ centimeters. Multiplying this by the number of columns (208), and adding 207 intercolumniations estimated at two centimeters each, Skeat arrived at the figure of 2,806 centimeters as the length of a papyrus roll required for the transcription of the text of P 46. If we deduct the space required by the text of Hebrews, which is found in P 46 but did not belong to the primitive edition, then the seven-churches edition of Paul's letters would have required a roll approximately twenty-four meters (eighty feet) long, which would have been more than

double the maximum length of Greek rolls and roughly three times what may be regarded as a normal length. Because the length of rolls was determined by custom and convenience, a roll of such extent is extremely unlikely. For a book intended to be read and studied and thus regularly handled, as an edition of Paul's letters assuredly was, a roll of such length is plainly inconceivable.[88] If Paul's letters were transcribed in a single book, as the features of the earliest recoverable edition required, that book must have been a codex, not a roll.[89]

It is only in connection with a seven-churches edition of the Pauline letters that we can find in the early history of Christian literature both the materials and a motive that might have conspired to suggest the use of a codex rather than a roll. It is also only in connection with the letters of Paul that we can see by the early second century an esteem for the authority of any Christian documents sufficient to have promoted the codex into prominence as the appropriate medium of Christian literature. This coming together of transcriptional need and religious authority in the Pauline letter collection and nowhere else makes it nearly certain that the codex was introduced into Christian usage as the vehicle of a primitive edition of the *corpus Paulinum*.

On this hypothesis the adoption of the codex by early Christianity was neither circumstantial nor arbitrary, but a careful decision based upon the advantages of the codex for the text at hand. One advantage was its comprehensiveness, which permitted, as a roll would not, the transcription of all the letters in a single book so that both the number and the order of the letters could be firmly established. Another was what is commonly called ease of reference but might better be termed the capacity of the codex for *random access*, as distinct from the *sequential access* offered by the roll.[90] It is not easy to suppose that a narrative like a Gospel should have first been published in a codex. A Gospel was brief enough to be easily contained in a roll of normal length, and as a narrative it was meant to be read from beginning to end. For this, the codex offered no advantage over the roll. It is unlikely, however, that a sequential reading was ever envisioned for the Pauline letters, save individually in their original settings. As a group they have no necessary sequence but could be and certainly were read and studied selectively. Their availability in a codex permitted easy access to any part of the collection. On no other hypothesis would the unique features of the codex be so clearly an advantage as they are in the case of an edition of Paul's letters.[91]

In arguing that it was the Gospel of Mark that was first given out

as a codex, C. H. Roberts commented that "the circle in which [Mark] moved in Rome—Jewish and Gentile traders, small businessmen, freedmen or slaves—would use wax-tablets or parchment notebooks for their accounts, their correspondence, their legal and official business, and it would be natural that St. Mark should use the same format for a work intended to be copied but not to be published as the ancient world understood publication."[92] Of course, we do not in fact know this about the author of the Gospel of Mark, whose identity and circle are completely obscure. We do, however, know it about Paul, thanks to recent investigations of his social circumstances and the social composition of the Pauline congregations.[93] The codex, whether of parchment or papyrus, would have been familiar to a small businessman like Paul and to the circles in which he moved. We cannot know in what medium his letters left his hand (or the hand of his amanuensis), but it is conceivable that they were written in small codices.[94]

However that may be, it is striking that the first mention of parchment codices in a Greek writing occurs in a letter belonging to the Pauline tradition: in 2 Tim. 4:13, Timothy is requested to "bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments *(kai ta biblia, malista tas membranas)*" [RSV translation]. *Membranai* means "parchment codex." There are two problems in the interpretation of the last phrase in this statement, however. First, it is not clear whether the sense is: (a) "The books, especially the parchments *[tas membranas],*" or (b) "the books, that is, the parchments [*tas membranas*]." The former is the standard sense of the Greek and ought to be preferred.[95] Yet more important is the question of precisely how the term *membranai* should be taken: Does it mean parchment notebooks (in codex form) or codices (of texts)? The difference is not of form but of use: are the membranai regarded, according to their traditional Roman use, as mere notebooks of memorandums, or are they regarded, in accordance with the use of the term by Martial, as codices containing actual texts? Here the latter is certainly to be preferred, since, no matter how the first problem is resolved, the membranai are classified as *ta biblia,* that is, as actual books. Since 2 Timothy is undoubtedly a pseudonymous composition, we must regard this particular notice either as contrived for verisimilitude by the author, or as an element of an authentic Pauline fragment that was incorporated into the letter for the same purpose.[96] In either case the statement reveals that within the Pauline literary and theological tradition there was an established association between the apostle and the codex. Whoever wrote 2 Timothy "felt that mentioning the mem-

branai which the author claims to have left in Troas would strike his fellow Christians as a genuinely Pauline detail."[97]

To claim that the most primitive edition of the Pauline letter collection was put out in a codex and that it was the religious authority of Paul's collected letters that set the standard for the transcription of subsequent Christian literature in codices is not to claim that this marked the first use of the codex in Christian circles. It is possible, perhaps likely, that the codex was first employed in primitive Christianity for collections of texts *(testimonia)* from Jewish scripture. Judging from the predominantly atomistic citation of Jewish scripture in earliest Christianity, this would not have been a matter of producing continuous transcriptions of Jewish scriptural books, but rather of compiling excerpta, that is, selective proof-texts or testimonia.[98] To record such compilations in a codex would have been in keeping with the ordinary use of the codex as a notebook. But even if this were done, it would not have marked a decisive step toward the use of the codex for a (continuous) literary text. Rather, that step appears to have been taken, as I have argued, in connection with the letters of Paul.

It cannot be persuasively argued that early Christianity "invented" the codex, nor that Christians were the first to use it for something more than notes. The evidence shows only that Christians adopted the codex in preference to the roll as a medium for literature sooner and more decisively than their contemporaries and so promoted its popularity.[99] That they did so says something important about the uses and functions of early Christian writings.

As I have noted, among the non-Christian manuscripts that can be dated to the second century the codex is poorly represented in comparison with the roll. It is worth seeing, nevertheless, what these early non-Christian codices can tell us.[100] Of the seventeen Greek codices that come into consideration, eleven are literary texts, while six are what may appropriately be called professional manuals—grammatical, lexical, and medical handbooks. It may well be that several of the literary texts in this group were working copies for educational use and so also fall into the category of professional manuals.[101] Thus, the early non-Christian evidence suggests an essentially utilitarian attitude toward the codex even when it is employed as the medium for a text, that is, as an actual book and not merely as a notebook. This ought not surprise us, since the original function of the codex as an instrument for recording ephemera was altogether practical, but it does indicate an intermediate stage in the developing use of the codex. We should not imagine that the codex moved directly and

immediately from the status of a notebook to that of a book. Rather, what began as a utilitarian notebook came to serve as a utilitarian book, which eventually gained regard as a book proper and a genuine peer of the roll.

It is to this intermediate phase in the evolving status of the codex—in the late first and early second centuries—that the earliest Christian books belong. It is misleading to suppose that the Christian step was to employ the codex for the transcription of literature. The Christians who made them and made use of them did not regard them either as notebooks or as books of fine literature. Neither did they intend a bibliographic innovation nor aim to distinguish Christian books from pagan or Jewish books. These were, to be sure, consequences of the early use Christians made of the codex, and as consequences they are clear enough in retrospect. Still, the historian must guard against the temptation to identify results with reasons, a temptation to which students of the problem have been especially vulnerable. It is more probable that the early Christians adapted a familiar, practical medium for a new but still practical purpose. Christian texts came to be inscribed in codices not because they enjoyed a special status as aesthetic or cult objects, but because they were practical books for everyday use: the handbooks, as it were, of the Christian community.

THE CONSTRUCTION AND INSCRIPTION OF EARLY CHRISTIAN BOOKS

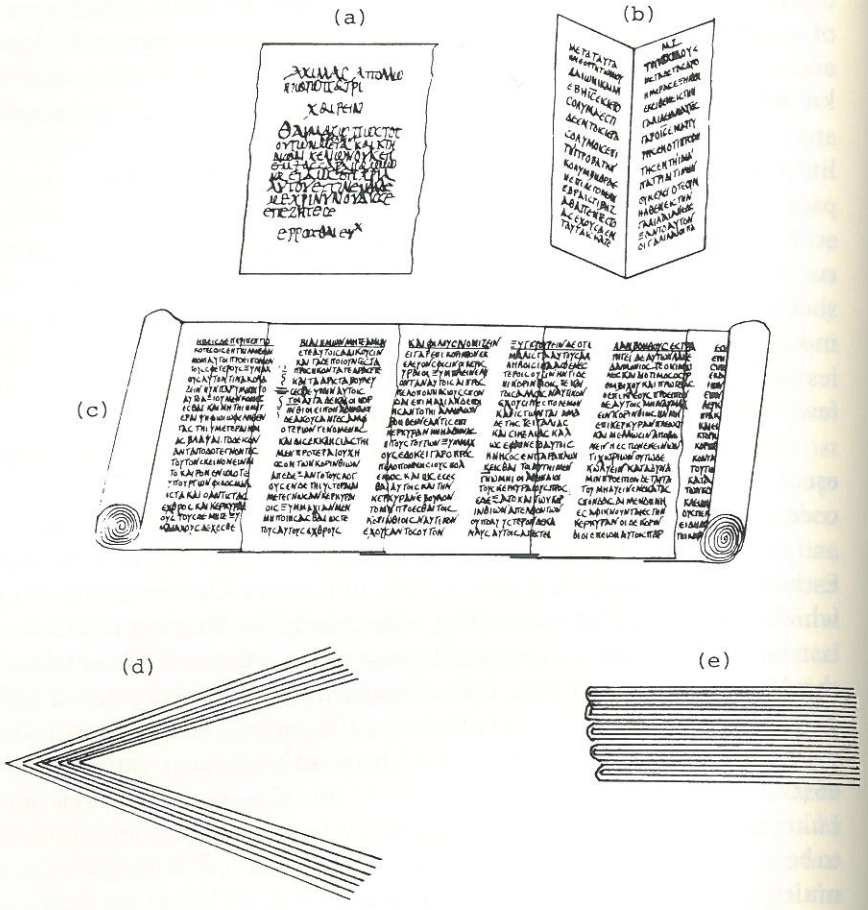
The practical nature of early Christian books is indicated not only by the choice of the codex but by features of their construction and inscription as well. Judging from the extant examples, they were books of relatively small size. Although there is some variation, they range between twenty and twenty-five centimeters in height and ten and fifteen centimeters in breadth. These dimensions were typical of codices made of papyrus. They took a rectangular shape, the height being about twice the breadth. Parchment codices, however, tended to be square.[102] The height of a papyrus codex was limited by the height of the roll from which the sheets were cut, while the height of a parchment codex was not. Though a papyrus codex could be made as broad as one wished by cutting a longer sheet from a roll, the tendency was clearly to cut the sheets more or less to the square.

Most early papyrus codices are constructed on the single-quire method; that is, one set of sheets is stacked, folded vertically at the center, and stitched along (rather than immediately in) the fold to form

one large gathering. The multiple-quire method, by which smaller sets of sheets (as many as twelve but usually four) were stacked and folded and the smaller gatherings then stacked and stitched together, is also known in some early codices but is less common. Generally, it would appear that the single-quire method, being simpler and within certain limits perfectly functional, was the earliest method of constructing a papyrus codex.[103] A single-quire codex has deficiencies. It is limited in scope: no more than about fifty sheets (yielding a hundred leaves and two hundred pages) could be conveniently used in this way. The more sheets used, the greater the stress at the stitching along the fold, the more the closed codex tended to spring open, and the more the central leaves protruded at the fore edge when the codex was closed. With fewer sheets these problems were manageable.

