



HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY

Title	A Memorandum for the Synoptic Problem
Author(s)	戸田, 聡
Citation	北海道大学文学研究科紀要, 152, 1(左)-36(左)
Issue Date	2017-07-28
DOI	https://doi.org/10.14943/bgsl.152.l1
Doc URL	https://hdl.handle.net/2115/67018
Type	departmental bulletin paper
File Information	152_03_toda.pdf



A Memorandum for the Synoptic Problem

TODA Satoshi

Chapter 1: Written documents as fixed points in the earliest stages of the Gospel tradition. Rethinking the Synoptic Problem*

Prologue

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the Synoptic Problem; in this chapter, a critical evaluation of the so-called Two Document Hypothesis will be presented.

It should be noted, however, that the following discussion will be something quite different from that which is normally presented in the studies of the Synoptic Problem¹. The reason is that the ways by which the

* This chapter is a revised version of my paper read at the 10th Birmingham Colloquium on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament “Lives of the Text”, held at the University of Birmingham 20th–22nd March 2017; as expected, the paper saw a total disinterest, if not to say rejection, of the audience.

Abbreviations:

BETHL = Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium

FOSTER et al. (eds.), *New Studies* = P. FOSTER et al. (eds.), *New Studies in the Synoptic Problem. Oxford Conference, April 2008. Essays in Honour of Christopher M. Tuckett* (BETHL, 239), Leuven: Peeters, 2011

¹ A fairly recent *status quaestionis* of the Synoptic Problem is presented by one of the most influential scholars of the matter, Prof. C.M. Tuckett (“The Current State of the Synoptic Problem”, in: FOSTER et al. (eds.), *New Studies*, pp. 9–50), and this survey reflects what I

Synoptic Problem has so far been discussed should be thoroughly reconsidered. The discussion on the Synoptic Problem should stick to concrete things, which can also be called “fixed points”, to use the expression in the title of the chapter. Thus with regard to the Synoptic Problem, this chapter discusses *two* fixed points, which actually mean written documents seen by *two men*, viz. Luke the evangelist and the apostle Paul.

Before beginning the discussion, mention must be made of the essay published earlier by the present author on the Synoptic Problem². The discussion of this chapter is largely covered in that essay, and in many cases the discussion of that essay is more detailed than that of this chapter. However, it should be noted that, since the way of presenting arguments is partially greatly different, this chapter is not simply a repetition of my previous publication.

1. What did Luke have before him when starting to write his own Gospel?

The first point of the discussion is concerned with Luke. As for the dating of the Gospel of Luke based on concrete arguments, C.F. Evans argues in his commentary (on Lk 19:43–44, which is a part of Jesus’ prophecy on the destiny of Jerusalem) that Jesus’ prophecy, as written by Luke, contains descriptions which clearly reflect the real situation of the circumvallation of the city by the Roman army led by Titus, and consequently the Gospel of Luke should be dated after AD 70³; I find the argument quite convincing.

regard as a normal presentation of the Problem.

² TODA S., “The Reasons Why the Synoptic Problem should be Reconsidered Once Again”, *Hitotsubashi Journal of Arts and Sciences* 53 (2012), pp. 47–78; accessible on internet (<http://hermes-ir.lib.hit-u.ac.jp/rs/handle/10086/25375>).

³ C.F. EVANS, *Saint Luke* (TPI New Testament Commentaries), London: SCM Press, 1990,

Then, what did Luke have before him when starting to write his own Gospel? In other words, how can we understand the state of the Gospel tradition at the time of Luke's starting to compose his own Gospel, i.e., some time after AD 70? Fortunately we have the prologue of the Gospel, which touches precisely upon the matter, so the question is how to interpret it (the following English translation is RSV):

¹Ἐπειδήπερ πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων, ²καθὼς παρέδοσαν ἡμῖν οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου, ³ἔδοξε καὶ μοι παρηκολουθηκότι ἄνωθεν πᾶσιν ἀκριβῶς καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι, κράτιστε Θεόφιλε, ⁴ἵνα ἐπιγνῶς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν.

¹Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things which have been accomplished among us, ²just as they were delivered to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, ³it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴that you may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed.

The key problem is how to understand the verse 1: "Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things which have been accomplished among us". First, the word "many" can be variously interpreted

pp. 684–685. The relevant discussion of Evans (on Lk 19:43–44) is as follows (italic original): "The language here [of Lk 19:43–44] is largely that of prophecy, as in *the days shall come upon you* (cf. 21⁶; Amos 4²; Hos. 9⁷), *dash to the ground* (*edaphizein* in this sense confined to the LXX, cf. Isa. 3²⁶ of Jerusalem), *the time of your visitation* (Jer. 6¹⁵; 10¹⁵, not found outside the LXX). But it also contains more factual and semi-technical language less suited for a prophetic lament - *cast up a bank* (*paremballein charaka* = to invest with a palisade), *surround* (*perikukloun* + +, cf. *kukloun* in this sense in Luke's prose statement 21²⁰), *hem in* (*sunechein*, so II Macc. 9² of investing a city.) These could betray knowledge of the actual course of events in the Roman assault on Jerusalem in AD 70, including the circumvallation of the city to block all exits, which was not an inevitable part of the attack, but was only decided on by Titus at a special council when the usual methods of attack from earthworks had failed (Jos. BJ 5.491ff)."

as to its rhetorical effect etc.⁴, and although commentators say that the meaning of the word “many” should not be pressed too much⁵, it is evident that at least the word means “more than one”, since all the modern commentators use the plural to explain the matter. It seems also evident that these “many” predecessors of Luke left their *written* works, and not simply oral tradition; otherwise the word “compile” (*ἀνατάξασθαι* in Greek) would be incomprehensible⁶. Thus one can safely say that, in front of Luke, there were at least *more than one written work written by more than one author* concerning “the things which have been accomplished among us”.

