

Further progress may be expected along the lines of Form Criticism; an example is to hand in Dupont.²⁹ Such study may enable us to say with confidence whether or not a conjectural Proto-Matthew is required. Unless it is required, it should be excluded: *entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem*. For the sake of clarity, it must be emphasized that the Proto-Matthew which may prove to be required must have been in the Greek language (that is, our problem would not be solved in an "Aramaic Matthew") . It is indeed possible that some of Luke's so-called Q material is derived, independently of Matthew, from Aramaic sources. But much of Luke's Q material, like Mark in general, is too similar in its Greek to the Greek of the corresponding passages in Matthew to be explained as resulting from independent translations of Aramaic originals.

LACHMANN'S ARGUMENT

N. H. Palmer*

In the Triple Tradition Matthew and Luke never agree against Mark in their arrangement of passages—that is, in the order of pericopes. This absence of agreement in order against Mark is often used to prove that these passages were taken by Matthew and Luke, independently, from Mark—that is, as an argument for Markan priority. This inference is commonly attributed to K. Lachmann. B. C. Butler has pointed out an error in this inference.

Palmer notes that it is disturbing that Gospel critics have for so long relied on an argument now seen to be invalid and that it is, therefore, of some interest to discover just how this so-called "Lachmann fallacy," as Butler termed it, came to be committed. In fact, Palmer points out, even Butler concedes that Lachmann did not so much commit a fallacy as make an unwarranted assumption; namely, Lachmann took it for granted that all three synoptic evangelists derived their material from a common source, a pre-evangelical source, whether written or oral.

Lachmann made the narrative sequence in the synoptic gospels (that is, what came to be regarded as the argument from order) the sole subject of his investigation in his critical essay. Inasmuch as Lachmann's argument is not easily accessible to scholars, Palmer sets out in the main body

²⁹J. Dupont, *Les Béatitudes* (1954).

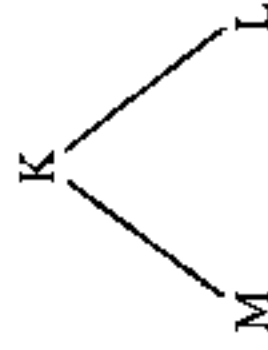
*N. H. Palmer, "Lachmann's Argument," *New Testament Studies* 13 (1966-1967): 368-78.

of his article to give an English version of the relevant sections of Lachmann's original Latin article of 1835: "De ordine narrationum in evangelii synopticis" (On the order of stories in the synoptic gospels).

Palmer concludes that Lachmann's article contains no trace of an argument from the absence of agreement in order against Mark or what, according to Palmer, Butler overhastily dubbed "the Lachmann fallacy." Others may be guilty of the so-called "Lachmann fallacy," but Lachmann himself apparently is not.

The gospels of Matthew and Luke rarely agree against Mark in details of the passages which are common to all three: and they never do so in their arrangement of those passages. Of all the other four possible types of agreement-and-disagreement, there are abundant instances. Let us call this composite fact "the absence of agreement against Mark." (Writing M for Matthew, K for Mark, L for Luke, and a dot for disagreement, we have just five types of combination: MKL; MK.L; KL.M; LM.K; M.K.L.)

The absence of agreement against Mark is often used to prove that these passages were taken by Matthew and Luke, independently, from Mark. (To save space, this "pedigree" may be written K—M, L.) This inference, which is commonly attributed to Lachmann, proceeds as follows:

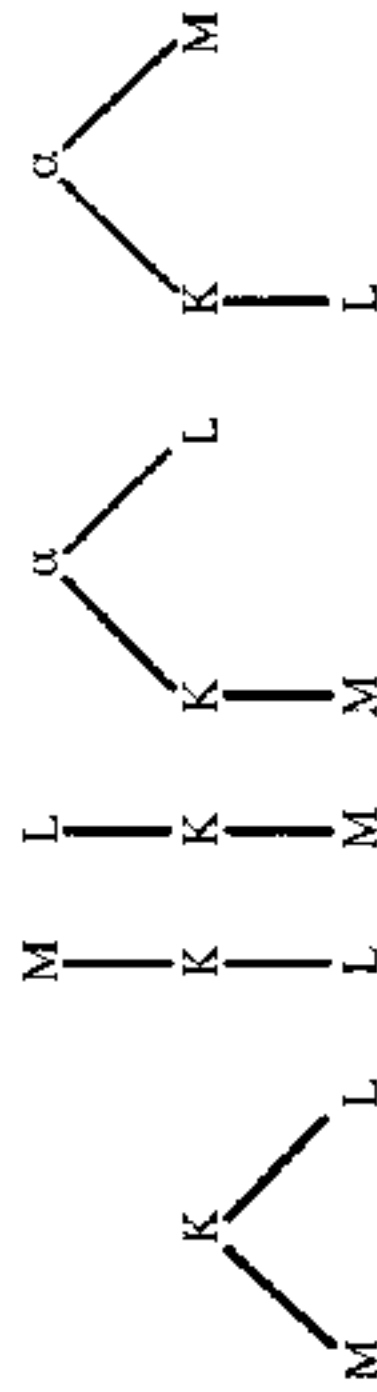


Although each variation in the detail or ordering of these passages may be taken to represent a decision of the borrowing evangelist to depart at that point from the gospel he was following, a considerable asymmetry between the resulting combinations (agreements-and-disagreements) should be taken as a property of their actual relationship, and can therefore be used to show which evangelist borrowed from which. Thus in any pedigree in which Mark could differ from, say, Matthew without thereby affecting the reading of Luke, he should quite frequently stand alone against their joint witness. As he so rarely does so, we must assume that the relationship of the documents made it difficult or impossible: that is, that in the actual pedigree Mark could not differ from Matthew (or Luke) without thereby affecting the reading of Luke (or Matthew). Now the pedigree possessing this property is K—M, L. We should therefore hold, on grounds of ordering, that Matthew and Luke derived the common material independently from Mark, and should explain away their "minor agreements" of detail against him as due to coincidence or to later assimilation of the texts.

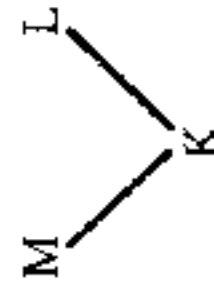
B. C. Butler has pointed out an error in this inference:¹ K—M, L is not the only pedigree to possess the required property. In any pedigree in

¹B. C. Butler, *The Originality of S. Matthew* (1951) chapter V, "The Lachmann Fallacy," 62-71. [Reprinted in this volume]

which Mark stands "between" the other two, his differing from one of them will affect the other, thus eliminating variations of the type ML.K. Divergent pedigrees of no less than five different patterns put Mark in this "medial position":



Mark also stands middle in such convergent pedigrees as

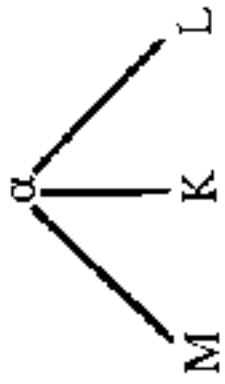


Until the relationship among these gospels is uniquely determined, very little progress can be made with questions of date or editorial policy; thus there is little point in discussing why Luke made certain changes when borrowing from Mark, as long as the possibility remains open that it was Mark who borrowed from Luke. As the absence of agreement against Mark does not determine the pedigree uniquely, appeal will have to be made to other and less objective arguments. Thus Butler finds some details of Matthew's text more "original"; while G. M. Styler is equally convinced, on similar grounds, of the priority of Mark.² The "one assured result" of Synoptic criticism (on which even form critics have been accustomed to rest some of their arguments) is once more in dispute.

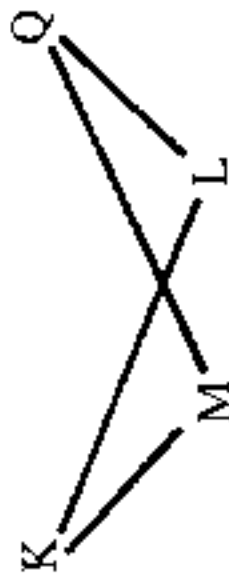
It is disturbing that Gospel critics should for so long have relied on an argument now seen to be invalid: and it is therefore of some interest to discover just how this "Lachmann fallacy" came to be committed. Butler points out that Lachmann himself did not so much commit a fallacy as make an unwarranted assumption. He took it for granted that all three evangelists derived their material from a common source, whether written

²G. M. Styler, "The Priority of Mark," in C. F. D. Moule, *The Birth of the New Testament* (1962) 223-32. [Reprinted in this volume]

down or recited orally. On this assumption, the absence of agreement against Mark does show that Mark stood "nearest" to the source.



