

AGAIN THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE LAST VERSES
OF MARK.

IN the EXPOSITOR for March 1905 (No. lxiii., series vi.), I gave reasons for the belief that the new text of the *pericope adulterae* of Professor Conybeare's Edschmiadzin codex, while really representing, as conjectured by the discoverer, the form found in Papias and described by Eusebius as an anecdote of "a woman accused of many sins before the Lord" (cf. the Edschmiadzin text: "A certain woman was taken in sins, against whom all bore witness"), is not earlier, but later than, and dependent on the well-known form of the received text; whereas this common form is probably that which Eusebius found "contained in the *Gospel according to the Hebrews*." This, if true, lends additional interest and value to the Armenian codex in question, since it practically affords a new Papias fragment. The Armenian scribe John will have had access directly, or more probably, indirectly, to Papias, and the evidence thus afforded goes to show the dependence of Papias—or rather of Papias' Palestinian authorities "the Elders"—on the *Gospel according to the Hebrews*, a notoriously Palestinian source.

These inferences having drawn forth no reply from Professor Conybeare or others may perhaps be assumed to have a certain degree of *prima facie* validity. I venture to offer, accordingly, certain further considerations in regard to the same codex, which relate to its testimony on a much more important point, and one now very generally accepted. These considerations, however, are unfortunately adverse to its reliability.

The articles of Zahn and Resch translated by Professor Conybeare for the *EXPOSITOR* (iv. 10, 1894, pp. 219-232), and that of Harnack in the *Theologische Literaturzeitung* with Hilgenfeld's comments in the *Zeitschrift für wiss. Theologie*¹ represent varying views of the identity of the Ariston to whom the codex attributes the authorship of Mark xvi. 9-20. Hilgenfeld alone, in accordance with his singular advocacy of the authenticity of the verses, refuses to see a reference to the authority referred to by Papias,² though he identifies the Aristion spoken of by Papias with Ariston of Pella, an author quoted at some length by Eusebius (*H.E.* iv. vi.) as reporting the overthrow of Jerusalem by Hadrian in 135 A.D.

The "Presbyter Ariston" of the new codex he sharply distinguishes from the "nicht-Presbyter" of Papias. The title in his view of the Papias fragment being applicable to "John," to distinguish him from the Apostle, but not to "Aristion." His explanation of the codex datum is "Von irgend einem Presbyter Ariston vor etwa 500 wird Mk. xvi. 9-20 in einer syrischen Handschrift, welcher der Schreiber der armenischen gefolgt ist, entlehnt sein." Zahn, Harnack and Rohrbach adopt substantially the discoverer's view of the inserted title "Of the Elder Ariston," considering that the authorship of the appendix to Mark is now completely established. Resch, like Hilgenfeld, thinks it impossible to identify "the Elder Ariston" with the "Aristion" of Papias, but his conclusion is that we must attribute the appendix of Mark to Ariston of Pella, the same Ariston of Pella being, according to a seventh-century scholion by Maximus Confessor on the work *De mystica Theol.* (cap. i. p. 17, ed. Corderii), author of the *Jewish-Christian Dialogue of Jason and Papiscus*.

¹ Review of Rohrbach (*Schluss des Mkevang.*) in the issue of 1894, p. 627.

² *Ap.* Eusebius, *H.E.* iii., xxxix. 4. In the Syriac and Armenian translations of Eusebius the name is spelled uniformly "Ariston."

Of all these critics not one save Zahn seems to have considered the possibility that the Armenian title might be based on misinformation or false conjecture, and even Zahn's momentary hesitation is almost immediately dismissed. In the translation of his article by Professor Conybeare we read as follows (p. 222) :—

Now who is this Ariston? Conybeare has quite rightly rejected the idea of Ariston of Pella. It is quite true that Moses of Chorene had plenty of fables to narrate about him (ii. 60), and we could not avoid thinking of him, if Langlois (*Coll. of Arm. Hist.*, i. 391; ii. 110, n. 3) were right in ascribing to Moses the statement that Ariston was secretary of the Bishop Mark, of Jerusalem, in the time of Hadrian.