The next word which deserves special attention is *διήγησις*, the translation of which is ‘a narrative’ (RSV), ‘an orderly account’ (NRSV), or ‘an account’ (REB). According to the Greek-English dictionaries such as LSJ and Montanari, *διήγησις* means “narration, narrative” (LSJ) and “exposition, narration” (Montanari) respectively⁷; a Greek-French dictionary conveniently

⁴ Henry Cadbury, one of the best specialists of Lucan writings in the first half of the twentieth century, says in his “Commentary on the Preface of Luke”, in: F.J. Foakes JACKSON & K. LAKE (eds.), *The Beginnings of Christianity*, Part I: *The Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 2: *Prolegomena II - Criticism*, London: Macmillan, 1922, pp. 489–510, on p. 492, as follows (quoting E. SCHWARTZ, “Zur Chronologie des Paulus”, *Nachrichten von der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philologisch-historische Klasse*, 1907, p. 294): “This word [πολλοί] is apparently frequent in rhetorical prefaces”.

⁵ E.g. CADBURY, *op. cit.*, p. 493; I. Howard MARSHALL, *The Gospel of Luke. A Commentary on the Greek Text* (The New International Greek Testament Commentary), Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978, p. 41; J.A. FITZMYER, *The Gospel According to Luke (I-IX)* (The Anchor Bible, 28), Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981, p. 291.

⁶ The relevant passage of G. DELLING, s.v. “ἀνατάξω”, in: G. FRIEDRICH (ed.), *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament begründet von Gerhard Kittel*, vol. 8: *T-Y*, Studienausgabe, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1990, p. 33, will be quoted below in n. 10; see the last sentence of the passage quoted.

⁷ *A Greek-English Lexicon* compiled by Henry George LIDDELL and Robert SCOTT, revised and augmented throughout by Sir Henry Stuart JONES with the assistance of Roderick MCKENZIE and with the cooperation of many scholars, With a revised supplement 1996, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996 (LSJ), p. 427; *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek* by

called Bailly gives as the translation of *διήγησις* “récit, narration, exposition”⁸. “Narrative” or “narration”⁹ seem to be the best English translations of the Greek word¹⁰.

Thus the initial question: What did Luke have before him when starting to write his own Gospel?, can be answered as follows: Written works characterized as “narratives”, and which were written by more than one author. Here many commentators understand that the “narratives” in question include at least the Gospel of Mark, and I can agree with their interpretation. However, when Fitzmyer, one of the commentators, says: “despite V. Hartl (*BZ* 13 [1915] 334–337) and the proponents of the Griesbach hypothesis it is quite unlikely that Matthew in any form is to be considered among the “many” among whom Luke writes here”¹¹, I can hardly agree with him. It is evidently Fitzmyer’s position on the Synoptic Problem that makes him say so. However, the proponents of the Two Gospel Hypothesis will surely include the Gospel of Matthew in the “narratives”, and from their

Franco MONTANARI, Editors of the English Edition Madeleine GOH & Chad SCHROEDER under the auspices of the Center for Hellenic Studies, Harvard University, Advisory Editors Gregory NAGY, Leonard MUELLNER, Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2015 (Montanari), p. 527.

⁸ A. BAILLY, *Dictionnaire grec français*, rédigé avec le concours de E. EGGER, édition revue par L. SÉCHAN et P. CHANTRAINE, Paris: Hachette, 1950, p. 508.

⁹ For reference, the *Oxford English Dictionary* which I could consult on internet and which has the signature of “W.A. Craigie, Oxford, August, 1907” has on p. 23 the following explanation: “Narration 1. b. That which is narrated or recounted; a story, narrative, account”; “Narrative 2. An account of narration; a history, tale, story, recital (of facts, etc.)”.

¹⁰ Cf. DELLING, *op. cit.*, p. 33 (italic original): “ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν meint kaum einfach, daß die πολλοί den mündlichen Traditionsstoff schriftlich fixiert haben. διήγησις bezeichnet zumindest in literarischen Zusammenhängen die geordnete Darstellung, meist die Darlegung eines Geschehens. Auf jeden Fall ist also der Gedanke des *geordneten Aufzeichnens* in der gesamten Wendung ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν enthalten. Die Tätigkeit des ἀνατάξασθαι unterscheidet sich betont von der der mündlichen Weitergabe; die schriftliche Fixierung gibt dem Stoff notwendig auch eine Ordnung”.

¹¹ FITZMYER, *The Gospel according to Luke (I-IX)* (note 5 above), p. 291.

viewpoint it is quite reasonable, because the Gospel of Matthew, just as the Gospel of Mark, presents a narrative, i.e., a sequential account of the words and acts of Jesus. According to the prologue of the Gospel of Luke, it is possible to think that Luke had before him the Gospel of Mark and the Gospel of Matthew¹².

However, the point which should be stressed here is different, and it is that the so-called Q will hardly be included in the “narratives”, because normally Q is characterized as a “Sayings Gospel” or “Logienquelle”, and not a “narrative”. I am aware that Mark Goodacre shows that Q contains narratives, and he is doubtless right in his analysis¹³. However, to the best of my knowledge, the overall character of Q is always a “Sayings Gospel”, and Q is never described as a “narrative” in its entirety. It is hardly thinkable to regard Mark and Q as the works consulted by Luke, because Q can hardly be called a *διήγησις*.