Assuming that this common source was in writing (*Grundschrift*), later scholars came to regard it as an earlier version of Mark ("Urmarcus"); then when a second document (Q) was postulated to account for the non-Markan parallels between Matthew and Luke, no reason remained for distinguishing Urmarcus from our Mark. Thus the familiar two-source theory was evolved, no one noticing that on these conditions the absence of agreement against Mark would no longer prove the priority of Mark.



This account of the development of Synoptic argument has recently been set out in considerable detail by W. R. Farmer.³ The general conclusion must be that Synoptic criticism took a large step backwards in this century, as critics from Streeter onwards went on using the argument from order as proof of Markan priority, after abandoning the assumption on which its validity depends.

Lachmann's argument was set out in a Latin article, "De ordine narrationum in evangeliiis synopticis," in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* for 1835. It was reprinted in the preface to the second volume of his *Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine* (1850). These volumes are not easy to come by, and it may be that few scholars know his reasoning at first hand. I therefore give an English version of the relevant sections.⁴ They contain several remarks of quite contemporary interest to Synoptic students. They do not, as far as I can see, contain the fallacious "Lachmann argument." The account just given of the (perverse) development of Synoptic criticism will therefore need correction at some points.

³W. R. Farmer, *The Synoptic Problem* (1964).

⁴The translation has been made from *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* (1835): 570-90. The relevant material appears on 573-84.

On the order of the stories in the synoptic gospels
by Karl Lachmann, professor at Berlin

[Introduction, replying to critics of his edition of the New Testament and dedicating this work to the memory of F. Schleiermacher.]

Many have inquired how it came about that three of the gospels accepted by the judgment of the Church should be so similar in form throughout, and yet should in various places both agree and differ together in order, in additions and omissions, and in the actual events and words.

Some are sure they will solve his problem one day by comparing and harmonizing not these passages alone, but all that remains of the gospel tradition, even including apocrypha. These scholars work very hard, but not very intelligently. Some others thought the whole explanation lay in the origins of these books, which they could discover. I would not say they were entirely wrong, but they could not provide all they had promised. Their wide claims should therefore be reduced; their acute observations need supplementing by further discoveries, if one is to climb to the summit rather than to fly up there. Now I should like to take a proper middle course; and it seems clear that in approaching the matter one must make a start either from one of those three gospels, or from one of the respects in which they both differ and agree. I have therefore decided to consider for the present only their ordering. This is much the simplest element, and no one, to my knowledge, has considered it before. So let us see how much progress can be made from this starting point.

The ordering of the gospel stories does not vary as much as most people think. The variation appears greatest if all three writers are compared together, or if Luke is compared with Matthew; it is less if Mark is compared with the others one by one. That shows what I should do: first compare Mark with Matthew, and afterwards consider the order of Luke and Mark.

The points in which Mark differs from Matthew all come together in one section (Mk. 1:21-6:13; Mt. 4:24-13:58). It is therefore an easy matter to set out their differences in a table, as follows:

According to Mark

Simon, Andrew, James, and John are called.

They were astonished at his doctrine.

I (II Mt.)

Peter's mother-in-law. [Let us go to the nearby villages and towns.]

II (I Mt.)

According to Matthew

Simon, Andrew, James, and John are called. [Great crowds follow. Sermon on the mount.]

They were surprised at his doctrine.

I (II Mk.)

Leper: you can cleanse me, if you will.

II (I Mk.)

Leper: you can cleanse me, if you will.

[Centurion] Peter's mother-in-law.

III (V Mk.)

He gives orders to cross the sea. [The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. Let the dead bury their dead.] He commands the wind and the sea. The Gerasenes.

III (IV Mt.)

Paralytic. Levi. Why does he eat and drink with publicans and sinners? Why don't your disciples fast?

Paralytic. Matthew. Why does he eat with publicans and sinners? Why don't your disciples fast?

IV (III Mk.)

V (VI Mk.)

The ruler's daughter, and the woman suffering from an issue of blood. [Two blind men. The dumb man.]

VI (VIII Mk.)

[The harvest indeed is great.] The apostles are called together. [Their names.] They are sent out. [Further address to them. The messengers sent by John. Discourse about John.]