If that were so the completer of the Second Gospel must have been identified with the Secretary of the Evangelist Mark, and also (accordingly?) have received the name Ariston. Langlois, however, seems to me to have made a mistake. For Moses has in view an Ariston who was secretary of Adrian, and was sent by him to Persia, cf. also Lauer's translation, p. 118. Ariston of Pella, who wrote his dialogue "Jason and Papiscus" after 135, and perhaps a good deal later, cannot be the author of a section, which Tatian already read in his Mark at the latest in 170, and which Justin had already known, so it would seem, as early as 150, though perhaps not as an integral part of the Gospel of Mark. There remains no other but the Aristion who was one of Papias' authorities (Eus., *H.E.* iii. xxxix. 4, 6, 7, 14).

Had Zahn, after coming so close to it, given real consideration to the third possibility of an Ariston who was neither the Elder (?) Aristion of Papias, nor Ariston of Pella, but a conjectural combination of the two in the mind of a tenth century Armenian scribe familiar, as every intelligent Armenian must be, with Moses of Chorene, the critical world might not have accepted so generally, as at present appears to be the case, the idea that "Conybeare's discovery has given the final solution of the problem" of the authorship of the appendix to Mark.

To show that this third, unconsidered possibility is after all the most probable, and that the authorship of the Markan appendix is therefore a problem just as completely

unsolved as before, we must first of all make certain corrections of Zahn's statements.

In his belief that Langlois misunderstands Moses in taking Ariston to be secretary of the Bishop Mark of Jerusalem, Zahn is manifestly right. Langlois' own rendering is as follows, his [] indicating that the name Ariston de Pella is supplied:—

Vers le même temps Hadrien envoya de grandes forces en Assyrie, et ordonna à notre Ardaschès d'aller en Palestine (*sic*) avec les nobles de sa garde. [Ariston de Pella] qui nous a transmis cette relation, était attaché à sa personne comme secrétaire.

The name Ariston of Pella is properly supplied, for the whole section opens: "Ce que raconte Ariston de Pella touchant la mort d'Ardaschès est vraiment digne d'intérêt."¹ Moses inserts thereafter the Ariston fragment from Eusebius, *H.E.* iv. vi., winding it up with the statement, derived of course from Eusebius, that Hadrian established in Jerusalem a community of "pagans and Christians, whose bishop was Mark." This extract, however, is a mere aside from his main purpose, which is to relate the death and imposing obsequies of his hero Ardaces. Consequently he proceeds in immediate sequence: "About the same time Hadrian sent great forces into Assyria and sent our Ardaces to Persia together with his retainers. He who has transmitted to us this narrative [of the death and obsequies] was attached to his (?) person as secretary."

It should not require the evidence of later Armenian tradition, which describes Ariston of Pella as "the secretary of Ardaces," to show what Moses means. Rightly or

¹ Cf. the rendering of Le Vaillant de Florival, *Hist. Arm.* ii. 57 (Ed. of Whiston, ii. 60): "Vers le même temps Adrien envoya de grandes forces en Assyrie et ordonna à notre Ardaschès d'aller en Perse (*sic*) avec ses surintendants. Attaché à sa personne en qualité de gardenotes (secrétaire) celui qui nous a donné cette histoire rencontre Ardaschès en Médie," etc.

wrongly he identifies the author from whom he derives his description of the death and obsequies of his principal hero with the Ariston of Pella from whom Eusebius had quoted before him. This extract may be subjoined (in Langlois' translation) since it is unknown, save for Moses' quotation, and throws perhaps some light upon the problematical Ariston of Pella.

Il [Ariston] rencontra Ardaschès en Médie, dans un endroit appelé Sohount. Il est dit qu'Ardaschès tomba malade à Marant, dans le bourg de Pagouraguerd. . . . L'historien [Ariston?] raconte en détail le nombre de personnes qui périrent à la mort d'Ardaschès, ses femmes bien aimées, ses concubines et ses esclaves dévoués, etc.

Langlois, accordingly, is quite wrong in connecting "sa personne" with the Bishop Mark of Jerusalem, although the mistake is easy. Zahn, however, is equally wrong in taking it to be Hadrian. Moses gives Ariston's close relation to *Ardaces* because it supports his account of the death and obsequies. The account seems in reality to reflect the personal observation of an eye-witness, and contains nothing more "fabulous" than the statement that Ardaces on falling ill at Marant dispatched a certain Apéggho, described (by Aristo?) as "energetic, astute, and a flatterer," to the shrine of Artemis in Ériza, asking for healing and a long life, but when the courtier returned the king was already dead.