Some might argue that, in the prologue of the Acts of the Apostles, Luke himself calls his Gospel “*πρῶτον λόγον*” (RSV and NRSV: “first book”, REB: “first part of my work”), and that, since thus Luke calls his Gospel a “work” (*λόγος*), and since Q can also be called a “work”, the prologue of the Gospel of Luke can be interpreted as referring also to Q. However, the problem of this interpretation is that, in order to refer to the works of his predecessors, Luke himself does not use *λόγος* but *διήγησις*; it seems that, when referring to his

¹² It should be noted that this is the main reason why I regrettably cannot follow the Two Gospel Hypothesis, propounded notably by the late Professor Farmer and others; in my view, the Two Gospel Hypothesis cannot explain satisfactorily the prologue of the Gospel of Luke which mentions the existence of *two narratives* before Luke.

¹³ See Chapter 9 “Narrative Sequence in a Sayings Gospel? Reflections on a Contrast between Thomas and Q” of M. GOODACRE, *The Case against Q. Studies in Markan Priority and the Synoptic Problem*, Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002, pp. 170–185. It goes without saying that Goodacre’s own position is that Q actually never existed; thus this analysis of Q by Goodacre is shown *à titre d’exemple*.

predecessors' works, Luke apparently had in mind an orderly account of Jesus' earthly life from the beginning to the end.

Since Q is touched upon here, a comment on this hypothetical document is in order. As an outsider to New Testament studies, I am always perplexed by the fact that, whereas Q is defined as "the postulated Greek written source underlying some 230 verses common to Matthew and Luke *and not found in Mark*"¹⁴, those scholars who suppose the existence of Q always mention the "overlapping of "Q" and Mark"¹⁵, which sounds in sheer contradiction with the very definition of Q; in an outsider's view, this methodical error seems fatal to the hypothesis in question, which is, needless to say, a *logical* construct and should be free of any contradiction. A different definition of Q can perhaps be accepted, according to which materials found in Mark are also included in Q; but in that case, the position of Q has to be different. What I mean is the following: Currently the Two Document Hypothesis has two wings of equal importance, i.e., Markan priority and Q, but if, as I suggest, Q has to be defined differently, then it will be necessary to first demonstrate Markan priority without having recourse to Q, because Q, in that different definition, is a complementary, and thus subsidiary, hypothesis to the theory of Markan priority.

2. From where did the apostle Paul come to know the words and acts of Jesus?

Next we go back slightly in time and are now in the fifties of the first century, when Paul wrote his epistles to various churches. And we all know that Paul sometimes refers to Jesus' words and "acts"; here the term "act"

¹⁴ J.A. FITZMYER, *To Advance the Gospel*, *New Testament Studies*, 2. ed., Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdsman, 1998, p. 16; italic mine.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 13.

should be understood in a broad sense.

I have not gone through the earlier studies concerning Paul's knowledge of Jesus, although I am aware that one of such studies was dealt with by Prof. Tuckett, and the monograph in question was mercilessly criticized¹⁶. The criticism of Tuckett is doubtless correct, in the sense that it seems to be a hopeless effort to try to find as many Pauline passages as possible in which one can detect allusions to the words and acts of Jesus, because, even if the number of passages increases, the situation does not change greatly. On this matter it is better to stay within the realm of the most evident, and thus we have solely the following passages:

Romans 14,14:

οἶδα καὶ πέπεισμαι ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ ὅτι οὐδὲν κοινὸν δι' ἑαυτοῦ, εἰ μὴ τῷ λογιζομένῳ τι κοινὸν εἶναι, ἐκείνῳ κοινόν.

I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but it is unclean for any one who thinks it unclean. (Cf. Mt 15,11; Mc 7,15)

I Corinthians 7,10:

τοῖς δὲ γεγαμηκόσιν παραγγέλλω, οὐκ ἐγὼ ἀλλὰ ὁ κύριος, γυναικα ἀπὸ ἀνδρὸς μὴ χωρισθῆναι.

To the married I give charge, not I but the Lord, that the wife should not separate from her husband. (Cf. Mt 19,9; Mc 10,11-12; Lc 16,18)

I Corinthians 9,14:

οὕτως καὶ ὁ κύριος διέταξεν τοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καταγγέλλουσιν ἐκ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ζῆν.

In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel. (Cf. Mt 10,10; Lc 10,7)

I Corinthians 11,23-25:

²³Εγὼ γὰρ παρέλαβον ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου, ὃ καὶ παρέδωκα ὑμῖν, ὅτι ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ ἣ παρεδίδοτο ἔλαβεν ἄρτον ²⁴καὶ εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ εἶπεν, Τοῦτό μού ἐστιν

¹⁶ C.M. TUCKETT, "Paul and the Synoptic Mission Discourse?", in: Id., *From the Sayings to the Gospels* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 328), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014, pp. 309-315 (originally published in *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 60 (1984), pp. 376-381). The monograph reviewed is: B. FJÄRSTEDT, *Synoptic Tradition in 1 Corinthians. Themes and Clusters of Theme Words in 1 Corinthians 1-4 and 9*, Uppsala: Teologiska Institutionen, 1974 (non vidi).

A Memorandum for the Synoptic Problem

τὸ σῶμα τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν. ²³ὥσαύτως καὶ τὸ ποτήριον μετὰ τὸ δειπνήσαι λέγων, Τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, ὅσάκις ἐὰν πίνετε, εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν.

