

content and order of episodes. It is fundamental to any valid solution to the Synoptic Problem that the respective content and order of the three Synoptic Gospels be perceived together. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the fundamental fact of the Synoptic Problem is precisely this complex set of agreements and disagreements in content and order between Matthew, Mark and Luke. The only way to begin to solve the Synoptic Problem is by attending to this fact. Negatively stated, we reject as methodologically incorrect any attempt to divide these three Gospels and focus attention first either upon some part or section of them, or upon the agreements and disagreements in content and order between any two of them, such as, for example, Matthew and Mark, or Matthew and Luke, or Mark and Luke. It follows that it is methodologically incorrect for Karl Lachmann (followed by W.G. Kümmel and F. Neirynek), to focus initially upon Matthew and Mark on the one hand, and then Luke and Mark on the other.

To discuss the content and order of Mark and Luke without reference to the content and order of Matthew (as advocated by Lachmann, Kümmel and Neirynek) requires the critic to leave out of view the whole network of evidence tying these two to Matthew, and the same thing is true of their treatment of Mark and Matthew, leaving Luke out of view. It is the interlocking web of agreement among all three that convinced Owen, Griesbach and their successors that Mark had used Matthew and Luke. Specifically, one can see clearly that it is the evidence from Matthew which explains much of the content and almost all of the order of Mark when it differs from the content and order of Luke, and so it is with Luke when Mark disagrees with Matthew. The fact that one can thus explain the order and content of Mark, and at the same time do this without needing to appeal to the use of a hypothetical source like "Q," or even better, without appealing to hypothetical sources like "Q" and "Ur-Markus" or "Deutero-Markus," is a consideration which clearly constitutes a prime reason for regarding Mark as third.

*Fourth:* It is a fact that there exists a positive correlation between agreement in order and agreement in wording among the Synoptic Gospels which is most readily explicable on the hypothesis that Mark was written after Matthew and Luke and is the result of a compositional procedure where Mark made use of both Matthew and Luke. If Mark were third, it would not have been unnatural for him to have given some preference to the text of Matthew when he had deliberately chosen to follow Matthew's order instead of that of Luke, and, conversely, it would not have been unnatural for him to have given

some preference to the text of Luke when he had deliberately chosen to follow Luke's order in preference to that of Matthew. One would not expect Mark to follow such a procedure inflexibly. Indeed, he does not.

*Fifth:* In 1843 Eduard Zeller, classicist, published in the *Theologische Jahrbücher* (pp. 443-543), the results of an important study of certain linguistic phenomena within the synoptic gospels. The title of the article is "Vergleichende Übersicht über den Wortervorrath der neutestamentlichen Schriftsteller."

In this article, Zeller compiled lists of words and phrases which were shared by any two Evangelists. He then refined these lists by limiting his attention to shared expressions which appeared in the text of one Evangelist *only* in literary contexts parallel to another Evangelist while those same expressions appeared in the text of that other Evangelist *not only* in parallel literary contexts but also elsewhere in his Gospel.

Zeller reasoned that an Evangelist who used an expression *only* in parallel literary contexts was most likely literarily dependent upon that Evangelist who used the same expression not only in parallel literary contexts but also elsewhere. He probably reasoned that every occurrence of a particular expression which *only* appeared in parallel literary contexts could be explained by copying while the same could not be claimed for every occurrence at the same expression in another gospel where it appears both in parallel literary contexts and also elsewhere.

Neither Holtzmann nor his contemporary defender, C.M. Tuckett, has recognized the fine point in Zeller's method of argumentation represented by the words "only" and "not only" emphasized above. Therefore, their responses to Zeller are inadequate. To date, then, Zeller's linguistic argument in favor of the Griesbach Hypothesis stands in the literature as the most adequate linguistic argument for solving the Synoptic Problem. Zeller concluded that his results on balance support the view that Luke used Matthew, and Mark used both Matthew and Luke.

*Sixth:* Basically Mark retells the story of the flesh and blood martyrdom of the Son of God in terms remarkably faithful to the common language and story line of Matthew and Luke. It was because Luke had made extensive use of Matthew that the possibility of this literary achievement existed for Mark. Had Luke not made extensive use of Matthew, Mark could not have been written.