IV (VII Mt.)

They pluck ears of corn on the sabbath. Withered hand healed. [Great crowds follow. The apostles' names.] He has Beelzebub and casts out demons in the name of the prince of demons. Discourse. His mother and brethren. Parable of the sower. [Lantern under a bushel. With what measure ye mete. If a man casts a seed on the ground.] Grain of mustard. Without a parable he did not speak.

V (III Mt.)

VII (IV Mk.)

They pluck ears of corn on the sabbath. Withered hand healed. [The blind dumb man.] He casts out demons in the name of Beelzebub. [continued.] His mother and brethren. Parable of the sower. [Tares.] Grain of mustard. [Leaven.] Without parables he did not speak. [Interpretation of the parable of the tares. Other parables.]

Let us cross over. He threatens the wind and says "Silence!" to the sea. The Gerasene.

VI (V Mt.)

Jairus' daughter, and the woman who had a flow of blood.

VII (VIII Mt.)

VIII (VII Mk.)

Is not this the carpenter? Is not this the carpenter's son?

VIII (VI Mt.)

The twelve are called together and sent out.

IX

IX

And King Herod heard.

Herod the tetrarch heard the report of Jesus.

No further difference can be found between these two gospels. If I can make out the reasons for the differences here set out, I shall bring them into agreement again. It is clear that they have not all been jumbled together indiscriminately. The entire difference concerns eight sections, two of which have been simply interchanged, so that what each put first stands second in the other. The remaining sections can be divided into two parts in such a way that in neither did the writers differ in their ordering: for the sections standing third, fourth and seventh in Mark stand fourth, seventh and eighth in Matthew; while Mark's fifth, sixth and eighth equal Matthew's third, fifth and sixth. This shows that each followed the same source,⁵ not departing from the order held by the other, unless compelled by some necessity. Which of them departed, then? And by what necessity? It used to be said that Matthew must have put back into correct temporal order the events at which he was present. No scholars, I suppose, would now hold this view; for recent learned controversy can hardly have left anyone supposing the gospel attributed to Matthew to be either more accurate than the others chronologically, or to have been written by an apostle. Even more plausible (since it makes less sense of the necessity which I mentioned) is the view of Mark as a bungling dilettante, unsure of his way, borne hither and thither between Matthew's and Luke's gospels by boredom, desire, carelessness, folly or design. Adherents of this view must have been taken in by a certain discussion of Griesbach's which, though it looks clever and subtle, is really not ingenious at all, but an absolute frost. Anyway, I hold that no good reason can be found by which we could suppose that Mark was led to alter Matthew's order here, especially as Luke agrees with Mark on almost all these points; but I think I can show why the order of Mark and Luke could not be used in the gospel of Matthew; so it was here, not there, that the order had to be broken by certain devices. Now

⁵Ut adpareat idem utrumque secutum esse.