²³For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." (Cf. Mt 26,26–28; Mc 14,22–24; Lc 22,19–20)

And one more passage should be added, namely:

Romans 1,3:

περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαβὶδ κατὰ σάρκα,
the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh,
(Cf. Mt 1,1; Lc 3,23–38, especially verse 31)

The Gospel of Matthew happens to cover all these passages, which is of course something noteworthy, but the point which should be stressed here is different: If Paul had been entirely dependent on other apostles as to his knowledge of Jesus' words and acts, how was it possible for Paul, who did not know Jesus personally during the latter's lifetime, to argue that he was also an apostle, i.e. someone called directly by Jesus, and to claim that he "worked harder than any of them [i.e., all the other apostles]", and even to criticize Peter and others? How could Paul have been so confident, if not to say arrogant, in quoting Jesus' command without any firm evidence? I dare suggest that, from a human point of view, Paul doubtless had some *written* document in hand, in which Jesus' words and acts were noted; otherwise, so much confidence he had in himself as an apostle of Jesus and as an individual human being, would be totally inexplicable.

If this interpretation be accepted at all, then the problem is: What was that *written* document? Evidently, the Gospel of Matthew is the most plausible answer, especially when we take into consideration the famous beginning passage of the Romans quoted above. I understand that neither

Mark nor Q contain any hint on the Davidic origin of Jesus.

Of course one can reject this interpretation, but it would then remain to explain from where Paul got his knowledge of the Davidic origin of Jesus, if not to mention other things. And if one argues that the matter was transmitted orally, then the problem is why it was not written down neither in Mark nor in Q, whereas Paul believed Jesus to be so. Explaining fully the matter from the viewpoint of the Two Document Hypothesis will perhaps turn out to be quite difficult.

3. Some reflections on the Synoptic Problem

I suppose it is very difficult, or even impossible, for many New Testament scholars to follow my arguments, and if so, it is quite understandable, because, for one thing, virtually no scholar nowadays dates the Gospel of Matthew so early, say, to the fifties, or even forties, of the first century.

My main argument for an early dating of the Gospel of Matthew is actually the following table which was already presented four years before, at the time of the 8th Colloquium¹⁷.

Table 1 Passages of the Passion narrative arranged according to the order of Matthew with reference to sections of the *Eusebian Canons*

Matthew	Luke	Mark	John	Canon
Mt 274	= Lc 260	= Mc 156	= Ioh 20	I
Mt 274	= Lc 260	= Mc 156	= Ioh 48	I
Mt 274	= Lc 260	= Mc 156	= Ioh 96	I

¹⁷ And which was subsequently published in my article “The Eusebian Canons: Their Implications and Potential”, in: H. A. G. HOUGHTON (ed.), *Early Readers, Scholars and Editors of the New Testament. Papers from the Eighth Birmingham Colloquium on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2014, pp. 36–40.

A Memorandum for the Synoptic Problem

Matthew	Luke	Mark	John	Canon
	Lc 262		= Ioh 113	IX
	Lc 262		= Ioh 124	IX
Mt 275		= Mc 157		VI
Mt 276	= Lc 74	= Mc 158	= Ioh 98	I
Mt 277		= Mc 159	= Ioh 98	IV
Mt 278	= Lc 263	= Mc 160		II
	Lc 264			X Lc
Mt 279		= Mc 161	= Ioh 72	IV
Mt 279		= Mc 161	= Ioh 121	IV
Mt 280	= Lc 269	= Mc 162	= Ioh 122	I
			Ioh 123	X Ioh
Mt 281	= Lc 268	= Mc 163		II
Mt 282		= Mc 164		VI
Mt 283				X Mt
Mt 284	= Lc 266	= Mc 165	= Ioh 55	I
Mt 284	= Lc 266	= Mc 165	= Ioh 63	I
Mt 284	= Lc 266	= Mc 165	= Ioh 65	I
Mt 284	= Lc 266	= Mc 165	= Ioh 67	I
Mt 285	= Lc 265	= Mc 166		II
Mt 285	= Lc 267	= Mc 166		II
Mt 286		= Mc 167		VI
Mt 287		= Mc 168	= Ioh 152	IV
Mt 288		= Mc 169		VI
	Lc 273			X Lc
	Lc 274		= Ioh 227	IX
	Lc 274		= Ioh 229	IX
	Lc 274		= Ioh 231	IX
Mt 289	= Lc 275	= Mc 170	= Ioh 126	I
	Lc 276			X Lc
Mt 290		= Mc 171		VI
	Lc 278			X Lc
Mt 291	= Lc 279	= Mc 172	= Ioh 156	I
			Ioh 157	X Ioh
Mt 292		= Mc 173		VI
Mt 293		= Mc 174	= Ioh 107	IV