The earliest Christian books, then, were not capacious. The largest of the Christian single-quire papyrus codices are the Chester Beatty codex of the Pauline epistles (P 46), which originally ran to 208 pages; and the Chester Beatty codices (IX–X) of Ezekiel, Daniel, Susanna, and Esther, which had 236 pages; of Numbers and Deuteronomy (VI), which had 216; and of Isaiah (VII), which had 224. Single-quire Christian codices, however, were usually smaller than these: P 47 contained the Apocalypse in 46 pages, P 52 contained the Gospel of John in 130 pages, and P 5 had the Gospel of John in 100 pages. The multiple-quire papyrus codex was not unknown for Christian books at an early time: P 66 (the Gospel of John), and P 4 + 64 + 67 (the Gospels of Matthew and Luke) both come from the second century. Up to a point, there appears to be no correlation between the manner of construction (single versus multiple quire) and the intended scope of content: P 75 had the Gospels of John and Luke in a single quire of 144 pages, whereas P 66 used multiple quires to contain the Gospel of John in 156 pages. Only when a book of much more than two hundred pages was wanted did it become necessary to consider the advantages of multiple-quire construction. Though it is not the earliest Christian codex to be made up in multiple quires, P 45, containing the four Gospels and Acts in about 440 pages, is the earliest (third-century) one whose content could not have been accommodated in a single quire.

The large majority of Christian codices in the earliest period contain the text of only a single document. With the exception of the letters of Paul, the practice of collecting discrete texts within a single codex was limited. Normally, each document was physically a book unto itself and not a very long one. Therefore, though multiple quires might be used, the single quire sufficed and was the norm for the



2.

A. A single sheet of papyrus used to write a letter.

B. A single sheet of papyrus folded vertically at its center (used to make a papyrus codex).

C. An open papyrus roll inscribed in columns, with the vertical lines indicating the joins *(kolleseis)* of single sheets of papyrus.

D. End-on view of a single-quire codex.

E. End-on view of a multiple-quire codex.

Drawings A, B, and C, by W. E. H. Cockle, are from E. G. Turner, *The Typology of the Early Codex* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977), 45.

earliest Christian books. Hence, when we envision these books we must think of them as pamphlets, not as tomes (see fig. 2).

I have said that the papyrus roll was sometimes furnished with a parchment sheath for protection. The codex could also be given a cover, though of a different sort. No codex of the first three centuries has been preserved with its cover.[104] A dearth of evidence on this point has now been richly remedied by the discovery of the Nag Hammadi codices, generally dated to the mid–fourth century, of which eleven survived with their covers intact. These covers are usually made of leather, mainly sheepskin, each cut in a single sheet of slightly larger dimensions than the sheets of papyrus used for the codex, with the hair side on the exterior. The leading edge of the front of the cover extends to form a flap (triangular or rectangular) that overlaps the edge of the back when the codex is closed, and to this extension is attached a thong to be wrapped around the closed codex. Shorter thongs at the top and bottom were tied for further security. The skin was stiffened by gluing layers of discarded papyrus on the inside, folding the edges of the skin over it, and pasting a fresh piece of papyrus over the stiffener and folded edges. The cover was further strengthened by gluing an additional strip of leather along the length of the spine on the inside. Cordlike thongs extending from the spine were passed through the papyrus sheets to secure the codex within the cover.[105] These covers, which look more like leather envelopes than modern book bindings, may not be taken as representative of codex covers in general. Other and less well-worked covers, sometimes consisting of wooden boards linked at the spine with the codex glued in, were also used.[106] Like covers for rolls, covers were probably not always provided for codices, and when they were, the type of cover probably depended on the preferences of the owner and the value of the text.

Equally interesting for my purposes are the inscriptional features of early Christian books. Christian or not, papyrus codices were usually inscribed in one broad column for each page. This contrasts with the tall narrow columns in which rolls were traditionally written, and the reason is obvious: the relatively narrow page of the papyrus codex did not readily accommodate two columns of writing.[107] Parchment codices, however, with their more nearly square pages, were usually inscribed with two columns a page. The difference in the relative dimensions of the page between the papyrus and the parchment codex is a necessary condition of these different methods of inscription. The actual cause of the narrower double columns typical of parchment codices would seem rather to lie in the conservatism of scribes, who

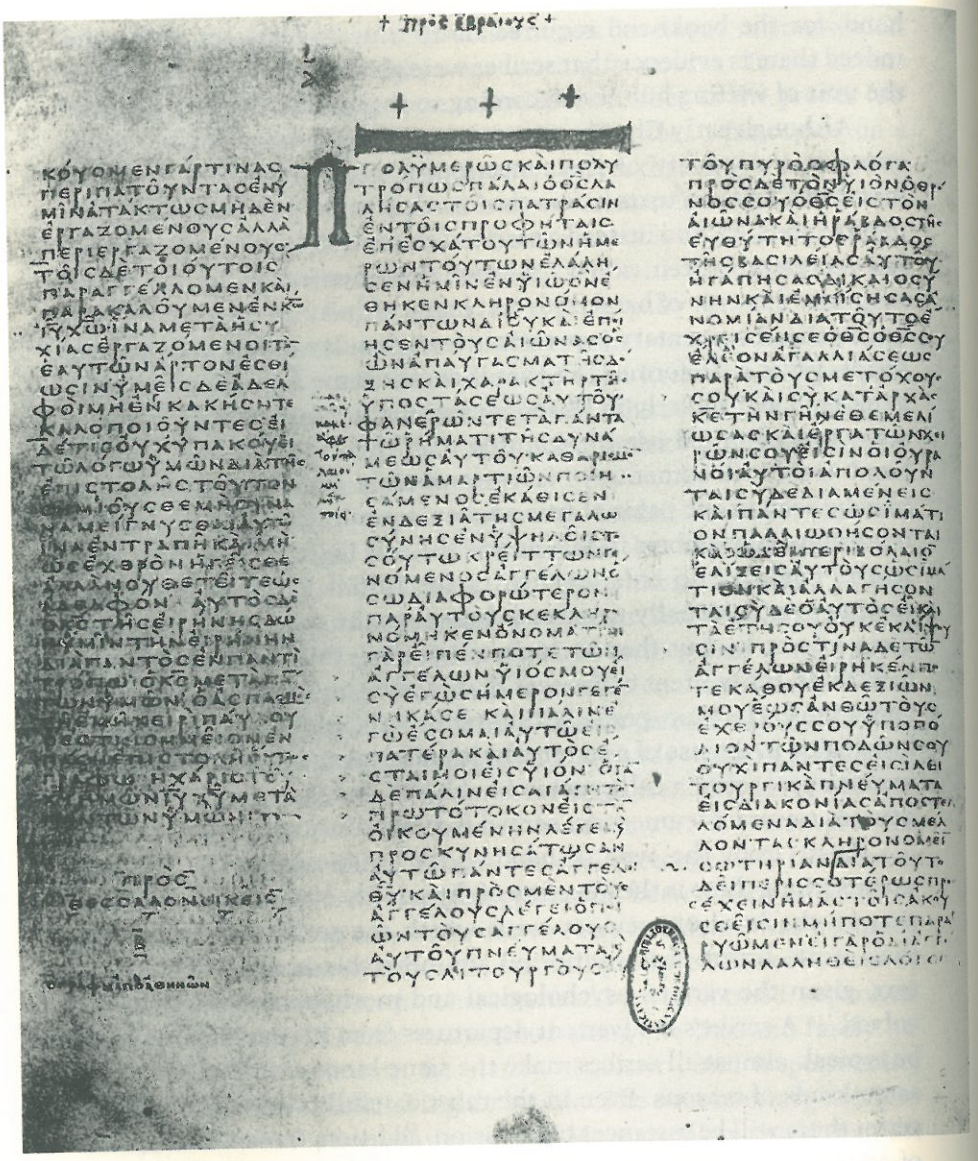
whenever possible followed the conventions developed in connection with the roll, even when they were writing in a codex. To the extent that tall, narrow columns were regarded by scribes as the proper format of the literary roll, it is plausible that "scribes who copied on a codex of papyrus in a single column were aware that they were writing a second-class book."[108] Here we may see a correlative of the evolutionary development of the codex from notebook to book. For Greek and Latin literature the codex achieved parity with the roll only in the fourth century, and when it did so it was principally the codex made of parchment, which was inscribed much as rolls had been. Earlier, however, when the roll persisted as the vehicle of literature and papyrus appears to have been the ordinary material of the codex, the method of inscription reflected the lower status of the codex: though not a notebook, neither was its format literary.

Inscription has to do not only with format but also with the character of the script. Roberts commented that the varieties of ancient scribal hands are "easier to recognize than to define,"[109] and paleography is truly an art as much as a science. Yet the paleographer is less concerned with the hands of individual scribes than with types of script, and since scribes were trained professionals, the scripts they used were largely standardized within certain periods. Only occasionally is it possible to discriminate individual hands within a given type. Within my period of study there are two fundamental types of writing, the bookhand and the documentary hand. In extreme examples the differences between these scripts are easily recognized, but manuscripts show an enormous range of gradations between the two, and an absolute dividing line cannot be drawn. The bookhand was normally employed, as the name indicates, for well-produced books of literary content. It is a careful script, characterized by well-formed, separated, and upright letters evenly maintained along the line and rarely extended above or below it. Its clarity, regularity, and impersonality render it both beautiful and highly legible. The documentary hand, by comparison, was for everyday purposes. More rapidly written than the bookhand, this cursive script is characterized by simplified and less careful letter formation, the frequent use of ligatures (strokes connecting or combining letters without lifting the pen between them), and the extension of certain letters well above or below the writing line. Lacking the stately elegance of literary script, the documentary hand is merely legible, neither well adapted to reading nor artistic in its appearance. It is natural to assume that a book written in a formal bookhand was more expensive than one written in a documentary

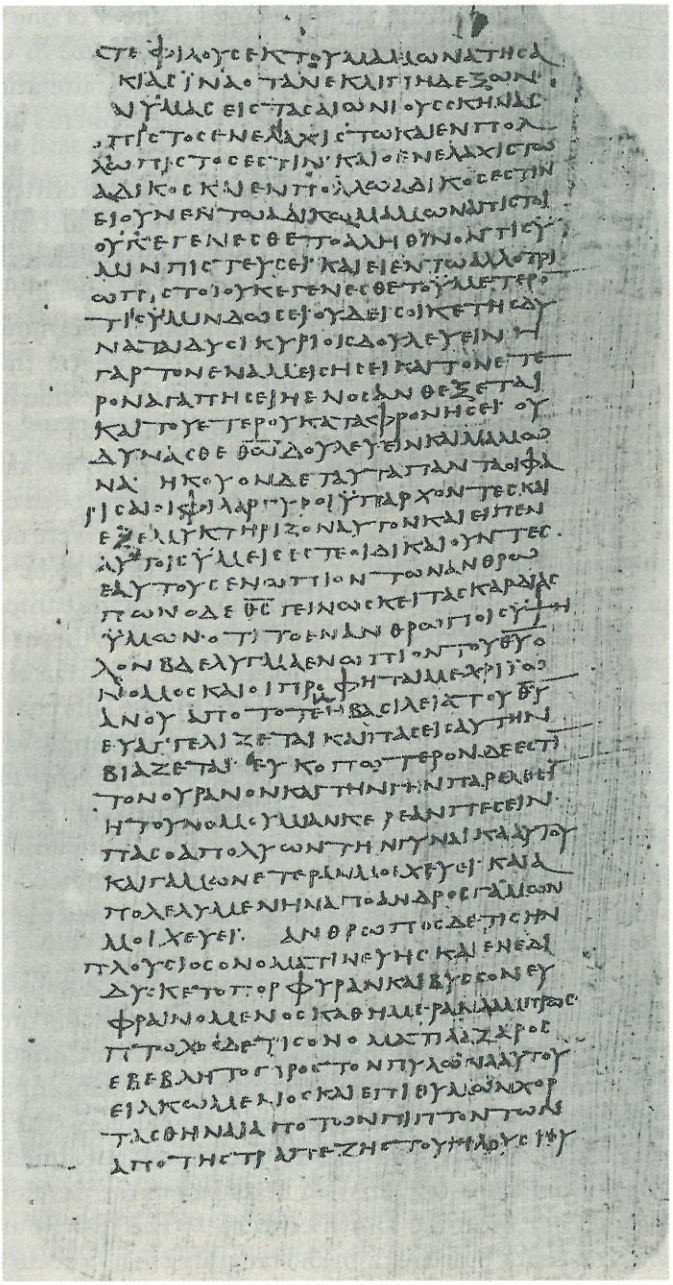
hand, for the bookhand required more time and greater skill. And indeed there is evidence that scribes were paid not merely according to the unit of writing but also according to the quality of the script.[110]