the gospel of Matthew I regard as originally composed of discourses of the Lord Jesus Christ, collected and woven together, with other stories stuck in afterwards (this view of Schleiermacher's needed expounding only, not arguing, since it is obviously true; so it should be accepted even if you differ from him in interpreting Papias). In this gospel the sermon on the mount in Galilee precedes the group of sections under discussion; the sixth section (on the numbering given just above) contains a discourse on the duties of apostles (Mt. 9:37, 38; 10:5-42), and another about John the Baptist (11:7-19 or 30); the seventh section gives a discourse about Satan, with various other things added in, which may or may not derive from Matthew the apostle (12:25-45); the same section also contains a large number of parables (13:3-52). Mark, on the other hand, has part of the discourse on Satan in his fourth section, plus some parables, and in his eighth section gives a bit of the discourse to the apostles. Anyone who thinks about this will agree that he can see why Mark's final section was put after his second, in Matthew's gospel, and Mark's eighth before his fourth. It is quite clear that Matthew the apostle put the sermon which is said to have been given on the mount right at the beginning of his book. It would therefore have seemed more appropriate that the leper should be said to have run and met Jesus when he came down from the mount and before he entered the town of Capernaum, in which he healed the centurion's servant according to the Gospel of Matthew, and Peter's mother-in-law according to both evangelists. Again it is quite likely, and not unreasonable, that Matthew the apostle put the discourse on duties of apostles and the one about John before the discourse on Satan and before the parables: in which case it is not surprising that those who composed the gospel according to Matthew, being afraid to change this order, preferred to change the arrangement in which the stories had been handed down to them. There were, then, compelling reasons for the arrangement in Matthew's gospel of most of Mark's sections (the order was this, sections two, one, three, eight, four, seven of Mark: for the third, fourth and seventh kept their positions, and I have just discussed the first second and eighth); it remained only to assign convenient positions to sections five and six. In discussing this we must of course beware of the penalties attached to excessive curiosity; I will, however, venture to say that they put Mark's sixth section, containing the raising of the ruler's daughter, in front of his eighth section (= Matthew's sixth), and added two blind men and the dumb one, so that the message there sent to John, that "the blind receive their sight and the deaf hear and the dead are raised up" (Mt. 11:5),⁶ should not seem pointless, that is, without examples. It is less obvious why they preferred not to put Mark's fifth section before his sixth, but put it over in front of his third instead; but as Jesus had twice already been said to have brought help to demoniacs also (Mt. 4:24; 8:16), they may have thought it more suitable for the Gerasenes, as a fine example of this type, to come immediately after the curing of the fever of Peter's mother-in-law, and for the paralytic to be put aside for a moment, as the centurion's servant, who suffered from just the same disease, had come only a little earlier, in Matthew's second section (8:6). But everyone can form his own opinion about this instance: it will suffice if compelling reasons for changing the order are found in some of these sections, since it is likely that the evangelist's own preferences also played a part at times. Both factors can be observed in the section I come to now. Mark, before the first discourse, in his fourth section (3:7-19), says that many followed Jesus "from Gal-

⁶Passages within quotation marks are given by Lachmann in the Greek.

ilee and from Judaea and from Jerusalem and from Idumaea, and beyond Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon," but he then goes on to list the apostles' names; Luke also has both these sections in the same position (6:14-19). But in the gospel according to Matthew the apostles' names had to be put in the sixth section (10:2-4), which corresponds to Mark's eighth and contains instructions to them as they were setting out. Now that other bit could have been put in the same place, but was moved elsewhere: for before the first discourse, that is, the one on the mount, it says, "and there followed him great multitudes from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judaea and beyond Jordan" (4:24, 25); but a similar opening is given to the discourse in both Luke and Matthew, "blessed are the poor, for yours is the kingdom of God."

I have now explained where and why Matthew departs from the order given in Mark. Fair and straightforward readers will, I think, agree with me. If others read this in the conviction that whatever I say will be wrong, I shall not exert myself to deceive them with a long discourse in a fine style, to drag them over unwillingly to my side. But not even obstinacy and scepticism, I suppose, could drive them to deny that Luke hardly ever departs from Mark, once they have examined a little more closely those places where there is some difference. These fall into two classes: in some the order changes while the words in both are very much the same; other sections are set in different positions and also differ in the matter and the words. There are two instances of the former class, and three of the latter. I shall discuss each class separately.

First comes the instance I mentioned just now in Matthew. Mark (3:7-19, 20-30) after the curing of the withered hand stated that a great crowd followed from Galilee and Judaea and from the other parts, and then at once put down the names of the apostles, and the discourse on the division of Satan's kingdom. Luke, however, changes the order a little at this point (6:12-19), that is, after the withered hand, first listing those who were chosen as apostles, then saying from whence the great multitude of the people had been gathered together: but he put the discourse about Satan elsewhere in the gospel (11:14-26), in a section peculiar to him and not shared with the others. The other instance is very similar to this, in every respect. In the very next passage (3:31-4:25, 4:30-32) Mark places first that saying of Jesus, "Behold my mother and my brethren," next the parable of the sower, and about the lantern under a bushel, and "To him that hath shall be given," and lastly the saying about a grain of mustard; Luke, however, (8:4-18, 19-21) starts with the sower and the lantern covered by a vessel, and adds at this point "To him that hath shall be given," but puts the parable about the grain of mustard away in another place (13:18, 19). It may seem rather bold of me to say, he puts them away from here; but when I see such clear and almost continuous agreement, from which Luke departs only once or twice, I am bound to consider that in the parable of the grain of mustard and in the discourse on Satan he departed deliberately from the order of the others, which was known to him, to avoid writing the same things twice or taking anything away from that account of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem, which he thought more reliable. The fact that he placed the apostles' names and "Behold my mother" in slightly different positions from the others makes so little difference to my case that I need not now inquire why he did so.