北大文学研究科紀要

Matthew	Luke	Mark	John	Canon
Mt 294	= Lc 281	= Mc 175	= Ioh 161	I
Mt 295	= Lc 282	= Mc 176	= Ioh 42	I
Mt 295	= Lc 282	= Mc 176	= Ioh 57	I
Mt 296	= Lc 280	= Mc 177		II
	Lc 283			X Lc
Mt 296	= Lc 284	= Mc 177		II
Mt 297		= Mc 178	= Ioh 70	IV
Mt 298		= Mc 179		VI
Mt 299		= Mc 180	= Ioh 103	IV
Mt 300	= Lc 285	= Mc 181	= Ioh 79	I
Mt 300	= Lc 285	= Mc 181	= Ioh 158	I
Mt 301	= Lc 286	= Mc 182		II
Mt 302	= Lc 287	= Mc 183	= Ioh 160	I
	Lc 288			X Lc
Mt 303				X Mt
Mt 304	= Lc 289	= Mc 184	= Ioh 170	I
			Ioh 171	X Ioh
Mt 305		= Mc 185		VI
		Mc 186		X Mc
Mt 306	= Lc 290	= Mc 187	= Ioh 162	I
			Ioh 163	X Ioh
Mt 306	= Lc 290	= Mc 187	= Ioh 174	I
Mt 307		= Mc 188	= Ioh 164	IV
			Ioh 165	X Ioh
Mt 308	= Lc 305	= Mc 189		II
	Lc 306			X Lc
Mt 309		= Mc 190		VI
Mt 310	= Lc 297	= Mc 191	= Ioh 69	I
	Lc 298			X
Mt 311		= Mc 192		VI
Mt 312	= Lc 299	= Mc 193		II
Mt 313	= Lc 294	= Mc 194	= Ioh 172	I
			Ioh 173	X Ioh
Mt 314	= Lc 291	= Mc 195	= Ioh 166	I
			Ioh 167	X Ioh

A Memorandum for the Synoptic Problem

Matthew	Luke	Mark	John	Canon
Mt 314	= Lc 291	= Mc 195	= Ioh 168	I
			Ioh 169	X Ioh
Mt 315	= Lc 292	= Mc 196	= Ioh 175	I
Mt 316	= Lc 293	= Mc 197		II
Mt 317	= Lc 295	= Mc 198		II
	Lc 296			X Lc
Mt 318	= Lc 300	= Mc 199	= Ioh 176	I
Mt 319				X Mt
	Lc 301			X
			Ioh 177	X
Mt 320	= Lc 302	= Mc 200	= Ioh 178	I
			Ioh 179	X Ioh
Mt 320	= Lc 302	= Mc 200	= Ioh 180	I
			Ioh 181	X Ioh
	Lc 303		= Ioh 182	IX
	Lc 303		= Ioh 186	IX
	Lc 303		= Ioh 190	IX
	Lc 304			X Lc
	Lc 307		= Ioh 182	IX
	Lc 307		= Ioh 186	IX
	Lc 307		= Ioh 190	IX
	Lc 308			X Lc
			Ioh 191	X Ioh
Mt 321		= Mc 201	= Ioh 192	IV
			Ioh 193	X Ioh
Mt 322	= Lc 309	= Mc 202		II
Mt 323		= Mc 203	= Ioh 183	IV
Mt 324				X Mt
Mt 325	= Lc 310	= Mc 204	= Ioh 184	I
Mt 326	= Lc 311	= Mc 205	= Ioh 188	I
			Ioh 189	X Ioh
	Lc 312		= Ioh 182	IX
	Lc 312		= Ioh 186	IX
	Lc 312		= Ioh 190	IX
Mt 326	= Lc 313	= Mc 205	= Ioh 194	I

北大文学研究科紀要

Matthew	Luke	Mark	John	Canon
			Ioh 195	X Ioh
Mt 327				X Mt
Mt 328	= Lc 314	= Mc 206	= Ioh 196	I
Mt 329		= Mc 207	= Ioh 185	IV
Mt 329		= Mc 207	= Ioh 187	IV
Mt 330		= Mc 208		VI
Mt 331	= Lc 315	= Mc 209	= Ioh 197	I
	Lc 316			X Lc
Mt 332	= Lc 318	= Mc 210	= Ioh 197	I
Mt 333		= Mc 211	= Ioh 203	IV
Mt 334	= Lc 321	= Mc 212	= Ioh 201	I
		Mc 213		X Mc
			Ioh 202	X Ioh
Mt 335	= Lc 324	= Mc 214	= Ioh 199	I
			Ioh 200	X Ioh
Mt 336	= Lc 317	= Mc 215	= Ioh 198	I
Mt 336	= Lc 319	= Mc 215	= Ioh 198	I
	Lc 320			X Lc
	Lc 277	= Mc 216		VIII
Mt 337		= Mc 217		VI
Mt 338	= Lc 322	= Mc 218		II
Mt 339	= Lc 325	= Mc 219		II
	Lc 326			X Lc
Mt 340	= Lc 327	= Mc 220		II
Mt 341		= Mc 221		VI
Mt 342	= Lc 323	= Mc 222		II
Mt 343	= Lc 329	= Mc 223	= Ioh 204	I
Mt 344	= Lc 328	= Mc 224		II
Mt 345				X Mt
			Ioh 205	X Ioh
Mt 346	= Lc 330	= Mc 225		II
Mt 347		= Mc 226		VI
	Lc 331			X Lc
Mt 348	= Lc 332	= Mc 227	= Ioh 206	I
			Ioh 207	X Ioh

A Memorandum for the Synoptic Problem

Matthew	Luke	Mark	John	Canon
Mt 349	= Lc 333	= Mc 228	= Ioh 208	I
Mt 350		= Mc 229		VI
	Lc 334			X Lc
Mt 351				X Mt
	Lc 335	= Mc 230		VIII
Mt 352	= Lc 336	= Mc 231	= Ioh 209	I
			Ioh 210	X Ioh
Mt 352	= Lc 336	= Mc 231	= Ioh 211	I
Mt 353	= Lc 337	= Mc 232		II
Mt 354	= Lc 338	= Mc 233		II
			Ioh 212	X Ioh
Mt 355				X Mt
	Lc 339			X Lc
	Lc 340		= Ioh 213	IX
			Ioh 214	X Ioh
			Ioh 216	X Ioh
	Lc 340		= Ioh 217	IX
			Ioh 218	X Ioh
	Lc 341		= Ioh 221	IX
	Lc 341		= Ioh 223	IX
			Ioh 224	X Ioh
	Lc 341		= Ioh 225	IX
			Ioh 226	X Ioh
	Lc 342			X Lc

On the table, the section number of Matthew is in ascending order by definition. However, the section number of Mark is also strictly in ascending order, and this means that, as far as the Passion narrative is concerned, the order of pericopes is *strictly the same* between Matthew and Mark, except for the so-called *Sondergut* of each Gospel. The point is that the agreement we see here is not simply a “general” agreement, but a *perfect* agreement. Faced with such a *perfect* agreement, only two interpretations are possible: When compiling his own Passion narrative, either Matthew consulted Mark through

and through; or Mark consulted Matthew through and through. Thus at least the possibility that Matthew is earlier than Mark exists.