Although early Christian manuscripts display considerable differences in the quality of their inscription, a fine bookhand is rarely found in Christian texts before the fourth century. In earlier Christian manuscripts we find instead a script of the "informal round" type that has sometimes been called reformed documentary.[111] As the name suggests, this type of hand finds its closest affinity not in literary texts but in the documentary papyri. It is a work-a-day rather than artistic script, yet it is "reformed" in that it shows some aspiration toward a bookhand, particularly in its more careful letter formation and somewhat more limited use of ligatures than the ordinary documentary hand. Other "documentary" features of early Christian manuscripts may be seen in the habit of using letters for numerical values instead of writing out numbers in full, as was the rule in literary works,[112] and in the tendency to enlarge slightly the initial letters of a page or section or occasionally to extend them into the margin.[113] Because it aims less at beauty than at higher legibility, this hand suggests an interest in the content of the text that is more or less indifferent to its appearance. Here too, perhaps, the status of the codex in Christian use is revealed in the use of a script that is practical and legible, that by no means approaches a calligraphic bookhand, and yet restricts the tendencies toward documentary scrawl (see figs. 3 and 4).

Apart from the type of hand characteristic of early Christian manuscripts, there is the question of the quality of their transcription, that is, the level of accuracy with which the scribes accomplished their work. Errors of transcription are inevitable in any hand-copied text, given the various psychological and mechanical operations involved.[114] A scribe's inadvertent departures from his exemplar tend to be typical: almost all scribes make the same kinds of mistakes for the same kinds of reasons. Even in the most carefully transcribed manuscript there will be instances of omission, addition, transposition, and, of course, misspelling. Sometimes scribes made intentional changes in the text as they copied, undertaking to improve the language or to clarify the sense, assuming that they were rectifying the error of a previous scribe. Scribal mistakes occur as often in Christian as in other hand-copied books, and indeed in the early period they were frequent. In addition to the general liability of scribes to error, early Christian texts held some particular inducements, especially to intentional changes. For example, the often closely parallel accounts among



3. A page of Codex Vaticanus (fourth century) showing the conclusion of 2 Thess. and the beginning of Hebrews. This parchment codex is written in three tall, narrow columns to the page, with forty-two lines to the column, and illustrates the regular and well-formed letters of a professional bookhand. From B. M. Metzger, *Manuscripts of the Greek Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 75.



4. A page of P 75, a Christian papyrus codex of the early third century, giving the text of Luke 16:9–21. The text is written in an "informal round" script in one broad column to the page. From B. M. Metzger, *Manuscripts of the Greek Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 69.

the Gospels led many a scribe to harmonize the text of one with the text of another. Inexact quotations of Jewish scripture in Christian texts were often conformed to the Septuagint. Some alterations were made for theological reasons, the scribe revising elements of the text that were doctrinally problematic.[115]

The study of scribal habits is important for textual criticism in its effort to determine the original text of documents.[116] It also sheds light on the nature of early Christian book production in which the scribe was an important agent and, in the earliest period, usually the only one. There is among early Christian manuscripts an enormous variety in the quality of transcription, and in part this reflects the diverse capacities and habits of individual scribes. It is one question how well-trained a scribe was, but another how he applied himself to his task. Some scribes of Christian manuscripts were scrupulous and copied their models faithfully. Others, though they may have been capable of good work, indulged a carelessness that suggests they were not professionally engaged or else did not consider themselves to be writing a high-quality book.[117] The number of corruptions in the earliest manuscripts indicates that during the first several centuries these texts were widely circulated and frequently copied and that Christian books were not reproduced under highly controlled conditions. This conclusion is borne out by the fact that the great majority of textual variants in those documents that were ultimately included in the New Testament appear to have arisen by about 200 C.E. The relatively free transmission of early Christian texts, which resulted in a proliferation of individual variants and diverse textual traditions, may indicate a greater interest in making these texts available than in the strict accuracy of their transcription.

There are, however, some interesting and important inscriptional peculiarities that belong to Christian manuscripts. In his meticulous examination of early codices, both Christian and non-Christian, E. G. Turner discerned a tendency in early Christian manuscripts for the scribe to write fewer lines to the page and fewer letters to the line than was usual. Turner thought this was not accidental, but aimed to facilitate the *public* reading of Christian texts before the development of large format codices in the fourth century.[118] The relative frequency with which accents, punctuation, and breathing marks occur in Christian manuscripts, compared with the larger run of ancient literary texts, corroborates a special interest in public reading.[119]

A more noticeable and extremely widespread peculiarity in the inscription of early Christian books is the phenomenon of the *nomina*

sacra, the scribal convention of contracting the written form of a number of words, most but not all of them names, which have particular religious significance.[120] The terms were contracted in various ways: by writing only the first and last letters, or the first two and the last, or the first and last two, or the first and last syllables. A horizontal line was always drawn over these letters to indicate that a contraction had been made and that the word could not be pronounced as written. Fifteen terms were commonly subject to this practice in early Christian manuscripts, and these can be subdivided into three groups according to the frequency of their contraction: God, Jesus, Christ, Lord; Spirit, Man, Cross; Father, Son, Savior, Mother, Heaven, Israel, David, Jerusalem. Only the four in the first group were consistently contracted. The remaining terms were less frequently treated as nomina sacra, but those of the second group were nevertheless common.

No early Christian writer alludes to this transcriptional practice, and we can only conjecture its origin and purpose. It is found in the majority of manuscripts and appears fully developed in the earliest manuscripts available.[121] The earliest evidence of it, however, is not paleographic. The author of the Epistle of Barnabas, writing near the beginning of the second century, was acquainted with the system of nomina sacra. He discovers (9.8) in the number of Abraham's companions, 318 (Gen. 14:14), a prefiguration both of the cross and of Jesus. This may well presuppose that in his Greek manuscript of Genesis the number 318 was not written out in full *(triakosious deka kai okto)* but was represented by Greek letters used as numbers: tau, iota and eta. The tau (=300), he took as a symbol of the cross, and the iota + eta (=18) as a suspended (rather than contracted) form of the name Jesus. Hence the author knew at least the convention of treating the name Jesus as a *nomen sacrum.*

No theory of the origin and significance of the system of nomina sacra has yet commanded general assent. There is broad agreement that it has something to do with Jewish reverence for the Tetragram, the name of God, but it has proved difficult to say exactly what. Among Jews the piety that forbade pronunciation of the divine name did not necessarily extend to the way the name was written, but it did in some cases. In writing Hebrew biblical texts, Jewish scribes usually wrote the name in the normal way, though it was the custom when reading the texts to pronounce a surrogate, ordinarily *adoni,* "the Lord," instead of the Tetragram. This eventually gave rise to the practice in vocalized Masoretic manuscripts of the eighth century C.E. and later of attaching the vowels of adoni to the consonants of the Tetra-

gram.[122] In the earlier tradition of the strictly consonantal transcription of Hebrew, however, there are numerous manuscripts in which the name is transcribed in diverse but conspicuous ways, clearly showing that reverence for the divine name had consequences in scribal usages as well as in pronunciation.[123]

Most directly relevant to the issue of the Christian nomina sacra is the way the divine name was treated in Greek manuscripts of Jewish scripture. Judging from the few identifiably Jewish manuscripts of the Septuagint that survive, it appears to have been customary to write the divine name in Hebrew or Aramaic characters, even in the midst of the Greek text (or, infrequently, to transliterate it with the Greek letters IAO).[124] Here, then, the sanctity of the name had transcriptional consequences. It was, of course, the Greek version of the Jewish scriptures that was the Bible of the early church. Within the increasingly and soon almost exclusively Gentile, Greek-speaking constituency of Christianity, texts rendering the divine name in Hebrew characters were anomalous at best and meaningless at worst. So it is not surprising that early Christian copies of Jewish scripture did not follow the Jewish transcriptional practice but rendered the Tetragram with the Greek words *theos* and *kyrios*, yet in the contracted forms *ths* and *ks*. This is peculiar, if only because neither Jews nor Christians would have attached to the Greek words *theos* or *kyrios* the special reverence belonging to the Tetragram, and much less would they have had scruples about pronouncing these words. Hence, the special way of writing these terms is perplexing.

An elaborate explanation of the nomina sacra has been offered by Roberts. To account for its early and widespread occurrence, he suggested that it must have originated early in the apostolic period (before 70 C.E.) and was probably devised by the primitive Jewish Christian community in Jerusalem. This community, he argued, embraced a mystical "theology of the Name," a theology, he claimed, that lay behind and was implicit in the scribal convention of transcribing certain terms in contracted form.[125] For all its ingenuity, this explanation is unconvincing. We know little about the theology of primitive Jerusalemite Christianity, and the evidence that it took a strong interest in the divine name is extremely slim. Moreover, by reaching so far back to find a sufficiently authoritative source for the nomina sacra, Roberts put himself in the awkward position of claiming that a scribal convention known only in Greek manuscripts was established in and by an Aramaic-speaking community, and this in a period before the composition of any known Christian literature.

Simpler explanations are available. Schuyler Brown has argued that it is a mistake to correlate the Christian nomina sacra and the Jewish reverence for the divine name too closely and that the Christian phenomenon is strictly scribal and has nothing to do with pronunciation. He thinks that when Christian scribes copying manuscripts of the Greek version of Jewish scriptures came across the divine name in Hebrew, they substituted the Greek equivalent, *kyrios*, but retained the function of the Hebrew term to distinguish the sacred name from the rest of the text. They did so by writing *kyrios* in a contracted form and drawing a line above it. In doing so, Brown urges, they were merely calling into service a documentary technique of secular scribes who sometimes contracted names and titles.[126] Subsequently, because in early Christianity *kyrios* was used of both God and Jesus, the practice of contraction was extended in both directions, to *theos* on the one hand and to *Iesous* and *Christos* on the other. The problem with this explanation is that the evidence is poor for contractions (as distinct from abbreviations) in secular documents, and there is none for the use of a superscriptive stroke. Yet there is no reason why the Christian method of writing divine names should have had an exact religious or secular analogue. The ability to set off the divine name in Christian manuscripts of Septuagintal texts, not by continuing to write it in Hebrew as Jews did but in some other way, must have occurred early to Greek-speaking Christian scribes copying Jewish manuscripts. The contracted forms of *theos* and *kyrios* probably derive, as G. Howard supposes, from Gentile Christians who, lacking the support of the Jewish tradition for retaining the Tetragram in (Greek) Christian copies of Jewish texts, adopted instead clearly designated contractions of Greek equivalents "out of deference to the Jewish Christians, to mark the sacredness of the divine name which stood behind these surrogates."[127] The principle, used at first with respect to texts of Jewish scripture, would have been extended under christological warrants to the further names, Jesus and Christ, in Christian documents. The still broader application of the practice to various other terms may have followed once the original significance of the first contractions had been lost.