There remains the other class of instances in which displacement is accompanied by a remarkable difference in the facts and the words. This has so impressed some writers that they thought Luke was telling different stories, rather than the

same stories in a different dress. Luke himself, however, must certainly be supposed to have held a different view; if it now seems credible that he was acquainted with the gospel stories in the order in which Mark used them, it is surely conceivable that he should have omitted those unless he was sure he could present them as received from other authorities in a different and indeed more reliable manner. Consequently where Mark describes the calling of Simon and Andrew and the sons of Zebedee (1:16-20), and again where he records that Jesus in reply to those in his home town who jeered "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?" said that a prophet is not without honor except in his own country (6:1-6), and lastly where Mark writes that the woman of Bethany anointed Jesus' head in the house of Simon the leper (14:3-9), in all these places Luke has nothing of that sort. Other writers have, I think, sufficiently explained why Luke transferred to the first part of his gospel (4:16-30) the saying to the Nazarenes, that no prophet is acceptable in his own country. Moreover on Luke's reading of the tradition about Simon and the sons of Zebedee, they did not merely leave their nets and their father, as the others wrote (Mk. 1:18, 20; Mt. 4:20, 22), but left *all* that they had (Lk. 5:11) and followed Jesus; Luke may therefore have thought it inappropriate to mention Simon's house (Lk. 4:38) after this, like the others, in reporting that his mother-in-law was suffering from fever there. Luke therefore preferred to put the call of Simon and his friends (5:1-11) after the healing of Simon's mother-in-law, rather than (supposing the story of the demon who knew Christ were transposed or dropped⁷ along with the words "he rose up from the synagogue" [4:31-38]), leave a problem, though not a difficult one, to the prudence of the reader: this, however, is what he did in another and rather similar case (5:28, 29), where he writes that Levi, who had just then left all his things and was following Jesus, made a great feast at his house. Finally, there is the woman who anointed Jesus' feet in the house of Simon the Pharisee: here Luke had received certain things which would have seemed inappropriate if said a few days before Jesus' death (for example, 7:49, "who is this that even forgiveth sins?", which could hardly have been placed after the snub to those who asked, 20:2, "tell us by what authority you do these things"): he therefore decided—if I may hazard a guess—that he might conveniently recount this matter at the point (7:38-50) where, following some authority of his own, he had to list the women who were ministering to Jesus (8:1-3).

How stands the matter now? If my suggestions are correct and there is such precise and comprehensive agreement between both Matthew and Luke and the order of the gospel according to Mark that what little variations there are can be supposed made by them each for his own purposes, and if it is clear, in spite of this complete agreement, that they did not have before them a copy of Mark to imitate, the only remaining possibility is to say that the more or less prescribed order which all three follow was settled and established by some authority and tradition of the gospel, before they themselves wrote. Whether that order was shown to the evangelists in writing, or acquired by them through an already fixed custom of teaching and hearing, I prefer not to decide for the moment, so as not to spoil my case by taking on another. I shall be satisfied if it is understood that in determining the precise chronology of the history of Jesus, and deciding which events should be thought to have happened before or after others, no greater weight can be placed on the witness of three evangelists than if a single and indeed unknown author had testified. It may

⁷*vel tractata vel revisa.*

also be helpful to point out to those who compose harmonies (or synopses as they are called nowadays), and who are usually put to great trouble by the difference of order and sequence, that in carrying out their task they should not be too contemptuous of Mark's authority. Finally, I think I can properly advise students of the sources of each gospel always to distinguish very carefully between material derived from the first writers and effects due to assembling the stories in a predetermined order; here even Schleiermacher may, I fear, have been oversubtle in ascribing to Luke's authorities some cases of linking different stories which a more correct view would see as coming together only by chance, being forced by the predetermined order to reach the same position in the story.

I have explained briefly with what caution gospel questions would have to be treated if anyone is minded not to neglect this small contribution of mine but to find a proper application for it in other fields. As learned readers do not need to be supplied with instances, I would have nothing more to add, were I not stimulated and roused to further discussion by what I said just now: that, even before our gospels were written, that order by which they were to be arranged was already settled. The first point that seems to me to be worth further inquiry is not who the first author of it was, but how and by what means that order was composed and the stories arranged.