In order to show that the matter is not influenced at all by Eusebius' analysis incorporated into the *Eusebian Canons*, the same matter is presented differently by the following table, this time using the headings of pericopes used in the Nestle-Aland's *Greek-English New Testament* (27th edition). The section numbers of the *Eusebian Canons* (Mt 274, Mc 156 etc.) are mentioned just for reference, and if one wishes, they can be eliminated from the table without any problem.

Table 2 Passages of the Passion narrative in Matthew and Mark

* *Italic* shows the so-called *Sondergut* (i.e., Canon X) of each Gospel.

Mt 26,1-5: To Plot to Kill Jesus (Mt 274-Mt 275)	Mk 14,1-2: To Plot to Kill Jesus (Mc 156-Mc 157)
Mt 26,6-13: The Anointing at Bethany (Mt 276- Mt 277)	Mk 14,3-9: The Anointing at Bethany (Mc 158-Mc 159)
Mt 26,14-16: Judas' Agreement to Betray Jesus; Mt 26,17-25: The Passover with the Disciples (Mt 278-Mt 282 & <i>Mt 283</i>)	Mk 14,10-11: Judas' Agreement to Betray Jesus; Mk 14,12-21: The Passover with the Disciples (Mc 160-Mc 164)
Mt 26,26-30: The Institution of the Lord's Supper (Mt 284-Mt 286)	Mk 14,22-26: The Institution of the Lord's Supper (Mc 165-Mc 167)
Mt 26,31-35: Peter's Denial Foretold (Mt 287-Mt 290)	Mk 14,27-31: Peter's Denial Foretold (Mc 168-Mc 171)
Mt 26,36-46: The Prayer in Gethsemane (Mt 291-Mt 299)	Mk 14,32-42: The Prayer in Gethsemane (Mc 172-Mc 180)
Mt 26,47-56: The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus (Mt 300-Mt 302 & <i>Mt 303</i> & Mt 304-Mt 305)	Mk 14,43-50: The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus (Mc 181-Mc 185)
-	Mk 14,51-52: The Young Man Who Fleed (<i>Mc 186</i>)
Mt 26,57-68: Jesus before the Council (Mt 306-Mt 313)	Mk 14,53-65: Jesus before the Council (Mc 187-Mc 194)
Mt 26,69-75: Peter's Denial of Jesus (Mt 314-Mt 316)	Mk 14,66-72: Peter's Denial of Jesus (Mc 195-Mc 197)
Mt 27,1-2: Jesus Brought before Pilate (Mt 317-Mt 318)	Mk 15,1-5: Jesus before Pilate (Mc 198-Mc 201)
Mt 27,3-10: The Death of Judas (<i>Mt 319</i>)	-
Mt 27,11-14: Jesus Questioned by Pilate (Mt 320-Mt 321)	[Mk 15,1-5: Jesus before Pilate (Mc 198-Mc 201)]
Mt 27,15-26: Jesus Sentenced to Die (Mt 322-Mt 323 & <i>Mt 324</i> & Mt 325-Mt 326 & <i>Mt 327</i> & Mt 328)	Mk 15,6-15: Jesus Sentenced to Die (Mc 202-Mc 206)
Mt 27,27-31: The Soldiers Mock Jesus (Mt 329-Mt 330)	Mk 15,16-20: The Soldiers Mock Jesus (Mc 207-Mc 208)

A Memorandum for the Synoptic Problem

Mt 27,32-44: The Crucifixion of Jesus (Mt 331-Mt 339)	Mk 15,21-32: The Crucifixion of Jesus (Mc 209-Mc 219)
Mt 27,45-56: The Death of Jesus (Mt 340-Mt 344 & <i>Mt 345</i> & Mt 346-Mt 347)	Mk 15,33-41: The Death of Jesus (Mc 220-Mc 226)
Mt 27,57-61: The Burial of Jesus (Mt 348-Mt 350)	Mk 15,42-47: The Burial of Jesus (Mc 227-Mc 229)
Mt 27,62-66: The Guard at the Tomb (<i>Mt 351</i>)	-

It should be stressed that this argument, illustrated in this table, has a very important implication for the Synoptic Problem: Provided the integrality of each Gospel (Matthew and Mark), which I assume is normally presupposed, one can compare Matthew and Mark *without taking into consideration the third Gospel, i.e., Luke*, in order to discuss on Matthean or Markan priority. This facilitates the discussion greatly; in the study of the Synoptic Problem, normal discussions, e.g. that of the so-called “minor agreements” or “major agreements”, are always threesome, and thus very much, or even too much, complicated from the outset¹⁸.