Although the origin and meaning of the nomina sacra may never be fully explained, the mere fact of them is instructive for my purpose. Abbreviations (as distinct from contractions) were common in secular documentary texts but rare in well-written literary texts. In literary texts they occur only in working copies, objects of study. The use of nomina sacra may therefore be another pointer to the practical

character of Christian texts. Further, the occurrence of this convention in Christian manuscripts is a clear indication that the transcription of early Christian books was not farmed out to the professional book trade but was done in-house by Christians themselves.[128] Again, early Christian books were not written to a high professional standard. Christian communities, except perhaps the smallest and most provincial, included persons who were competent to transcribe books, and only a few Christian manuscripts before the fourth century show a hand that approaches the professional bookhand. In addition to the relatively few educated members of a congregation, there may also have been some slaves trained for scribal tasks or professional scribes experienced especially in documentary work.[129] But even small-businesspersons accustomed to dealing with records would have been able to write a clear, practical hand. The system of nomina sacra, though not an esoteric code, stands out as an in-group convention that expressed a community consciousness and presumed a particular readership.

In all, the inscription of early Christian books reflects the setting in which they were prepared and the purposes for which they were intended. They were neither private texts nor products of the trade, but books produced by and for the use of small Christian communities. Just as there is little to indicate that Christians had an aesthetic regard for their literature, neither do they seem to have had a cultic attitude toward their books, and in this the contrast with Judaism is noteworthy. Judging from rabbinic literature, Judaism followed strict procedures in the reproduction of the text of Torah. It was not permitted to transcribe Torah from dictation, but only by visual copying. Before the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. official copies had to be derived if not directly, then at least ultimately from an exemplar preserved in the Temple, and a high standard of scribal accuracy was required. There were detailed rules governing the type of material and the type of script that could be used.[130] Although there may be in such prescriptions an admixture of idealism, it cannot be doubted that in Judaism the construction and inscription of scriptural books were closely regulated enterprises rooted in deep reverence for the texts. In the case of early Christian books the situation is much different. There is a level of contingency in the transcription of scriptural texts that cannot be reconciled with the rigorous stipulations governing the production of Jewish scriptural books. Too much should not be made of this, however, because the regulations governing the transcription of the Hebrew text did not apply to the production of Septuagintal texts, and it was with these texts, used in hellenistic synagogues, that Christians were ac-

quainted. Comparing Greek texts with Greek texts, the differences between Jewish and Christian copies of scripture are less apparent but still noticeable. When one compares copies of Septuagintal texts it is not always easy to distinguish the Jewish from the Christian, but on the whole Jewish manuscripts are better written. The transcription is more accurate, and the script is superior: Jewish manuscripts usually display an even, formal script with tendencies not only toward a bookhand but toward a somewhat decorated style with footed and serifed letters.[131]

It was not until the fourth century that Christian books began to be produced to a professional and literary bibliographic standard. This was in part because of the increasing popularity of the codex for non-Christian literary texts, which reduced the disparity of format, but more significantly it was the result of the establishment of Christianity as the religion of the empire. Obviously, this conferred a higher status and value on Christian texts than they had ever enjoyed before. It did not constitute them as literary, but it brought them fully into the public domain and put professional resources within easier reach. The new situation is illustrated in a letter that the emperor Constantine wrote to Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, in 332, commissioning the production of new manuscripts of scripture:

> *Victor Constantius Maximus Augustus, to Eusebius: In that city which bears my name, by the assistance of God our Savior's providence, a vast multitude of men have joined themselves to the most holy Church. Whereas, then, all things there receive a very great increase, it seems quite necessary that there should be more churches erected in that city. Therefore do you most willingly accept what I have determined to do. For it seemed fit to signify to your prudence that you should order fifty copies of the divine scriptures, the provision and use of which you know to be chiefly necessary for the instruction of the Church, to be written on well-prepared parchment by copyists most skillful in the art of accurate and beautiful writing, which [copies] must be very legible and easily portable in order that they may be used. Moreover, letters have been dispatched to the chief financial officer of the diocese giving instructions that he should take care to provide everything necessary in order that the said copies might be completed. This, then, shall be your responsibility, to see that the written copies be provided forthwith.*[132]

Constantine obviously wanted books of first quality, professionally produced, and in no way inferior to the finest volumes of non-Chris-

tian literature, and he knew and furnished the resources of money and talent to get them.

It has sometimes been thought that the great biblical codices of the fourth century, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, are surviving products of Constantine's requisition.[133] This is unlikely for several reasons. Constantine wanted the books to be produced quickly and to be easily portable, but neither could be expected if the books in question were whole Bibles. In any case, whole Bibles (pandects), including both the Christian Old Testament and the New Testament, were rare in the early centuries of the church. Indeed, there are no examples from the pre-Constantinian period of manuscripts containing even a complete New Testament, whose scope was still indeterminate. It is far more probable that the codices produced in the Caesarean scriptorium contained only the four Gospels rather than the whole New Testament or the entire Christian Bible.[134] Nevertheless, in the quality of their construction and inscription, if not in their scope, the codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus at least suggest the kinds of books that Christianity began to produce and use in the fourth century: large codices inscribed on high-grade parchment in careful literary hands by accomplished scribes, laid out in three (Vaticanus) or four (Sinaiticus) narrow columns to the page, reminiscent of the manner in which literary rolls had been written. Never before had Christian books been so fine. A barrier was broken, though subsequent Christian manuscripts, even of the scriptures, did not usually measure up to this high standard.

Although the codex was early and strongly favored as the format of Christian literature, there are indications that not all early Christian texts were inscribed in codices. The author of the Apocalypse, who often speaks of books, describes in his first vision a heavenly book held in the right hand of the one who sits on the throne. The book is "written on the inside and sealed on the outside with seven seals" (5:1, *gegrammenon esothen kai opisthen katesphragismenon sphragisin hepta*) and thus is undoubtedly a roll book, though of a particular sort called a *diploma*.[135] A heavenly book in roll form is, of course, a conventional element of apocalyptic visions and as such need not be taken to reflect actual early Christian practice.[136] Certainly a specialized roll of this sort is not evidence of general Christian use. There are, to be sure, some extant pre-Constantinian Christian manuscripts that are rolls, but they are a small minority among Christian manuscripts of the period.[137] The existence of a late second-century roll of Irenaeus's *Against Heresies* (P. Oxy. 405) could suggest that works of scholarship, as distinct from scriptural texts, persisted for a while in

roll form in Christian scholastic circles. In the *Acts of Peter,* composed in the late second century, there is an allusion (20) to Peter's rolling up a Gospel book. If this is not just an idiomatic reflex, it may imply that at least sometimes a scriptural book was in roll form. In the same period the *Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs* mentions a Christian who had "books and epistles of Paul" (12) in a capsa, which was normally a container for rolls.[138] Also, in some early Christian art we see figures depicted with rolls rather than codices,[139] but little can be made of this since ancient artists kept closely to traditional conventions. But if not every early Christian text was written in a codex, it would not contravene the evidence of the papyri that the codex was the heavily preferred form of the early Christian book well in advance of its broad adoption outside Christianity.

When in the late third and early fourth centuries the codex gained parity with the roll as the vehicle of Greek and Latin literature, eventually to displace the roll altogether, it was no doubt because the practical advantages of the codex had become widely recognized. The basis of this recognition must have been Christian use. Although the strong Christian preference for the codex was by then long-standing, it was only in the late third century, and still more powerfully in the fourth, that Christianity began to exert its influence within the mainstream of public life. Not least was this influence felt by well-educated users of books, a minority among whom Christians were increasingly numerous.[140] Such influence presupposes the wide currency of Christian books. The question of how Christian books attained their currency will be my concern in the following chapter.

147. It is along these lines that Tolbert proposes to understand the Gospels and in particular Mark, as "popular literature, composed in such a way as to be available to wide spectrum of society": *Sowing the Gospel*, 48–79.

148. See the pointed remarks of J. Dummer, "Die Stellung der griechischen christlichen Schriften im Rahmen der antiken Literatur," in *Das Korpus der griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller. Historie, Gegenwart, Zukunft*, ed. J. Irmscher and K. Treu (TU 120; Berlin: Akademie, 1977), 65–76.

CHAPTER II: THE EARLY CHRISTIAN BOOK

1. An interesting but not entirely successful effort to draw out the significance of early Christian papyri for church history was made by the late C. H. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society, and Belief in Early Christian Egypt* (Schweich Lectures of the British Academy, 1977; London: Oxford University Press, 1979). That the papyri have not yet received the attention they merit even from New Testament textual critics has been noted by E. J. Epp, "The New Testament Papyrus Manuscripts in Historical Perspective," in *To Touch the Text: Biblical and Related Studies in Honor of Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S. J.*, ed. M. P. Horgan and P. Kobelski (New York: Crossroads, 1989), 261–88.

2. On these issues, see esp. D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (Panizzi Lectures, 1985; London: British Library, 1986); together with the review essay of G. T. Tanselle, "Textual Criticism and Literary Sociology," in *Studies in Bibliography*, ed. F. Bowers (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991) 44:83–143.

3. There is a rich literature on this subject. Mention is made here only of especially important or particularly useful discussions: classic and influential studies are those of Th. Birt, *Das antike Buchwesen in seinem Verhältnis zur Litteratur* (Berlin: Hertz, 1882); W. Schubart, *Das Buch bei den Griechen und Römern*, 3d ed., by E. Paul (Heidelberg: Schneider, [1922] 1962; K. Dziatzko, *Untersuchungen über ausgewählte Kapitel des antiken Buchwesens* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1900); and F. G. Kenyon, *Books and Readers in Ancient Greece and Rome*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1951). A useful recent contribution has been made by H. Blanck, *Das Buch in der Antike* (Munich: Beck, 1992). Relatively brief but current overviews may be found in P. E. Easterling and B. M. W. Knox, "Books and Readers in the Greek World," in *Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, 1, "Greek Literature," ed. Easterling and Knox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 1–41; and E. J. Kenney, "Books and Readers in the Roman World," *Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, 2, "Latin Literature," ed. Kenney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 3–32.

4. The terms *biblos* and *biblion* were derived from the name of the city of Byblos (and so were originally spelled *byblos*). Strictly, the word *biblion* is a diminutive (little book), but the nuance was lost as this word became more general than *biblos*. (The designation of Jewish or Christian scripture as the Bible is taken from the Greek, *ta biblia*, "the books.") The Latin word *volumen*, with the literal sense of "something rolled," designated the book as a physical object. The Latin *liber*, which originally meant "bark," was sometimes used synonymously with *volumen* and sometimes to indicate a literary unit of a larger work (thus as an equivalent of the Greek *tomos*). The Latin *libellus* (little book) retained its proper sense, but the Greek *biblion* did not.

5. The most thorough and authoritative discussion is given by Naphtali Lewis, *Papyrus in Classical Antiquity* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1974), with corrections and expansions in *Papyrus in Classical Antiquity: A Supplement* (Papyrologica Bruxellensia, 23; Brussels: Fondation Egyptologique Reine Elisabeth, 1989).

6. Thus, Lewis, *Papyrus*, 37, 41–51, reflecting the traditional view. Pliny claims, apparently mistakenly, that Nile water was the adhesive agent. Water was probably used, but only to keep the material sufficiently moist during the manufacturing process.