Why should it be treated as an absurdity when Moses of Chorene, the reputed translator of the Gospels and of the Church History of Eusebius from the Syriac, and the first and greatest historian of Armenia, supposes himself in the account aforesaid to be quoting the same Ariston of Pella from whom Eusebius had given the account of Hadrian's treatment of Jerusalem?¹ The only grounds adduced for questioning his statement are that the work

¹ Hilgenfeld well defends the reliability of this statement of Moses in *Zts f. w. Th.* for 1883, p. 8 ff.

of Ariston does not appear to have long survived its use by Eusebius (Moses of Chorene wrote about 125 years later), and that the scholiast Maximus Confessor ascribed to this same Ariston of Pella the early Jewish-Christian *Dialogue of Jason and Papiscus*. But this late ascription is far from probable. All the other authorities from whom we learn anything concerning this dialogue treat it as if anonymous, so that even the critics who accept the statement of Maximus are obliged to assume that in earlier times the dialogue had generally circulated in anonymous form. Thus Jerome, though twice quoting the dialogue, makes no mention of its author in his catalogue of Christian writers, and Eusebius, who quotes Ariston's account of the Jewish war of Hadrian, omits all reference to him as the author of any Christian work.

Per contra a Decapolis writer of this very unusual¹ name, and (most probably) of this same period,² is known to Stephanus of Byzantium, who enumerates first among the literary celebrities native to Gerasa (less than twenty miles from Pella) "Ariston the cultured rhetorician."³ From Pella he knows of none. One can scarcely sum up the case otherwise than to say, The evidence for the existence of a Christian writer Ariston is late and meagre in the extreme, the unsupported statement of Maximus to this effect being opposed to what we should infer from earlier and better authorities. The quotation of Eusebius, on the other hand, positively assures us that a historical writer, Ariston of Pella, Jew, Christian or Pagan, gave a contemporary account of Hadrian's campaign against Jeru-

¹ It occurs in the proper Greek form Ἀριστίων as the name of one or two obscure characters in Greek literature (see Pape s.v.) and in the form Ἀρίστρων in an inscription of the first century found near Jaffa. Cf. Ganneau, *Arch. Res. in Pal.* ii. p. 150. Other occurrences are unimportant.

² Greek inscriptions from this region are infrequent, after the second century.

³ Πήρω ἀρετίος. See Steph. Byz., s.v. Γέρασα.

salem. We are credibly informed that in conjunction with it he gave an account of the death and obsequies of Ardaces king of Armenia, whom Hadrian had dispatched against the Parthians, and we have mention of an ἀστέιος ῥήτωρ Ἀρίστων of Gerasa who may possibly be the same. That the anonymous Jewish-Christian dialogue employed about 160 A.D. by Celsus and known to Origen and Clement as the *Dialogue of Jason and Papiscus* should several centuries later come to be ascribed to this second-century littérateur of the Decapolis would be no unprecedented instance of involuntary Christian baptism.¹

We propound then as the real explanation of the inserted title "Ariston Eritzou" of the Edschmiadzin codex, the theory that the tradition is no older than the scribe, or διορθωτής, of the codex itself, who wrote in A.D. 989, and arises simply from the ambiguous phrase of Moses of Chorene, which Langlois has understood as declaring "that Ariston was secretary of the Bishop Mark, of Jerusalem, in the time of Hadrian." That a tenth century Armenian scribe should take the Ariston of Pella whose description of the overthrow of Jerusalem he found quoted by Eusebius, and who further appeared to be designated by Moses the "father" of Armenian history, as "the secretary of Mark, Bishop of Jerusalem," to be the completer of the Gospel of Mark is nothing extraordinary. The verses Mark xvi. 9-20 themselves were attached as an unauthentic postscript, in accordance with Armenian tradition, which follows old-Syriac authority in omitting Mark xvi. 9-20. Just as in the case of the *pericope adulterae*, which was also, as it were, appended in [], with the marginal note, "The

¹ The datum of *Chron. Pasch.* (Ed. Dindorf, p. 477) attributing to the year 134 the delivery to Hadrian of an *Apology* by Ἀπελλῆς καὶ Ἀρίστων, ὃν μέμνηται Εὐσέβιος κτλ., has long been recognized as a pure blunder for ὁ Πελλαῖος Ἀρίστων; but the name Ariston of Pella would not have been substituted for "Aristides," the real author of the *Apology*, if the process of transforming the "cultured rhetorician" and "historian" of Decapolis into a Christian apologist had not already begun.