Mark was a very creative and skillful author, whose Gospel serves to re-present the popular encomiastic biography of Jesus familiar to readers of either Matthew or Luke, in terms that conflict with neither. As such, Mark supplements Matthew, with material from Luke, and

Luke, with material from Matthew. Readers of Matthew, through reading Mark, could be encouraged to read Luke. And readers of Luke, through reading Mark, could be encouraged to read Matthew.

#### IV. ANSWERS TO PLANNING COMMITTEE'S QUESTIONS

##### 1. *Presuppositions*

A. We do not restrict ourselves to any particular text of the Gospels. We find Nestle-Aland and the United Bible Societies' texts useful. We realize that textual criticism is influenced by the solution to the Synoptic Problem. Since all recent critical editions of the Gospel texts have been made by text critics who assume Marcan priority, there is no way that we, denying Marcan priority, can, with confidence, choose between the current critical texts. To construct a critical edition of the text of the Gospels based on the Two-Gospel Hypothesis is a task that lies out ahead of us. We also recognize the usefulness of a critical text constructed without dependence upon any source theory during an interim period while the Synoptic Problem is under critical review and there is no secure critical consensus on the matter.

B. We recommend the use of the new T. & T. Clark edition of *A Synopsis of the Four Gospels in Greek, arranged according to the Two-Gospel Hypothesis*; edited by John Bernard Orchard, O.S.B. (Edinburgh, 1983). But we do not use it exclusively. We use this synopsis because it applies the text of Luke directly to the text of Matthew and makes it easier for the eye to move from the text of Matthew and see immediately how Luke has modified the text of Matthew. Then it is not too difficult for the eye to move further to the right, where one can see how, at the hands of the Evangelist Mark, the texts of Matthew and Luke were modified to meet the needs of those churches for which Mark wrote his Gospel.

Orchard's synopsis, however, is not well-suited to study Mark as a whole in relationship to the texts of Matthew and Luke if one wants to understand how Mark combined the episodes and chronology of Matthew and Luke. For that purpose a new and differently constructed synopsis is needed. Such a synopsis would place Mark in the middle between Matthew and Luke, but would set forth the parallels so that one could readily see how Mark has combined Matthew and Luke. Such a synopsis would differ significantly from **standard synopses** which have no such purpose, even though they **also place Mark** in the middle.

C. The Two-Gospel Hypothesis assumes the written form of the Gospel traditions as the primary data for study. However, it is clear that this written form of the Gospel tradition, especially when it is logia material, preserves the oral forms of the Aramaic or Hebrew *Vorlagen*. The evidence in support of this assumption resides chiefly in the fact of parallelism in much of the logia material. Also important is the fact that the Greek texts of the Gospels often exhibit detailed linguistic features of translation from the Aramaic and Hebrew original.

D. The Gospels belong to the general category of Hellenistic biography. As such, they display the literary intentions and purposes normally associated with redactors/editors/authors of the period. Analyses of topoi, literary techniques, and authorial intent place them in the genre of encomium biography, examples of which concentrate on praise accounts designed to defend someone's reputation, to commend someone on public occasions, and/or to offer someone as an object of emulation. The Evangelists drew both from the "model formative texts" (e.g. Isaiah) and from the topoi (such as the Elisha miracle cycles in II Kings 4:1-8:6) of Judaism to compose the cycles of material within their Gospels. But within the total literature of the Greco-Roman world the closest literary analogies to the Gospels themselves as a literary genre would be such works as Tacitus's *Agricola*, Philo's *Life of Moses*, several of Plutarch's *Lives of Famous Men*, and Philostratus's *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*. This dual "Jewish-Hellenistic" character of the Gospel narratives served the early Church effectively within the Greco-Roman environment both in the preservation of traditions about Jesus and in the proclamation of Jesus as Messiah, to the Jew and to the Gentile.

E. Paul, as head of the mission to the Gentiles, is the silent partner of each of the Evangelists. They portray in vivid images the redemptive story of the flesh and blood martyrdom (obedience unto death) of the Son of God. Paul's own martyrdom in Rome, together with that of Peter, is the unexpressed premise of the apostolic Christianity represented by these four Gospels. Paul's collected letters were received in the Church as the letters of a martyred Apostle. These letters, along with the four Gospels, are the *sine qua non* of life and faith within this new humanity which I Peter portrays as a new race — one brotherhood throughout the world, established on Christ and the Apostles (I Peter 2:17; 5:9). That explains why, once these Gospels were formed into a fourfold Gospel canon, it was necessary for the Church to place alongside them the letters of Paul, along with those of Peter and the

other Apostles who, according to Paul's own testimony, had given Christ's Apostle to the Gentiles the right hand of fellowship (Gal. 2:9).