7. Thus I. H. M. Hendriks, "Pliny, Historia Naturalis XIII, 74–82 and the Manufacture of Papyrus," *ZPE* 37 (1980): 121–36. See also the responses of E. G. Turner in *ZPE* 39 (1980): 113–14, and N. Lewis in *ZPE* 42 (1981): 293–94; and Hendrik's further comments, "More about the Manufacture of Papyrus," *Atti del XVII Congresso Internazionale di Papyrologia*, 1 (Naples: Centro Internazionale per lo Studio dei Papyri Ercolanesi, 1984), 31–37. For Lewis's fuller response, see *Papyrus in Classical Antiquity: A Supplement*, 16–21.

8. Pliny (*Nat. Hist.*, xiii, 78) indicates that there were different grades and sizes of manufactured sheets, but the only dimension he notes is width. The omission of any mention of height is logical if the breadth of sheets (unlike their height) is an aspect of their quality: the wider the sheet, the fewer joins had to be made in manufacturing a roll, and thus there were fewer imperfections in the surface (W. A. Johnson, "Pliny the Elder and Standardized Roll Heights in the Manufacture of Papyrus," *CPhil* 88 [1993]: 46–50). Among surviving examples the standard range of height is twenty-five to thirty-two centimeters.

9. On the uses and difficulties of this terminology, see E. G. Turner, "The Terms Recto and Verso: The Anatomy of the Papyrus Roll," *Actes du XV congres international de papyrologie*, pt. 1 (Papyrologica Bruxellensia, 16; Brussels: Fondation Egyptologique Reine Elisabeth, 1978). Strictly speaking, the side that is inscribed (or first inscribed if writing is on both sides) is the recto, but normally in a roll this was the side with the fibers running horizontally.

10. Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* 13.77) claimed that there were never more than twenty sheets in a roll. Lewis, *Papyrus*, 54–55, considers it likely that this was the standard length. See also T. C. Skeat, "The Length of the Standard Papyrus Roll and the Cost Advantage of the Codex," *ZPE* 45 (1982): 169–75, esp. 169–72, who estimates the actual length of such a roll at 3.2–3.6 meters, or an average of 3.4 meters (a little over eleven feet). But as Lewis notes (55) Pliny, since he is speaking about raw materials, may have meant only that no more than twenty sheets could be made from a single stalk of papyrus. In that case, the standard length of a manufactured roll may have been considerably longer than 3.4 meters.

11. See Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 13.78–79; Cicero, *Att.* 16.6.4; and Horace, *Serm.* 1.10.92.

12. Pliny says that the valued characteristics of papyrus were fineness, firmness, whiteness, and smoothness *(tenuitas, densitas, candor, levor)*.

13. There are instances in classical literature attesting the use of papyrus materials hundreds of years old, without any indication that the material had significantly deteriorated (see, e.g., Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 13. 83, Galen 18[2]. 630).

An impressive indication of the strength and durability of papyrus is to be seen in the fact that one of the leather rolls found at Qumran (4QSam a) was reinforced by gluing a strip of papyrus on its verso side.

14. See R. R. Johnson, "The Role of Parchment in Graeco-Roman Antiquity" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, 1968), 3–21. Most Qumran scrolls are leather or parchment, and only a small percentage are papyrus.

15. Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* 13.70), relying on Varro, claimed that parchment was invented in Pergamum in the reign of Eumenes II (197–158 B.C.E.) owing to a shortage of papyrus caused by an Egyptian embargo allegedly imposed by an Egypt that had grown jealous over the growing repute of the library at Pergamum. This time of origin is refuted by evidence of an earlier use of parchment, and the alleged cause and motive are certainly fanciful. For an analysis of the tradition, see Johnson, "The Role of Parchment," 22–51, and "Ancient and Medieval Accounts of the 'Invention' of Parchment," *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 3 (1970): 115–22, which canvasses most of the literary testimony about parchment.

16. For the technical and scientific aspects of parchment production, see esp. the detailed discussion by R. Reed, *The Nature and Making of Parchment* (Leeds: Elmet, 1975), and, more generally, *Ancient Skins, Parchments, and Leathers* (London: Seminar Press, 1972), and M. L. Ryder, "The Biology and History of Parchment," in *Pergament: Geschichte, Structur, Restaurierung, Herstellung*, ed. P. Ruck (Simarigen: Thorbecke, 1991), 25–33.

17. Johnson, "The Role of Parchment," 113–18, surveys this question, which he deems "fruitless." Although the relative costs cannot be judged, he rightly distinguishes between various grades of parchment and considers that the lesser grade(s) would have been "moderately priced" but that the finer ones were "quite expensive" (116). As to papyrus, Lewis, *Papyrus*, 133–34, considers that "a roll of papyrus cost the equivalent of one or two days' wages, and it could run as high as what the labourer would earn in five or six days," such that "in social milieux more elevated than that of a prosperous Egyptian villager the purchase of papyrus is not likely to have been regarded as an expenditure of any consequence."

18. Kenyon, *Books and Readers*, 54. This was the original reference of the dictum: "A big book is a big evil" (Callimachus). Longer rolls are known, but they are uncommon, and the very long rolls that have turned up in Egypt are ceremonial burial rolls, not meant to be read by the living.

19. For the evidence, see Th. Birt, *Die Buchrolle in der Kunst. Archaologisch-antiquarische Untersuchungen zum antiken Buchwesen* (r.p. New York: Olms, 1976); H. Immerwahr, "Book Rolls on Attic Vases," in *Classical, Mediaeval, and Renaissance Studies in Honor of B. L. Ullman*, ed. C. Henderson (Rome: Edizione de storia e letteratura, 1964), 1:17–48, and "More Book Rolls on Attic Vases," *Antike Kunst* 16 (1973): 143–48.

20. See F. G. Kenyon, "Book Divisions in Greek and Latin Literature," in *William Warner Bishop: A Tribute*, ed. H. M. Lydenberg and A. Keogh (New Haven: Yale University, 1941), 63–75; and more recently J. van Sickle, "The Book-Roll and Some Conventions of the Poetic Book," *Arethusa* 13 (1980): 5–42, esp. 6–12. Of course, single rolls might also contain shorter *tomoi*, on which see Lewis, *Papyrus*, 76–7, inc. n. 9.

21. There are instances when both sides of a roll are inscribed. Such a roll is known as an opisthograph (literally, also "written behind" or "on the back"). The reason is almost always a wish to conserve material. Pliny the Younger (*Ep.* 3.5.17) says that his uncle left him 160 notebooks written in a very small hand on both sides *(commentarios centum sexaginta mihi reliquit, opisthographos quidem et minutissimis scriptos)*. These were personal notebooks. No well-produced roll was written on both the front and back. In almost all extant opisthographs the writing on the back is in a different hand than is the writing on the front, and the text was inscribed on the back when the text on the front was no longer valued or used. A rare example of an opisthograph that was written by the same scribe on both the front and back is the Isocrates fragment in the Beinecke Library of Yale University.

22. Turner, "Recto and Verso," 20–24.

23. Top margins ranged from three to four centimeters, bottom margins from three to five. On the characteristic features of the papyrus roll book, see the close analysis of W. A. Johnson, "The Literary Papyrus Roll: Formats and Conventions. An Analysis of the Evidence from Oxyrhynchus" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1982), and his unpublished paper kindly shared with me, "The Aesthetic of the Luxury Book Roll." On scripts themselves, see below in the text.

24. On punctuation and other sigla, including critical signs, see E. G. Turner, *Greek Manuscripts of the Ancient World*, ed. P. Parsons (2d ed. rev. and enlarged; London: University of London Institute of Classical Studies, 1987).

25. See H. Zilliakus, "Boktiteln i antik litteratur," *Eranos* 36 (1938): 1–41; and R. P. Oliver, "The First Medicean MS of Tacitus and the Titulature of Ancient Books," *TAPA* 82 (1951): 232–61.

26. For title tags, see Turner, *Greek Manuscripts*, 34, with pl. 6–8, and T. Dorandi, "Sillyboi," *Scrittura e civiltà* 8 (1984): 185–99, with plates. Cf. the remarks of Ovid, *Pont.* 4.13.7, and Cicero, *ad Att.* 4.4a.1, 5.4 and 8.2.

27. See W. Luppe, "Rückseitentitel auf Papyrusrollen," *ZPE* 27 (1977): 89–99. These are in a hand other than the scribe's and presumably were supplied by the owner of the book.

28. For detailed discussion, see S. Besslich, "Die 'Horner' des Buches: Zur Bedeutung von cornua im antiken Buchwesen," *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* (1973): 44–50.

29. See, e.g., Lucian, *Adv. Indoct.* 8, 16; Martial, 3.2.10, 8.72, 9.93.3.

30. See C. Sirat, "Le livre hébreu dans les premiers siècles de notre ére: Le témoignage des textes," *Les débuts du codex*, ed. A. Blanchard (Bibliologia, 9; Brepols: Turnhout, 1989), 115–24. On the question of material, see also J. P. Hyatt, "The Writing of an Old Testament Book," *BA* 6 (1943): 71–80; and M. Haran, "Book Scrolls in Israel in Pre-Exilic Times," *JJS* 33 (1982): 161–73 (with an addendum in *JJS* 35 [1984] 84–85). The large majority of the Qumran scrolls are on skin, mainly leather rather than parchment. On this aspect of the Qumran materials, see J. B. Poole and R. Reed, "The Preparation of Leather and Parchment by the Dead Sea Scrolls Community," *Technology and Culture* 3 (1962): 1–26.

31. For descriptive catalogues of early Christian manuscripts, principally papyrus, see esp. J. van Haelst, *Catalogue des papyrus littéraires juifs et*

chrétiens (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1976); and K. Aland, *Repertorium der griechischen christlichen Papyri*, I, Biblische Papyri (Patristische Texte und Studien, 18; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1976). Reports on new accessions may also be found in a series of essays by K. Treu, "Christliche Papyri," appearing periodically in *APF*, and in the report by K. Aland in the annual *Bericht der Hermann Kunst-Stiftung zur Forderung der neutestamentlichen Textforschung* (Munster, 1982–).

32. See the statistical table given by C. H. Roberts and T. C. Skeat, *The Birth of the Codex* (London: Oxford University Press, 1983), 37. Statistics in such a matter are somewhat tricky since the evidence survives fortuitously and since paleographers by no means always agree on the date of individual manuscripts. Still, the evidence is extensive enough to be representative, and differences in paleographic dating do not fundamentally change the general picture.

33. This began to be recognized by Kenyon, *Books and Readers*, 94–99, but was argued in detail and influentially by C. H. Roberts, "The Codex," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 40 (1954): 169–204, now revised and expanded in Roberts and Skeat, *Birth*. Among the earlier literature, see also C. C. McCown, "Codex and Roll in the New Testament," *HTR* 34 (1941): 219–50, and "The Earliest Christian Books," *BA* 6 (1943): 21–31. It has been urged, especially by Roberts, that the Christian predilection for the codex pertains especially to scriptural materials, but this distinction is hard to sustain in the state of the evidence. It seems likely that the codex was the preferred though not exclusive medium for all Christian writings.

34. This is confirmed in the curious opinion of Seneca (*de brev. vit.* 13) that Claudius Caudex (consul in 264 B.C.E.) was the first to persuade the Romans to board ships and was so named because "among the ancients a structure formed by joining boards together was called a *caudex*, whence also the tables of the law are also called *codices*, and, in the old fashion, boats that carry provisions up the Tiber are even now called *codicariae*." Among the Greeks, the term *kodix* (the only form of the word actually attested) was eventually borrowed but even then did not mean "book." See the discussion of B. Atsalos, *La terminologie du livre-manuscrit a l'époque byzantine* (Thessaloniki: 1971), 144.