things concerning the adulteress," so here an interlined scholion, manifestly crowded in after the completion of the copyist's work, but before the manuscript had left the scriptorium, explained the unwonted addition as the work of "The Presbyter Ariston." In spite of Hilgenfeld, however, we cannot conceive the insertion of such a title to be independent of the Papias excerpt in Eusebius, *H.E.* iii. xxxix. 4. These verses, to appear entitled even to such a quasi-canonical position as the scribe has given them, would have to be attributed to some authority only second to the Apostles themselves. Appended as first written, without a separate title, but separated by several devices from the rest of the Gospel, they suggested for themselves a derivation from some anonymous "secretary" or completer of Mark. With the subsequent addition "Ariston Eritzou" they obtained a somewhat higher sanction. Their presence in so exalted a position, contrary to orthodox Armenian tradition, was excused by ascription to the famous Elder on whom Papias had depended. No obstacle appeared to the identification, because in the Syriac and Armenian "Ariston" (not "Aristion") is the name of the Elder in question.

Nothing can so strongly support the view just stated of the origin of this title as the photographic facsimile of the page, given on p. cv. of Swete's *Commentary on Mark*. Professor Conybeare himself furnishes the accompanying description, from which we transcribe the following:—

In this codex verse 8 of ch. xvi. ends at the beginning of a line, in the second column of a page. The line is partly filled up with the vermilioned flourishes which indicate that the Gospel proper of Mark is ended. Verse 9 however is begun on the next line, and the whole 12 verses are completed in the same large uncials as the rest of the Gospels. As it were by an afterthought the scribe adds the title *Ariston Eritzou* just above the flourishes mentioned, and within the columnar space. It is written in vermilioned smaller uncials identical in character with those which at the foot of each column denote the Ammonian canons, and also with those which the scribe uses to

complete a word at the end of a line, thereby preserving the symmetry of the lines and avoiding the necessity of placing the last one or two letters of a word by themselves at the beginning of a fresh line. The title therefore was added by the first hand; or, if not by him, at least by the *διορθωτής*. In any case, it is contemporary *and must have stood in the older copy transcribed*, from which also were perhaps transferred the fifth century full-page illuminations included in the existing codex. At first it was intended to omit the title, but on second thoughts it was added. If the scribe had from the first meant to keep it, he would have left room for it, instead of cramping it in above the terminal flourishes. That he regarded Mark proper as ending with verse 8, is further shown by the large circular boss consisting of concentric circles of colour added against the end of verse 8 between the columns.

The whole case for the widely accepted view of Professor Conybeare rests upon the words I have italicized in the above extract "must have stood in the older copy transcribed." But on what does this inference rest?

The suggested possibility that the omission of the appendix from our earliest authorities might be due to the presence of some such title *τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου Ἀρίστωνος*, can scarcely be called a reason. The verses, when attached at all in the more ancient Armenian MSS., are included between the subscription *Εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Μάρκον* placed after both verse 8 and verse 20 (W. H. *Notes, l.c.*), and Greek MSS. gave similar indications of their secondary authority. Even had there been no such tradition the mere fact that another form of the ending was known to be in circulation would account for an obelizing or cancellation of the suspected material. In attaching the appendix after a space filled out by terminal flourishes and other indications that "he regarded Mark proper as ending with verse 8," the scribe is simply showing his regard for Syriac and Armenian tradition, which rejected the verses, while at the same time he yields to the increasing pressure of later Greek usage. As with the *pericope adulterae*, while he feels obliged for completeness' sake to take up the unwonted material, he records his (supposed) knowledge of their real

derivation in the scholion "cramped in above the terminal flourishes." The text, as Professor Conybeare notes, has no very noticeable variants from the Greek text of Westcott and Hort. The appendix, then, is from the common Greek tradition. Its secondary position is accounted for by the standard Armenian practice. But what is there to indicate that the title *Ariston Eritzou* was "transcribed from the older text employed"?