A digression is necessary here. If there is any difficulty in following this discussion on Matthean or Markan priority, it is doubtless related to a kind of common sense of New Testament scholars, which I think is expressed e.g. in Streeter’s classical treatment of the Synoptic Problem¹⁹:

Now there is nothing antecedently improbable in the idea that for certain purposes an abbreviated version of the Gospel might be desired; but only a lunatic would leave out

¹⁸ It should also be noted that one needs to ask whether the grouping of “minor agreements” or “major agreements” is meaningful at all. My reasoning is the following: Each parallel passage is unique, and thus it needs to be treated separately and individually. And the results of such analyses are necessarily diverse: perhaps a few can provide quite clear-cut conclusions, while many others are simply inconclusive, etc.; and even the clear-cut conclusions can be diverse among themselves, since the relationship established in each threesome discussion can be complex. If this is the case, what is the point of grouping “minor agreements” or “major agreements”?

¹⁹ B.H. Streeter, *The Four Gospel. A Study of Origins*, revised ed., London: Macmillan, 1930, p. 158.

Matthew's account of the Infancy, the Sermon on the Mount, and practically all the parables, in order to get room for purely verbal expansion of what was retained.

However, I have to say that this is precisely the source of all the fallacies: According to Streeter, since Q came into being in Antioch in A.D. 50 and Mark was written in Rome in A.D. 66, i.e., more than a decade later, Mark must have had a fair chance to be able to consult Q when writing his own Gospel. If this be correct, then it follows that Mark did not include in his own Gospel the Sermon on the Mount etc *intentionally*, and that Mark's non-inclusion of the Sermon on the Mount etc. is due to his redactional decision. Thus according to Streeter, Mark should really be called a "lunatic". Furthermore, the earlier Q is dated, which I understand is the case in more recent studies, the more acute the problem of Mark's non-inclusion is.

It should also be added that, as is the case here, arguments against Matthean priority quite frequently concern the level of redactional decision. I think this is a grave methodical error, since, methodically speaking, redaction criticism can be properly done only after the Synoptic Problem is definitively solved²⁰.

To return to the main discussion, is it possible to find, by comparing the two (and not three) Synoptic Gospels, any significant indication which would suggest Matthean or Markan priority? The answer is affirmative, and two

²⁰ In this context the following remark of Fitzmyer is quite interesting (Fitzmyer, *To Advance the Gospel* (note 13 above), p. 5; italic original): "As for *Redaktionsgeschichte*, this method of gospel study could theoretically be carried out on the basis of another theory of Synoptic relationships. But it has not really been done". Thus on the one hand, Fitzmyer himself admits that, theoretically (or methodically), it is not necessary for redaction criticism to be based on Markan priority. On the other hand, the fact (according to Fitzmyer) that, at least until the time when this article of Fitzmyer was written, redaction criticism was not applied on the basis of other theory than that of Markan priority, can simply be a reflection of the situation that the theory of Markan priority was prevalent in the New Testament studies.

parallel passages will be examined below.

Before discussing the two parallel passages, however, it should be noted that Matthew is a weird author, in the sense that he sometimes writes things which are simply incredible. To quote an example, the famous pericope “The Ruler’s Daughter and the Woman Who Touched Jesus’ Garment”, in Matthew’s version, has the following words (Mt 9,18):

Ταῦτα αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος αὐτοῖς ἰδοὺ ἄρχων εἷς ἐλθὼν προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγων ὅτι Ἡ θυγάτηρ μου ἄρτι ἐτελεύτησεν· ἀλλὰ ἐλθὼν ἐπίθες τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐπ’ αὐτήν, καὶ ζήσεται.
a ruler came and knelt before him [Jesus], saying, “My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.”

Why is it possible for this “ruler” to believe so easily in the resurrection of the dead? This is completely outrageous in my view, at least compared with a much more realistic version of Mark, which is titled “Jairus’ Daughter and the Woman Who Touched Jesus’ Garment” and which has the following words (Mk 5,23):

καὶ παρακαλεῖ αὐτὸν πολλὰ λέγων ὅτι Τὸ θυγάτριόν μου ἐσχάτως ἔχει, ἵνα ἐλθὼν ἐπιθῇς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῇ ἵνα σωθῇ καὶ ζήσῃ.
and [Jairus] besought him [Jesus], saying, “My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live.”

Although I think the relation of this parallel passage can be best explained as Mark modifying the unrealistic story of Matthew into a more realistic one, the point here is that Matthew could write things weird.

However, it should be immediately added that, at the same time, Matthew is an intelligent author, which is evident e.g. from the impressive use of the expression *ἀπὸ τότε*, which is used to clearly mark the moving of the narrative into a new stage:

Mt 4,17 (beginning of the public ministry):
Ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς κηρύσσειν καὶ λέγειν, Μετανοεῖτε· ἤγγικεν γὰρ ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.
From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Mt 16,21 (beginning of the prophecy of the Passion):

Ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς δεικνύειν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἀπελθεῖν καὶ πολλὰ παθεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ ἀρχιερέων καὶ γραμματέων καὶ ἀποκτανθῆναι καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθῆναι.

From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

Mt 26,16 (beginning of the Passion narrative):

καὶ ἀπὸ τότε ἐζήτει ἐνκαιρίαν ἵνα αὐτὸν παραδῶ.

And from that moment he [i.e., Judas] sought an opportunity to betray him [i.e., Jesus].

Thus it should be clearly understood that Matthew is a weird but intelligent author.