35. For wooden tablets, see the discussion in Roberts and Skeat, *Birth*, 11–14 (with literature), and add the discussions provided by M. Sirat, P. Cauderlier, and R. Pintaudi in *Les débuts du codex*, ed. A. Blanchard (Bibliologia, 9; Brepols: Turnhout, 1989). Also note the unusual "concertina" Roman writing tablets discovered in England, on which see A. K. Bowman, "The Vindolanda Tablets and the Development of the Book Form," *ZPE* 18 (1975): 237–52; and A. K. Bowman and J. D. Thomas, *Vindolanda: The Latin Writing Tablets* (London: SPRS, 1983), suggesting that this might represent an intermediate stage in the development from wooden tablets to a leaf book. Turner ("Recto and Verso," 51–53) would relate these more closely to the roll written *transversa charta* than to the codex.

36. Pliny the Younger (*Ep.* 3.5.14–15) speaks of his uncle dictating notes to his slave, who jotted them down in shorthand on wax tablets *(pugillares)*. Horace's suggestion (*Sat.* 1.10.72–73) that if the stylus is frequently inverted (for erasure) one is more likely to write something worth reading obviously

applies to drafts written on wax tablets. On note-taking in conncection with lengthy compositions, see T. Dorandi, "Den autoren über die Schulter geschaut: Arbeitsweise und Autographie bei den antiken Schriftstellern," *ZPE* 87 (1991): 11–33.

37. A sheet or manuscript from which writing has been removed and that is then used again for writing is called a palimpsest (from the Greek *palimpsestos*, "rubbed [or washed] again"). Although the word has come to be associated almost exclusively with parchment, both papyrus and parchment could be and were recycled in this way.

38. Quintillian's statement reads: "It is best to write on wax because of its ease of erasure, though weak sight may make it desirable to use parchment *(membranarum)* instead." The term *membranae* in such close conjunction with the mention of wax tablets indicates that a parchment codex is meant. The earliest surviving example of a parchment notebook comes from the second or third century. Ostensible allusions and extant examples are fully discussed by Roberts and Skeat, *Birth*, 15–23.

39. For detailed discussion, see Roberts and Skeat, *Birth*, 24–29.

40. *Epigrams* 14. 184 (Homer), 186 (Vergil), 188 (Cicero), 190 (Livy), and 192 (Ovid).

41. For the list, see J. van Haelst, "Les origines," 13–35 (esp. 23, 25). There is naturally disagreement about the dating of some of these manuscripts, but the differences are not great and affect only a few items.

42. For particulars, see J. Mallon, "Quel est le plus ancien codex latin?" in *De l'écriture: Recueil d'études publiées de 1937 à 1981* (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1982), 209–12. Although the original editors dated the manuscript "no earlier than the third century," they did so for reasons now invalid. Mallon (211) puts the date at the end of the first or near the beginning of the second century.

43. E. G. Turner, *The Typology of the Early Codex* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977), 38.

44. Mallon, "Codex latin?" 208, thinks this codex has a Roman origin. See also van Haelst, "Les origines," 26.

45. *Das Archiv des Petaus* (Pap. Colon., 4), ed. U. Hagedorn and D. Hagedorn and L. C. Youtie and H. C. Youtie (Cologne: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1969), 156–57. See the also the comments of E. G. Turner, *The Papyrologist at Work* (GRBM 6; Durham, N.C.: Duke University, 1973), 37–38; and van Haelst, "Les origines," 21–23. Although this letter was found among the Petaus materials, it seems to have no substantive connection to the archives.

46. L. Koenen, "Ein Monch als Berufsschreiber zur Buchproduktion im 5.6. Jahrhundert," in *Festschrift zum 150-jährigen Bestehen d. Berl. ägypt. Museum* (1974), 351, n. 20, but against Turner and van Haelst, who seem to think that Dius dealt only in parchment codices.

47. The evidence is compiled and discussed by Turner, *Typology*, 13–54.

48. Van Haelst, "Les origines," 32–34, appealing to the later dates assigned to some of the manuscripts by E. G. Turner, *Typology*. The dates given by Aland, *Repertorium*, accord closely with those used by Roberts and Skeat.

49. Van Haelst, "Les origines," 34.

50. A good discussion of these is given by Roberts and Skeat, *Birth*, 45–53, and what follows summarizes their points except where otherwise indicated.

51. T. C. Skeat, "Length of the Standard Papyrus Roll," 175, concludes a saving of 26 percent.

52. A modern advocate of this view is G. Cavallo, ed., *Libri, editori, e pubblico nel mondo antico* (Bari: Laterza, 1975), 83–85; cf. also his review of *The Birth of the Codex* in *Studi italiani di filologia classica,* ser. 3, 3 (1985): 118–21.

53. See ch. 1. In addition, Roberts and Skeat, *Birth,* 69–70, point out that so-called popular literature was usually transcribed in rolls.

54. Ancient literature preserves no outright complaints about the inconvenience of rolls. E. G. Turner (*Greek Papyri* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1968], 7) points out that some Athenian vase paintings depict readers who have allowed a roll to become twisted or have lost a grip on it, and that Pliny (*Ep.* 2.1.5) tells of Verginius Rufus fracturing his hip while trying to recover a dropped roll. The fact that a good many extant rolls appear to have been torn in two could be either the reason for or the result of their being thrown away. See also T. C. Skeat, "Two Notes on Papyrus: I, Was Rerolling a Papyrus Roll an Irksome and Time-Consuming Task?" in *Scritti in onore di Orsolina Montevecchi* (Bologna: Clueb, 1981), 373–76 ("No.").

55. Special weight and new arguments are given to this feature of the codex by M. McCormick, "The Birth of the Codex and the Apostolic Life-Style," *Scriptorium* 39 (1985): 150–58.

56. Most of the very early Christian codices appear to have contained only individual texts and not particularly long ones. The earliest codices, Christian or not, tended to be of the single quire variety, with a maximum capacity of around two hundred pages.

57. Similarly, the columns in rolls were not normally numbered, and the number of columns in a given text depended on how the individual manuscript was written. Turner (*Typology,* 75) notes that pagination "would not seem to have been integral with the invention of the codex, otherwise one would have expected to find it as a part of every codex," and that in many codices where pagination is present, it has been secondarily added. This suggests that "pagination originated in book consultation rather than in book production" (M. McCormick, "Typology, Codicology, and Papyrology," *Scriptorium* 35 [1981] 334).

58. Roberts, "The Codex," 187; cf. Roberts and Skeat, *Birth,* 53.

59. Ibid., 187–91.

60. Ibid., 189. P. Katz, "The Early Christians' Use of Codices Instead of Rolls," *JTS* 46 (1945): 63–65, claimed that Christians adopted the codex simply to differentiate Christian from Jewish books, but it is not obvious why such a differentiation should have been thought necessary or desirable. On Roberts's reconstruction, the various alleged practical advantages of the codex over the roll are entirely discounted, and everything is mortgaged to the authority of the document itself.

61. Among manuscripts that can be dated before the fourth century, only 2 represent Mark, while Matthew and John are represented in 12 each, and Luke in 4. Roberts later acknowledged that this was a problem for his hypothesis (*Manuscript, Society, and Belief,* 59, 61). For criticism of Roberts' theory, see also van Haelst, "Les origines," 29–31.

62. Roberts and Skeat, *Birth*, 57–61.

63. For such a practice, see the comments of S. Liebermann, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1962), app. 3, "Jewish and Christian Codices," 203–8, who says that the use of a codex was the most appropriate way to make it clear "that they were writing the Oral Law for private, or unofficial use, and not for publication" (205).

64. Roberts and Skeat, *Birth*, 59.

65. Ibid., 59–60. It must, however, have been a Greek-speaking Christian community, since Roberts and Skeat appeal in this connection also to the nomina sacra, a Christian convention in the transcription of certain Greek terms, and draw a close connection between this convention and the origin of the codex.

66. The point is well made by van Haelst, "Les origines," 31–32. *Apopirin* in M. Kelim 24.7 does not mean a papyrus codex, but a wooden tablet.

67. Roberts and Skeat, *Birth*, 60.

68. Having rightly rejected the theories of Roberts and Skeat, van Haelst immediately concludes "the impossibility of finding a satisfying hypothesis" and proceeds to revise the evidence in order to reduce the need for one ("Les origines," 32). Still, even on his terms an explanation is needed for the far greater speed for the transition to the codex in Christianity.

69. An earlier version of the following argument was presented several years ago at an National Endowment for the Humanities conference in Dallas and was subsequently published as "The Pauline Corpus and the Early Christian Book," *Paul and the Legacies of Paul*, ed. W. Babcock (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1990), 265–80. I am indebted to participants in the conference for stimulating my further reflections on it.

70. Although traditions about Jesus, and perhaps especially the sayings of Jesus, did have a primitive and preeminent authority in Christianity, that authority was by no means exclusive of other authorities (e.g., scripture or apostolic figures), and it did not automatically accrue to written Gospels. The uses of Jesus-traditions in early-second-century literature may suggest that oral tradition was often preferred to written Gospels. See H. Koester, *Synoptische Überlieferung bei den apostolischen Vätern* (TU 65; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1957).

71. On the knowledge and use of Paul's letters by these and other early Christian figures, see D. Rensberger, "As the Apostle Teaches: The Development of the Use of Paul's Letters in Second Century Christianity" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1981); A. Lindemann, *Paulus im ältesten Christentum: Das Bild des Apostels und die Rezeption der paulinischen Theologie in der frühchristlichen Literatur bis Marcion* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1978); and E. Dassmann, *Der Stachel im Fleisch: Paulus in der frühchristlichen Literatur bis Irenaeus* (Munster: Aschendorff, 1979). Their positive assessments contradict the previously influential view of W. Schneemelcher, "Paulus in der griechischen Kirche des 2. Jahrhunderts," *ZKG* 75 (1964): 1–20. On the early circulation and valuation of Paul's letters, see also ch. 3.

72. For a concise survey of the main theories, see H. Gamble, *The New Testament Canon: Its Making and Meaning* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 36–41 (with literature); and E. H. Lovering, "The Collection, Redaction,

and Early Circulation of the Corpus Paulinum" (Ph.D. diss., Southern Methodist University, 1988).

73. Tertullian, *adv. Marc.*, 5. Tertullian considers Philemon after Philippians, and so presumably as the last letter in Marcion's collection (5.21–22). According to Epiphanius, however, in Marcion's collection Philemon followed Colossians and stood before Philippians (*Pan.* 42.9.4, 11.8, 12). The placement of Philemon turns out to be important.

74. P 46 almost certainly did not contain the personal letters or at any rate not Timothy (1–2) and Titus, for the number of leaves missing from the end of the codex were not sufficient to have contained them. See F. G. Kenyon, *The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri*, fasc. 3, suppl. (London: Emery Walker, 1936), x–xi. P 46 does contain Hebrews (between Romans and Corinthians), but it is unlikely that Hebrews formed part of any primitive edition of Paul's letters.

75. For this theory and its witnesses, see Th. Zahn, *Geschichte des neutestamentliche Kanons*, 2 vols. (Erlangen: Deichert, 1892), 2:73–75; K. Stendahl, "The Apocalypse of John and the Epistles of Paul in the Muratorian Fragment," in *Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation*, ed. W. Klassen and G. F. Snyder (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 239–45; and N. A. Dahl, "The Particularity of the Pauline Epistles as a Problem in the Ancient Church," in *Neotestamentica et Patristica* (NovTSup 6; Leiden: Brill, 1962), 261–71.

76. The evidence for such an order is assembled by H.-J. Frede, "Die Ordnung der Paulusbriefe und der Platz des Kolosserbriefs im Corpus Paulinum," *Vetus Latina* 24/2 (Freiburg: Herder Verlag, 1969), 290–303. Cf. J. Finegan, "The Original Form of the Pauline Collection," *HTR* 49 (1956): 85–104.