### 2. *Overview of the Theory*

A. The facts regarding the relations among the four Gospels may be described as follows:

1. The similarity among Matthew, Mark, Luke and John is such as to justify the assertion that they stand in some kind of literary relationship to one another. The verbal agreement among Matthew, Mark, and Luke indicates some kind of direct literary relationship among these three. The agreement in the sequence of episodes among all four Gospels can best be explained by some kind of literary relationship among all four.

2. There are agreements between Matthew and Mark against Luke, between Matthew and Luke against Mark, and between Mark and Luke against Matthew. Since there are agreements among all three sets of two of these Gospels against the third, it follows that, barring an unnecessary appeal to hypothetical documents, no hypothesis is valid that does not allow for a direct literary relationship among all three.

3. Thus, whichever Evangelist wrote third must have made use of both his predecessors, one of which had previously made use of the other. There are certain definite redactional limitations and possibilities within which a writer under such circumstances is able to function, and this fact will suggest which of the three wrote last.

A writer in the position of being third can (1) follow the text to which both earlier Gospels bear concurrent testimony; (2) deviate from one, but follow the other, when his sources disagree; (3) attempt to combine them when they disagree; (4) deviate by omission or alteration from both when they disagree; (5) deviate by omission or alteration from both even when they agree.

4. In philosophical (i.e., ethical-religious) schools of antiquity it was necessary for each school to take care to produce teaching documents that made clear that what the school taught was defensible. To prove that the teachings of a school were inconsistent or self-contradictory was clear proof that the school did not teach the truth. Since the Gospels eventually came to be used as the chief teaching documents of the Church, it follows that for the Church to be free from the charge of inconsistency and/or self-contradiction, it would have been necessary to be able to show that essential doctrines were not contradicted by the Church's chief teaching documents.

5. Luke and Matthew, at many points, differ from one another in such a manner as to appear to contradict each other. This is clear proof that they were not originally intended for the same Church audience. Or, at least it suggests that the Christian audience for which the second was written did not accept the first as altogether suitable for use as a public teaching document.

6. The fact that Mark is both internally self-consistent and free from contradictions with Matthew and Luke at every point where they appear to contradict one another, strongly suggests that this Gospel was written after Matthew and Luke, and for a Church which valued both earlier Gospels as teaching documents. In spite of many differences and occasional apparent contradictions between Matthew and Luke, Mark's narrative can be used to demonstrate that these two Evangelists tell essentially the same story. This suggests that Mark was written after these two earlier Gospels and for the purpose of establishing the true doctrine of the community of which the Evangelist was a member. That this community was partial to the Pauline school is strongly suggested by the close parallels (especially in *theologia crucis*) between Paul and Mark. That this community may have had a Roman provenance is consistent with the fact that it is the irenic Paul of Romans that has influenced Mark most of all, not, if would it have to be admitted, the polemical Paul of Galatians.

7. All other categories of evidence such as the phenomenon of order, the historical evidence, compositional and genre considerations, minor agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark, etc., are fully commensurate with, if not better explained by, Mark coming after Matthew and Luke, rather than coming first or second.

8. That Luke is dependent on Matthew and not Matthew on Luke, is clear primarily on form-critical grounds. But it is also supported by redaction-critical considerations, as well as by external evidence.

9. The question of whether Mark was written before or after John has never been settled on the grounds of internal evidence. Both Bleek and De Wette concluded that, on balance, Mark appears to have been written after John. But the external evidence consistently favors the view that John was written last of the four. This problem awaits further study.