Let me begin at this point. No one, I suppose, will believe that this whole body of gospel history, which has come down to us in three versions, came out full and complete in every part as though at one birth, at the same time as the separate stories were framed in a more or less fixed verbal form: and there is evidence by which certain smaller collections of stories can be easily made out, the elements of which though very possibly handed down by different authors are fitted and linked together by a sort of common bond and can even be marked off from the passages on either side of them by certain fixed and definite signs and formulae. Now I think I can show with sufficient precision how many such "molecules" of gospel history there were for our writers to use, and what were the limits of each one. As I said, it makes no difference to my case whether you regard them as written tracts or suppose that those who told stories were accustomed when speaking and teaching to link those parts together, though if we have to admit that those learned in the gospel history would bring out several stories all together, what was there to prevent those stories, linked in that way and put in those same words, from being written down, before bolder spirits turned their minds to the composition of complete gospels? [Outline division of the common tradition by reference to subject-matter and closing formulae.]

Although in this article clarity is sometimes sacrificed to brevity, the general line of argument is clear and needs no commentary. Like modern critics, Lachmann regards these gospels as assemblages of paragraphs. Like the harmonists, he tries to reconcile or explain the variant arrangements of these paragraphs. Unlike them, he treats this as a literary problem: we are not to decide which order is most likely to be historically correct but which arrangement was earlier and which resulted from alterations to it at a later date.

Lachmann had some experience in juggling paragraphs, for in his second edition of Proterius (1829) he reassembled some poems cut in half by a dislocation in the manuscript. The transpositions in the gospels were not to be explained by chance and mechanical means, but by finding reasons which could have influenced one or another evangelist in altering the order that he found. This recalls the familiar method of choosing between readings in manuscripts: is it easier to conceive reasons or processes by which the reading of A could be turned into the reading of B, or is the reverse change, from B to A, more easily conceivable? (For example, if copyists tended to interpolate, then *brevior lectio potior* . . .) The reasons which Lachmann found may still deserve attention; it may also be that we could find "reasons" telling the opposite way in each single case. His argument, then, does not rest on facts about different gospels or evangelists so much as on a comparison of plausibility in various conjectures of ours about the evangelists. Lachmann also takes for granted a theory about the double composition of Matthew without which his conjectures would appear even less plausible. The main point, however, is the complete absence of the argument we were led to expect, that triple comparison among types of variation, whose overhasty conclusion Butler dubbed (overhastily) "the Lachmann fallacy." Lachmann's article contains no trace of an argument from the absence of agreement against Mark.

We may therefore take a more cheerful view of the progress, gradual but not completely interrupted, of Synoptic criticism. Lachmann first tried arguing from the phenomena of order. His successors in Germany worked out several forms of *Grundschrift* and Urmarcus theory. The first clear case of the argument from absence of agreement is cited from Abbott: "In the case of the three narratives A, B, and C, if A contains much that is common to A and B alone, and much that is common to A and C alone, and *all that is common to B and C*, it follows generally that A contains the whole of some narrative from which B and C have borrowed parts."²⁸

It was natural that the new principle should first be recognized in a concrete case; and that general statements of it should not at first make the limitations and qualifications very precise. Abbott may not have realized that, if A copied B, adding new material, and C then copied most of A, giving a linear pedigree B—A—C, text A would indeed "contain the whole of

²⁸E. A. Abbott and W. G. Rushbrooke, *The Common Tradition of the Synoptic Gospels* (1884) vii; cf. Farmer, 77.

some narrative from which B and C "present some parts, without proving that documents B and C both borrowed their text from that of document A.

A formal and nearly correct treatment of the argument from absence of agreement against one of three texts was first given by Quentin, in discussion of the Vulgate text.²⁹ The precise application of this technique of triple comparison to the Synoptic problem is probably due to Butler, himself, although he does not mention Quentin, and writes as though the principle of the argument were well known to all, and the fallacy committed by Stanton, Abbott, Wellhausen, Burkitt, Streeter, Rawlinson, Narborough, Redlich and perhaps Hawkins³⁰ were an elementary error to which not even a schoolboy would fall prey. But arguments are tricky things to handle and even more difficult to conceive in the abstract or to describe. We shall all of us commit logical sins in the future: it is some comfort to learn that we are in good company.

²⁹H. Quentin, *Essais de critique textuelle* (1926) ch. III.

³⁰See Butler, *Originality*, 63.