77. Thus Frede, "Die Ordnung der Paulusbriefe," 292; Finegan, "Original Form"; and N. A. Dahl, "The Origin of the Earliest Prologues to the Pauline Letters," *Semeia* 12 (1978): 233–77, esp. 253, 263.

78. Dahl, "Particularity," 261–71.

79. Ibid. For further discussion, see ch. 3.

80. What is often called the "Marcionite order" of the Pauline letters, which is a distinguishing characteristic of the edition of the collection used by Marcion, is not exclusively associated with Marcion in the ancient evidence. The sequence Galatians-Corinthians-Romans, etc., is also found in the old Syriac, as witnessed by the Catalogus Sinaiticus and the commentary of Ephrem, on which see, respectively, A. S. Lewis, ed., *Studia Sinaitica*, 1, "Catalogue of the Syriac MSS in the Convent of St. Catherine on Mt. Sinai" (London: Clay, 1894), 13–14; and Th. Zahn, "Das Neue Testament Theodors von Mopsuestia und der ursprungliche Kanon der Syrer," *NKZ* 11 (1900): 788–806, esp. 798–99. The evidence is summarized by Frede, "Die Ordnung der Paulusbriefe," 295–97, but cf. J. Kerschensteiner, *Der altsyrische Paulustext* (Louvain: Secrétariat du Corpus SCO, 1970), 172–76, with some reservations.

81. This was seen already by A. von Harnack, *Marcion: Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott* (2d ed. rev.; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1924), 168–69, also noted by J. Knox, *Marcion and the New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), 60–70.

82. Additional confirmatory evidence of this is to be found in the so-called Marcionite prologues to the Pauline letters, and above all if they are not in fact

Marcionite. That they are catholic and not Marcionite products has been persuasively argued by H.-J. Frede, *Altlateinische Paulus-Handschriften* (Freiburg: Herder, 1964), 165–78, and in still greater detail by Dahl, "Earliest Prologues." Careful analysis of the prologues (Dahl, 246–51) shows that only six of those now available are original, and that a seventh (for Laodiceans/Ephesians) was at some point replaced. This means that the original set of prologues, which undoubtedly derives from the second century and a Greek archetype, represented ten letters of Paul (including Philemon) as letters to seven churches. It is a germane fact too that the prologues characteristically concern themselves with the communities that were addressed, rather than with the letters as such.

83. See Knox, *Marcion*, 43–45, and *Philemon among the Letters of Paul* (rev. ed.; New York: Abingdon Press, 1959), 83–86. This would comport with the evidence of Epiphanius. In any case, the present prologue for Philemon is patently secondary, which indicates that Philemon must have been reckoned with Colossians in the original set of prologues.

84. Clarity requires emphasizing that the seven churches edition taken up by Marcion was itself not identical to the original seven-churches edition, but a secondary variation on it. The order of the letters in Marcion's collection is not at all likely to have been his innovation, contrary to the common view. That order is much more easily comprehended as chronologically rather than dogmatically conceived (see Frede, *Altlateinische Paulus-Handschriften*, 165–66). An early placement of Romans in an ostensibly chronological scheme was permitted by the absence of chapters 14–15 in the text of Romans belonging to that edition. That Marcion simply took over a preexisting edition of Paul's letters, without modifying its order, is also supported by the character of its text. See the helpful treatment of this subject by J. J. Clabeaux, *A Lost Edition of the Letters of Paul. A Reassessment of the Text of the Pauline Corpus Attested by Marcion* (CBQMS 21; Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association, 1989).

85. This observation was made by E. J. Goodspeed on behalf of his own theory of the original Pauline letter collection, which, however, he took to consist of seven letters, not of letters to seven churches. See his *New Solutions of New Testament Problems* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), 1–64.

86. On the early history of the Pauline letters before their collection, see also ch. 3.

87. Skeat, "Length of the Standard Papyrus Roll," 169–70.

88. Of a (presumed) manufactured roll of about 26 meters, Skeat (170) comments that it would be "much too long to be handled in one piece."

89. It is surprising how little attention has been given to the possibility that the Pauline letter collection was initially made available in a codex. I am able to cite only Finegan, "Original Form," 88; and G. Zuntz, *The Text of the Epistles: A Disquisition upon the Corpus Paulinum* (London: British Academy, 1953), 15. Both of these simply take it as a supposition but do not argue the case, though Finegan seems to recognize that a fixed order of the letters could not be secured in any other way.

90. I owe this formulation to a 1987 conversation with Peter Zaas of Siena College.

91. Thus, even though it may be true that practical advantages alone do not adequately explain the broad adoption of the codex in early Christianity (Roberts and Skeat, *Birth*, 53), those advantages cannot be simply disregarded when trying to determine why the codex was initially employed for whatever Christian document it was that served to popularize the codex for Christian literature generally.

92. Roberts, "The Codex," 187–88.

93. See ch. 1.

94. For a rather more speculative argument to this effect, see K. P. Donfried, "Paul as *Skeinopoios* and the Use of the Codex in Early Christianity," in *Christus bezeugen*, ed. K. Kertelge, T. Holtz, and C.-P. Marz (Leipzig: St. Benno-Verlag, 1989), 1:249–56. Observing that Paul's craft was leatherworking, Donfried suggests that Paul specialized in making parchment codices (!) and employed them himself to record both testimonia and Christian traditions, and to write his own letters.

95. But see the discussion by T. C. Skeat, "'Especially the Parchments': A Note on 2 Timothy iv.13," *JTS* 30 (1979): 173–77, who favors the second sense against the lexical authorities and most commentators.

96. For the view that the Pastoral Epistles, though on the whole pseudonymous, nevertheless embody some authentic fragments, see P. N. Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles* (London: Oxford University Press, 1921). For the calculated use of personal notices to create an impression of authenticity in pseudonymous writings, see W. Speyer, *Die literarische Fälschung im heidnischen und christlichen Altertum* (HKAW 1.2; Munich, 1971), 44–84, and more briefly, N. Brox, *Falsche Verfasserangaben. Zur Erklärung der frühchristlichen Pseudepigraphie* (SBS 79; Stuttgart: Katholische Bibelwerk, 1975), 57–62.

97. McCormick, "Codex and Apostolic Life-Style," *Scriptorium* 39 (1985): 155.

98. See ch. 1 on early Christian testimonia collections. McCormick, "Codex and Apostolic Life-Style," 156–57, rightly calls attention to the importance from the beginning of Jewish scripture, "the first book the first Christians needed and used" (156), but his conception of Jewish scripture as a book and his apparent assumption that Christians would have undertaken early on to produce copies of whole books, are anachronistic.

99. See van Haelst, "Les origines," esp. 32–35.

100. For the list see Roberts and Skeat, *Birth*, 71, or van Haelst, "Les origines," 23–25 (who adds the dates proposed by Turner).

101. See van Haelst, "Les origines," 26, and McCormick, "Codex and Apostolic Life-Style," 157. McCormick takes these early non-Christian codices to be essentially the books of doctors and teachers and finds the common feature of these two groups in their mobility. This leads him to suggest that these groups were drawn to the codex because of its portability.

102. For the sizes and shapes of early codices, see especially Turner, *Typology*, 13–34.

103. Turner, *Typology*, comments (58) that "the relatively early character of this make-up is a striking fact" but considers (98–99) that the evidence does not suffice to prove that the earliest codices must have been made up in single

quires. It is potentially relevant that no known parchment codex is made up in a single quire; this method seems restricted to papyrus. All but one of the Nag Hammadi codices are of the single-quire variety, in spite of the fact that by the time these codices were constructed the multiple-quire method had become widespread. The largest number of pages among the Nag Hammadi codices is 156. For particulars see J. M. Robinson, "On the Codicology of the Nag Hammadi Codices," in *Les textes de Nag Hammadi*, ed. J. Ménard (Nag Hammadi Studies, 7; Leiden: Brill, 1975), 15–31, and (more fully) *The Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codies: Introduction* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 24–44.

104. See the studies of B. van Regemorter: "La reliure des manuscrits grecs," *Scriptorium* 8 (1954): 3–23; "Le codex relie depuis son origine jusqu'au Haut Moyen-Age," *Le Moyen Age* 61 (1955): 1–16; and *Some Early Bindings from Egypt in the Chester Beatty Library* (Chester Beatty Monographs, 7; Dublin: Hodges Figgis, 1958). Yet none of the codices she treats is as early as the third century.

105. A detailed analysis is given by J. M. Robinson, "The Construction of the Nag Hammadi Codices," in *Essays on the Nag Hammadi Texts in Honor of Pahor Labib*, ed. M. Krause (Nag Hammadi Studies, 6; Leiden: Brill, 1975), 170–90; and *The Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices*, 71–86 (superseding the studies of B. van Regemorter, "La reliure des manuscrits gnostiques decouverts a Nag Hammadi," *Scriptorium* 14 [1960]: 225–34; and J. Doresse, "Les reliures des manuscrits gnostiques coptes," *Revue d'Egyptologie* 13 [1961]: 27–49). Robinson shows that the covers can be distinguished by different types of manufacture.

106. Such a cover is preserved with the miniature Glazier manuscript (fourth or early fifth century) of the Pierpont Morgan Library containing part of Acts in Coptic, which is, incidentally, the earliest extant complete vellum codex and provides the earliest surviving cover for a vellum codex. Its cover is made of wooden boards joined with a leather strip on the spine and has straps with bone pegs at their ends, which wrapped around the closed codex. See J. S. Kebabian, "The Binding of the Glazier Manuscript of the Acts of the Apostles," in *Homage to a Bookman: Essays on Manuscripts, Books and Printing Written in Honor of Hans P. Kraus* (Berlin: Mann, 1967), 25–29.

107. Only a few papyrus codices were written in two columns a page. Among the Christian ones are P 4 + 64 + 67, P 8, P 50, P 78, and P. Oxy. 3527.

108. Turner, *Typology*, 37.

109. *Greek Literary Hands 350 B.C.–A.D. 400*, xi.

110. One of the best and most carefully nuanced discussions of Greek hands is given by Turner, *Greek Manuscripts*, 1–23. On the payment of scribes, the only explicit evidence is the edict of Diocletian of 301 C.E. (*De pretiis rerum venalium* 7.39–41 [CIL 3:381]), setting rates per hundred lines *(stichoi)* at twenty-five denarii for writing of the first quality and twenty denarii for writing of the second quality.

111. On informal round script, see the discussion of Turner, *Greek Manuscripts*, 20–21. The fullest discussion of script in specifically Christian manuscripts is given by Roberts, *Manuscript, Society, and Belief*, 14–23.

112. See Turner, *Greek Manuscripts*, 15.

113. This later became a characteristic feature of medieval manuscripts,

where the initial letter is often not only enlarged but elaborately worked and frequently done in red ink ("rubricated"). These developments are not found in Greek literary papyri. There are, however, a few examples in Christian papyri dating from the fourth and fifth centuries.

114. A good treatment of these factors is given by A. Dain, *Les manuscrits* (3d ed. rev.; Paris: Les Belles-Lettres, 1975), 15–55.

115. For intentional changes in the transmission of early Christian scriptural texts, see C. S. C. Williams, *Alterations to the Text of the Synoptic Gospels and Acts* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1951); K. W. Clark, "Textual Criticism and Doctrine," in *Studia Paulina in honorem J. de Zwaan* (Haarlem, 1953), 52–65; M. Karnetzki, "Textgeschichte als Überlieferungsgeschichte," *ZNW* 47 (1956): 170–80; and B. D. Ehrman, *Orthodox Corruptions of Scripture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). See also ch. 3.