B. The critical criteria utilized to differentiate primary from secondary tradition (i.e., "original" from "secondary" Jesus traditions) are as follows:

1. Assuming (A) that the original events in the history of the

Christian movement took place in Palestine, within predominantly Jewish (however Hellenized) circles, and (B) that by the time the Gospels were written, Christianity had expanded outside of Palestine, and outside of circles which were predominantly Jewish in culture, whenever there is a particular tradition which exists in parallel texts in different Gospels, with agreement so close as to indicate copying: *That form of the tradition which reflects an extra-Palestinian, or non-Jewish provenance is to be adjudged secondary to a form of the same tradition which reflects a Palestinian or Jewish provenance.*

2. Assuming the redactional tendency to add explanatory glosses, and otherwise to expand tradition to make it applicable to new situations in the churches: *That form of a tradition which exhibits explanatory redactional glosses, and expansions aimed to make the tradition more applicable to the needs of the Church, is to be adjudged secondary to a form of the tradition which is free of such redactional glosses and expansions.*

3. Assuming the tendency of all writers to use some words and phrases more frequently than is true for writers in general when dealing with the same subject: *Whenever there is a particular tradition which exists in parallel texts in different Gospels, and the degree of verbatim agreement indicates copying: that form of a tradition which exhibits words or phrases characteristic of a redactor whose hand is clearly traceable elsewhere in the same Gospel is to be adjudged secondary to the parallel form of the same tradition in the other Gospel providing it is free of such words and phrases.*

By applying this criterion it is clear that when we confine our attention to Jesus tradition preserved in parallel texts of the Synoptic Gospels, there is a general tendency for the Matthean form of sayings of Jesus to be free from words or phrases clearly attributable to the final redactor, and completely conformable to a Palestinian and Jewish cultural and religious milieu. On the other hand, the parallel texts in Luke frequently exhibit the hand of the Evangelist, and frequently reflect changes which make the tradition more understandable for extra-Palestinian and Gentile readers.

The Jesus tradition in Matthew is seldom glossed or modified by the Evangelist. The same is true of much of the Jesus tradition in Luke not paralleled in Matthew. On our hypothesis it is clear that the need to accommodate the form and content of the Jesus tradition Luke drew from Matthew was greater than the need to accommodate the rest of the Jesus tradition available to the Evangelist. **This suggests that Luke was writing for churches which were less familiar with the Jesus**

tradition he drew from Matthew than with the rest of the Jesus tradition he incorporated into his Gospel. Moreover, the fact that Luke often destroys the parallelism of the oral form of the Jesus tradition he takes over from the text of Matthew, whereas he tends to preserve the oral form of much of the rest of the Jesus tradition he incorporates into his text, strongly suggests that much of the Jesus tradition in Luke which Luke had not taken from Matthew had already achieved a certain fixed form within the churches for which Luke was writing.

Mark tends to add words and phrases to the Jesus tradition he takes over from Matthew and Luke. Frequently, these are words and phrases that are characteristic of Mark. Seldom, if ever, does Mark preserve a form of the Jesus tradition which, by applying the above criterion, can be shown to be original in comparison to Matthew or Luke. There may be one class of exceptions. *Mark may sometimes appear to be more Jewish and more original than Luke. In these cases the text of Mark is always close to the text of Matthew.* Thus, one can always explain the text of Mark on the assumption of Mark being third, and very often there is confirmatory evidence of this from the hand of the Evangelist himself. This is well illustrated and amply documented in the exegesis of Mark 13 and parallels that follow this position paper.

C. Our theory explains the phenomena of the order of pericopes in the Synoptic Gospels as follows:

1. *Matthew has organized the narrative framework of his Gospel in accordance with a fulfillment of prophecy motif from Isaiah 9:1-2.* First, those sitting in darkness in Galilee proper are to see the great light of God's salvific work. Then those across the Jordan shall see this light. After this fulfillment of prophecy, Jesus and his disciples will go to Jerusalem where he will be delivered up in accordance with a thrice-repeated prediction of his own passion and resurrection. Into this narrative framework the Evangelist has introduced several lengthy discourses, most of which are homogeneous collections of Jesus tradition, like the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7) and the Woes against the Scribes and Pharisees (Matt 23).