One exceedingly interesting item is adduced by Professor Conybeare, which, so far as it goes, tends to confirm the ascription of the appendix of our Second Gospel to Papias' Aristion. "In a 12th century Bodleian Codex of Rufinus' Latin version of the *Ecclesiastical History* (of Eusebius) this story (how Justus called Barsabas 'drank off a deadly drug and yet suffered no ill effects because of the grace of the Lord') is mentioned in the margin against the name of Aristion (in p. 136, 31), from which we may suppose that the scholiast of Rufinus regarded the story as in a peculiar manner due to, or suggested by Aristion."¹ If Professor Conybeare is here correct in both his observation and inferences, the scholiast of Rufinus might not unreasonably be assumed to have imbibed somewhere the idea of Aristion as author of Mark xvi. 9-20; for the resemblance between Mark xvi. 18 and the tale of Papias regarding Barsabas is too close to be accidental. We shall then have two witnesses, but by no means necessarily independent witnesses, for the currency of the idea. It remains to be shown, however, that it was really the scholiast's intention to indicate Aristion as the author of this tale,² and that his grounds for this belief, if he entertained it, were connected with a belief in Mark xvi. 18 being also by Aristion, which

¹ EXPOSITOR, iv. viii., 1893, p. 246.

² We venture the query whether it is not rather the name "the Elder John," alongside that of Aristion, against which the reference to the drinking a cup of poison with impunity was written, the scholiast having in mind the well known exploit attributed to "John."

belief in turn rested on some better authority than a scribe's conjecture. Until something further is vouchsafed in respect to this scholion it can hardly be considered to establish much of a probability that "Aristion" was the actual author of Mark xvi. 18, and that the remembrance of this fact hidden for almost a millennium suddenly reappeared in the "afterthought" of an Armenian scribe.

How much of improbability is really involved in the supposition is made clear by no other than Zahn himself:—

Now it would be an extremely improbable assumption that the composer of the appendix to Mark should have actually named Aristion as his authority, either in a prefatory title or in a marginal notice. If he did, how can we explain the fact that the notice was lost and disappeared from the hundreds of copies in which that appendix has been transmitted to us, so that we had no trace of it until the Edschmiadzin Gospel was discovered? A learned notice of the kind is quite out of keeping with the style of Mark xvi. 9–20.

Zahn's explanation is that:—

A learned man of the fourth or fifth century, who was interested in the question of the origin of Mark xvi. 9–20, because he did not find the section in all copies, who also knew the work of Papias and found in it a *Diegesis* of Aristion's, essentially the same with Mark xvi. 14–18, availing himself of his information, entered on the margin of his copy of the Gospels the words *'Αριστίωνος πρεσβυτέρου*. This notice may then have gained currency over a small range, and have made its way to Armenia among other places.

In other words, Zahn is obliged to assume, just as we are, that the notice rests upon pure conjecture, only, accepting Professor Conybeare's unsupported assumption that it "must have stood in the older copy transcribed," he takes a leap backward of 500 years in the dark, and instead of an Armenian scribe misunderstanding the actually surviving passage of Moses of Chorene which seems to say that Aristo of Pella was the secretary of Mark, he substitutes a learned man, comparing a supposititious passage of Papias with Mark xvi. 14–18.

A further coincidence which might have been but has

not been adduced in favour of common authorship for the appendix to Mark and the *Dialogue of Jason and Papiscus* is that Celsus in 160 and Jerome in 375 both employ the two, Jerome in particular evincing, as Zahn justly argues, acquaintance with a longer and more original form of the text in Mark xvi. 14f. than any known to us. But few who have studied the problem of the *Dialogue* will be disposed to look in it for the source of the appendix. What we have now presented should suffice to prove that even if Ariston of Pella were proved to be its author the reasons are but slight for regarding Ariston of Pella or Papias' Ariston, or any other of the name, as author of Mark xvi. 9-20.

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THE PROBLEM OF THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN.

THE object of this paper is to discuss the question whether the Second Epistle of St. John was written to a literal Mother and Children or whether it was addressed to some Church personified as a Mother with her Children.

These two opposing theories may for convenience be distinguished as the *literal* and the *figurative* hypotheses.

Opinion has been much divided on this question. Thus, without attempting to give an exhaustive list, Alford, together with the contributors in the *Speaker's Commentary* and in Ellicott's *Commentary*, support the literal hypothesis. On the other hand Meyer and Wordsworth are in favour of the figurative theory. The latter view was also taken by Lightfoot and Westcott. Thus Lightfoot wrote: "I take the view that the *κνρία* addressed in the 2nd Epistle of St. John is some Church personified, as indeed the whole tenor of the Epistle seems to imply." (*Commentary on Colossians and Philemon*, p. 303 note.)