116. On the habits of the scribes of some of the earliest Christian books, see E. C. Colwell, "Scribal Habits in Early Papyri: A Study in the Corruption of the Text," in *The Bible in Modern Scholarship*, ed. J. P. Hyatt (Nashville: Abingdon, 1965), 370–89; J. R. Royse, "Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri" (Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, 1981), summarized in Royse, "Scribal Habits in the Transmission of New Testament Texts," in *The Critical Study of Sacred Texts*, ed. W. D. O'Flaherty (Berkeley Religious Studies Series, 2; Berkeley: Graduate Theological Union, 1979), 139–61; P. M. Head, "Observations on Early Papyri of the Synoptic Gospels, Especially on the 'Scribal Habits,'" *Bib* 71 (1990): 240–47; and more generally K. Junack, "Abschreibpraktiken und Schreibergewohnheiten in ihrer Auswirkung auf die Textüberlieferung," in *New Testament Textual Criticism: Its Significance for Exegesis, Essays in Honor of Bruce M. Metzger*, ed. E. J. Epp and G. D. Fee (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), 277–95.

117. An interesting example is P 66, an early copy of the Gospel of John. The scribe, although possessing a good and well-practiced hand, proved in this case to be a careless copyist. See, on this manuscript, in addition to the studies in the preceding note, G. D. Fee, "The Corrections of Papyrus Bodmer II and Early Textual Transmission," *NovT* 7 (1965): 247–57; and E. F. Rhodes, "The Corrections of Papyrus Bodmer II," *NTS* 14 (1968): 271–81.

118. Turner, *Typology*, 84–87. The manuscript that especially caught his eye was the Chester Beatty codex IX–X (Ezekiel, Daniel, Susanna, Bel, and the Dragon), which offers 49–54 lines to a page and 17–23 letters to a line, while comparable Greek prose texts in codex manuscripts tend to have a few more lines to the page and significantly more letters to the line. The observation holds also for P 66 and P 75, among other early Christian manuscripts.

119. See Turner, *Greek Manuscripts*, 144, on P. Oxy. 3533 (Menander). Some more notable examples among early Christian manuscripts are: P. Bad. 456 (Exodus-Deuteronomy), P. Mich. 130 (Hermas), P. Ryl. 1.1 (Deuteronomy), Chester Beatty IX (Esther), and P. Yale 3 [P 50] (Acts). On lectional aids in early Christian manuscripts, see also the comments of Roberts, *Manuscript, Society, and Belief*, 21–22. For the practice of the public reading of Christian texts, see ch. 5.

120. The original study of this phenomenon was made by L. Traube, *Nomina Sacra: Versuch einer Geschichte der christlichen Kürzung* (Munich: Beck,

1907). It has been repeatedly discussed, but without great progress, in many subsequent studies. See esp. A. H. R. E. Paap, *Nomina Sacra in the Greek Papyri of the First Five Centuries A.D.: The Sources and Some Deductions* (Leiden: Brill, 1959); S. Brown, "Concerning the Origin of the *Nomina Sacra*," *SP* 9 (1970): 7–19; G. Howard, "The Tetragram and the New Testament," *JBL* 96 (1977): 63–83; and most recently, C. H. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society, and Belief*, 26–48.

121. Aland, *Repertorium*, conveniently notes the presence of the convention whenever it occurs and gives the forms attested in each manuscript.

122. This is the origin of the peculiar English formation "Jehovah," which misconstrues a transcriptive convention as a pronounceable word. As Brown points out ("*Nomina Sacra*," 10), Traube's entire study is vitiated by a failure to grasp that in the pre-Masoretic tradition Hebrew was written only consonantally.

123. For details, see Howard, "The Tetragram," esp. 66–70.

124. For a detailed survey of the evidence, see J. A. Fitzmyer, "The Semitic Background of the New Testament *Kyrios*-Title," in *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (SBLMS 25; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979), 115–42. A brief summary of the main points is given by Howard, "The Tetragram," 63–65.

125. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society, and Belief*, 26–48. Roberts goes so far as to say that the system of nomina sacra embodies "the embryonic creed of the first Church" (46).

126. Brown, "*Nomina Sacra*," 14–16.

127. Howard, "The Tetragram," 76.

128. This is also indicated by the appearance of the Christogram in very early Christian texts, as noted by K. Aland, "Bemerkungen zum Alter und zur Entstehung des Christogrammes anhand von Beobachtungen bei P 66 und P 75," in *Studien zur Überlieferung des Neuen Testaments und seines Textes* (ANTT 2; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1967), 173–79.

129. It is an interesting question whether the scribes of Christian books were paid for their work or did it from devotion. The question probably has no generally valid answer in the early period. The best indication that scribes were paid is the presence in some manuscripts of calculations of stichoi, or fixed units of measurement. But stichoi had another important use, namely, to document the scope of the text and thus to test whether it was complete.

130. Specially prepared parchment with lines carefully ruled was required (B. T. Megillah 19a), and a particular type of script (without vocalization) was normative (B. T. Shabbat 104a, Sanhedrin 21b-22a, and Megillah 1.71b). Orthographic uniformity was emphasized (B. T. Erubin 13a, Megillah 18b, and Ketubot 19b), and "crowns" *(tagin)* were required for seven letters of the alphabet whenever they occurred (B. T. Menahot 29b). Promoting careful inscription was the rule (B. T. Megillah 29b) that any sheet of parchment that contained as many as four errors was not to be corrected but discarded (and buried).

131. See esp. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief*, app. 1 ("Jewish Theological Papyri of the Roman Period"), 74–78, commenting (76) that "there seems to have been a distinctive style of writing used for Jewish copies of the

scriptures in Greek from the second century B.C. onwards, and still used, with modifications of course, down to the third century A.D." This style is typical enough that Roberts would add it as a criterion for identifying Jewish manuscripts to those discussed (and largely relativized) by K. Treu, "Die Bedeutung des griechischen für die Juden im römischen Reich," *Kairos* 15 (1973): 123–44.

132. Eusebius, *De vita Const.* 4.36.

133. For discussions of this supposition, see K. Lake, "The Sinaitic and Vatican Manuscripts and the Copies Sent by Eusebius to Constantine," *HTR* 11 (1918): 32–35; and K. Wendel, "Der Bibel-Auftrag Kaiser Konstantins," *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 56 (1939): 165–75. T. C. Skeat, "The Use of Dictation in Ancient Book Production," *PBA* 42 (1956): 179–208, regards the Codex Vaticanus (written in three columns to the page) as one of the copies prepared for Constantine but never sent because it was defective in various particulars (196–97). Without claiming that either Sinaiticus or Vaticanus was produced in Caesarea in response to Constantine's request, some scholars nevertheless regard these codices as examples, in scope and quality, of the sorts of copies that were made: W. H. P. Hatch, *The Principal Uncial Manuscripts of the New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 18; B. M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament* (2d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 7–8.

134. Thus, most recently, G. A. Robbins, "Peri ton Endiathekon Graphon: Eusebius and the Formation of the Christian Bible" (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1986), 186–216.

135. The punctuation, hence the sense, is not entirely clear. It is grammatically possible that the phrase means that the book was written "on the inside and on the outside" (cf. Ezek. 2:8–3:3), but even that sense does not necessarily indicate an opisthograph. Bibliographic evidence indicates that what is in view is rather a roll book of the diploma (double document) type. This is correctly recognized by G. Bornkamm, "Die Komposition der apocalyptischen Visionen in der Offenbarung Johannis," in *Studien zu Antike und Christentum* (Munich: Kaiser, 1953), 204–22: "A document in two parts which, being written in a two-fold fashion, comprises one legally valid text and a corresponding second text, unsealed and offered for the inspection of everyone," 205). For a detailed discussion of the nature and use of the diploma roll, see Turner, "Recto and Verso," 26–53. Turner shows that rolls of this type were ordinarily written *transversa charta*: the roll of papyrus was rotated ninety degrees and inscribed across the fibers. Thus the text was vertical to the length of the roll, and for reading the roll was held vertically rather than horizontally. Turner also points out that such rolls (rotuli) were used for documentary purposes.

136. For heavenly books, see further in Rev. 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 15, and, e.g., in other apocalyptic texts, 1 Enoch 89.70–71, 47.3, 90.20; 4 Ezra 6.20; 2 Baruch 24.1; and Jub. 36.10; cf. heavenly tablets in, e.g., 1 Enoch 81.1–2, 93.2–3, 103.2, and 106.19. Fuller references are given by R. H. Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1913), 2:216, n. (on 1 Enoch 47.3). Cf. generally L. Koep, *Das himmlische Buch in Antike und Christentum: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur altchristlichen Bildersprache* (Bonn: Hanstein, 1952).

137. For these, see van Haelst, *Catalogue*, 409–13.

138. J. den Boeft and J. Bremmer, "Notiunculae Martyriologicae IV," *VC* 45 (1991): 105–22 (esp. 116–17). Their further comment that a continuing Christian use of roll books is supported by Tertullian's failure, despite his rich terminology for Christian scripture, to use the term *codex*, carries no more weight than any argument from silence. On the *Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs*, see also ch. 4.

139. The point is emphasized by W. V. Harris, "Why Did the Codex Supplant the Book-Roll?" in *Renaissance Society and Culture: Essays in Honor of Eugene F. Rice, Jr.*, ed. J. Monfasani and R. G. Musto (New York: Italica, 1991), 71–85 (esp. 77).

140. Ibid., 78, 83–85, with criticism of Roberts and Skeat for neglecting this.

CHAPTER III: THE PUBLICATION AND CIRCULATION OF EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

1. The text had not been identified when the manuscript (P. Oxy. 405) was first published. For the dating of the manuscript "near the end of the second century" see C. H. Roberts, "Early Christianity in Egypt," *JEA* 40 (1954): 92–96 (esp. 94). The fullest discussion is given by A. Rousseau and L. Doutreleau, *Irenée de Lyons: Contre les heresies*, bk. 3, vol. 1 (SC 210; Paris: Cerf, 1974), 126–31.

2. P. Mich. 130; see C. Bonner, "A New Fragment of the Shepherd of Hermas, Michigan Papyrus 44," *HTR* 20 (1927): 105–16. The text is written on the verso of a roll, which on the recto has a document of the third quarter of the second century. On the time-lapse to be allowed in the case of opisthographs, see Turner, *Greek Manuscripts*, 18–19.

3. The manuscript is P. Ryl. 457 (=P 52). See C. H. Roberts, "An Unpublished Fragment of the Fourth Gospel in the John Rylands Library," *BJRL* 20 (1936): 45–55. Some would date the manuscript closer to 100 than 125: see K. Aland, "Neue neutestamentliche Papyri II," *NTS* 9 (1962–63): 303–16 (307: "near the beginning of the second century").

4. It is a question, of course, what conclusions about circulation and use may be drawn from the place of a manuscript's discovery and its paleographic dating. It is conceivable that a given manuscript might never have been read or otherwise circulated in the place where it was found, or that, if it was, it occurred only at a later date than the date to which the actual writing of the manuscript was assigned. Although these possibilities require acknowledgment, they are not the most plausible assumptions in most cases, including the one cited above.

5. K. Dziatzko, "Autor- und Verlagsrecht im Altertum," *RhM* 49 (1894): 559–76; W. Speyer, *Die literarische Fälschung im heidnischen und christlichen Altertum: Ein Versuch ihrer Deutung* (Munich: Beck, 1971).

6. On the process by which texts were published and entered into circulation in antiquity, the most helpful discussions are V. Burr, "Editionstechnik," *RAC* 4 (1959): 597–610; B. van Groningen, "Ekdosis," *Mnemosyne* 16 (1963): 1–17; R. Sommer, "T. Pomponius Atticus und die Verbreitung von Ciceros Werken," *Hermes* 61 (1926): 389–422; K. Quinn, "The Poet and His Audience