2. *Luke has in general followed the basic narrative outline of Matthew's Gospel; first, a ministry in Galilee and then, the Passion Narrative in Jerusalem.* But Luke has considerably rearranged the narrative framework. All of the lengthy Matthean discourses are represented in Luke, and except for one reversal, Luke's parallels to Matthew's discourses are all in the same relative sequence, a clear sign of a close compositional relationship between **Luke and Matthew.** Moreover, when in following

Matthew's narrative framework, Luke comes to one of Matthew's lengthy discourses, he generally takes only a few sayings, yet he always makes his selection from the opening sayings in Matthew's respective discourses. This is another clear sign of a close literary relationship between Matthew and Luke. In between the ministry in Galilee and the passion narrative in Jerusalem Luke includes a great central section of sayings material. This section includes a great deal of sayings material Luke has taken from other sources. However, Luke has also introduced into this central section many sayings which he has taken from the Matthean discourses. Luke follows understandable literary procedures in his use of material taken from Matthew. In this compositional process Luke generally works forward through Matthew, often returning to material from the earlier part of Matthew after completing a forward sweep. This is certainly consonant with Luke's compositional dependence on Matthew. In some instances Luke, after moving forward in Matthew in order to bring into his text material pertinent to his own composition, will copy into his text the pericope immediately preceding the pericope he has just copied. This is further evidence that Luke is compositionally dependent on the sequential arrangement of the Matthean pericopes.

3. Mark, writing third, has a power, denied the other two, of controlling how the text of his Gospel will be related to the text of both his predecessors. Matthew, writing before the other two Gospels were in existence, had no control over how his Gospel was to be related to either Luke or Mark. Luke could control how his Gospel was to be related to Matthew, but not to Mark. Mark alone could control the relationship of his text to that of both the other Synoptists. It is a distinct merit of the Two-Gospel Hypothesis that it can attribute the unique Synoptic phenomenon of order of episodes (Matthew and Luke almost never agree against Mark or Mark almost always maintains the common order of Matthew and Luke) to authorial intent and does not need to resort to the less satisfactory appeal to a literary accident due to random chance. (Random chance is how, on the Two-Document Hypothesis, one must explain the fact that whenever Matthew departs from the order of episodes in Mark, Luke supports Mark's order and vice versa.)

Mark had before him two works concerning Jesus. Often they agreed in the sequence they gave to particular episodes in Jesus' ministry. Often they disagreed. In accordance with his **authorial intent** to produce a version of the Gospel that was free from **open contradictions** with the other great teaching instruments of the **Christian community**

of which he was a member, Mark, in general, followed the common order of his sources. Where they depart from one another in order, he even-handedly follows now the order of one and now the order of the other. Mark always supports the order of the pericopes of one of his predecessors, and wherever possible, the order of both. The one major exception to this, the order of the episode of the Cleansing of the Temple, is the exception that proves the rule. Mark places this episode after the first day Jesus was in Jerusalem, whereas both Luke and Matthew place it during the first day.

D. The so-called "Q" material is simply material Luke copied from Matthew which, in turn, was not taken over by Mark. This explains why it is so difficult to identify the extent or purpose of "Q". That "Q" could have produced an "intelligible" theology is explained by the fact that Luke selected from Matthew only material that was useful for his Gentile readers. This explains the appeal of "Q" to modern theologians. It is generally free of Jewish *Tendenz* which would be offensive to Gentile readers. But in omitting Matthean Jesus tradition which was particularly Jewish, Luke's selection becomes historically unrepresentative, and in important respects quite unbalanced. Any reconstruction of the so-called "theology of the 'Q' community" will thus be correspondingly unrepresentative of the Jesus tradition and historically skewed. This is a point of the greatest importance for contemporary theology. "Q" is more representative of Luke's version of the Jesus tradition than it is of Jesus himself. This is especially true in the case of critics like Harnack who, after showing on linguistic grounds that the Lucan form of the "Q" material was generally secondary to the Matthean, nonetheless preferred the Lucan form of "Q" as more historical, appealing quite unconvincingly to an argument from Luke's order and arrangement. Harnack has been widely followed. Like the idea of Marcan priority, the view that the Lucan form of "Q" is a particularly trustworthy avenue to Jesus is a theologoumenon of liberal Protestant theology.

E. The minor agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark are to be explained as follows: (a) In composing his Gospel, Luke frequently copied the text of Matthew verbatim. (b) In composing his Gospel, Mark frequently copied the text of Matthew or Luke where Luke had copied Matthew closely. In these instances Mark could be said to have followed the text to which Matthew and Luke bore concurrent testimony. In any case, whether by copying Matthew or Luke, Mark often copied into his text a text which was nearly identical in both his sources. Even if Mark compared the texts of both his sources at all