(1) Mt 14,1-13 vs Mk 6,14-33²¹

¹At that time Herod the tetrarch heard about the fame of Jesus; ²and he said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist, he has been raised from the dead; that is why these powers are at work in him." ³For Herod had seized John and bound him and put	¹Ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ ἤκουσεν Ἡρώδης ὁ τετραάρχης τὴν ἀκοὴν Ἰησοῦ, ²καὶ εἶπεν τοῖς παισὶν αὐτοῦ, Οὗτός ἐστιν Ἰωάννης ὁ βαπτιστής· αὐτὸς ἡγέρθη ἀπὸ τῶν νεκρῶν καὶ διὰ τοῦτο αἱ δυνάμεις ἐνεργοῦσιν ἐν αὐτῷ. ³Ὁ γὰρ Ἡρώδης κρατήσας τὸν Ἰωάννην ἔδρασε	¹⁴Καὶ ἤκουσεν ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἡρώδης, φανερόν γὰρ ἐγένετο τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἔλεγον ὅτι Ἰωάννης ὁ βαπτίζων ἐγήγερται ἐκ νεκρῶν καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἐνεργοῦσιν αἱ δυνάμεις ἐν αὐτῷ. ¹⁵Ἄλλοι δὲ ἔλεγον ὅτι Ἠλίας ἐστίν· ἄλλοι δὲ ἔλεγον ὅτι προφήτης ὡς εἰς τῶν προφητῶν. ¹⁶ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἡρώδης ἔλεγεν, Ὅν ἐγὼ ἀπεκεφάλισα Ἰωάννην, οὗτος ἡγέρθη. ¹⁷Αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ Ἡρώδης ἀποστείλας ἐκράτησεν τὸν Ἰωάν-	¹⁴King Herod heard of it; for Jesus' name had become known. Some said, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; that is why these powers are at work in him." ¹⁵But others said, "It is Eli'-jah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." ¹⁶But when Herod heard of it he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised." ¹⁷For Herod had sent and seized John, and bound him in prison
--	--	---	---

²¹ The following discussion of the two parallel passages reproduces, for the most part, that which is presented in my previous article (note 2 above).

A Memorandum for the Synoptic Problem

him in prison, for the sake of Hero'di-as, his brother Philip's wife;

⁴because John said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her."

⁵And though he wanted to put him to death, he feared the people, because they held him to be a prophet.

⁶But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Hero'di-as danced before the company, and pleased Herod,

⁷so that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask.

[αὐτὸν] καὶ ἐν φυλακῇ ἀπέθετο διὰ Ἡρωδιάδα τὴν γυναικα Φιλίππου τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ αὐτοῦ·

⁴ἔλεγεν γὰρ ὁ Ἰωάννης αὐτῷ, Οὐκ ἐξεστὶν σοι ἔχειν αὐτήν.

⁵καὶ θέλων αὐτὸν ἀποκτεῖναι ἐφοβήθη τὸν ὄχλον, ὅτι ὡς προφήτην αὐτὸν εἶχον.

⁶γενεαίοις δὲ γενομένοις τοῦ Ἡρώδου ὠρχίσαστο ἡ θυγάτηρ τῆς Ἡρωδιάδος ἐν τῷ μέσῳ καὶ ἤρεσεν τῷ Ἡρώδῃ.

⁷ὅθεν μεθ' ὅρκου ὡμολόγησεν αὐτῇ δοῦναι ὃ ἐὰν αἰτήσῃται.

νην καὶ ἔδησεν αὐτὸν ἐν φυλακῇ διὰ Ἡρωδιάδα τὴν γυναικα Φιλίππου τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι αὐτὴν ἐγάμησεν·

¹⁸ἔλεγεν γὰρ ὁ Ἰωάννης τῷ Ἡρώδῃ ὅτι Οὐκ ἐξεστὶν σοι ἔχειν τὴν γυναικα τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου.

¹⁹ἡ δὲ Ἡρωδιάς ἐνεῖχεν αὐτῷ καὶ ἤθελεν αὐτὸν ἀποκτεῖναι, καὶ οὐκ ἠδύνατο· ²⁰ὁ γὰρ Ἡρώδης ἐφοβεῖτο τὸν Ἰωάννην, εἰδὼς αὐτὸν ἄνδρα δίκαιον καὶ ἅγιον, καὶ συντηρεῖ αὐτόν, καὶ ἀκούσας αὐτοῦ πολλὰ ἠπόρει, καὶ ἡδέως αὐτοῦ ἤκουεν.

²¹Καὶ γενομένης ἡμέρας εὐκαίρου ὅτε Ἡρώδης τοῖς γενεαίοις αὐτοῦ δείπνον ἐποίησεν τοῖς μεγιστάσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῖς χιλιάρχοις καὶ τοῖς πρῶτοις τῆς Γαλιλαίας, ²²καὶ εἰσελθούσης τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτοῦ Ἡρωδιάδος καὶ ὀρχισαμένης ἤρεσεν τῷ Ἡρώδῃ καὶ τοῖς συνανακειμένοις. εἶπεν ὁ βασιλεὺς τῷ κορασίῳ, Αἰτήσόν με ὃ ἐὰν θέλῃς, καὶ δώσω σοι· ²³καὶ ὡ-

for the sake of Hero'di-as, his brother Philip's wife; because he had married her.

¹⁸For John said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

¹⁹And Hero'di-as had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, ²⁰for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and kept him safe. When he heard him, he was much perplexed; and yet he heard him gladly.

²¹But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and the leading men of Galilee.

²²For when Hero'di-as' daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests;

and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will grant it."

⁸Prompted by her mother, she said, “Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter.” ⁹And the king was sorry; but because of his oaths and his guests he commanded it to be given; ¹⁰he sent and had John beheaded in the prison, ¹¹and his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. ¹²And his disciples came and took the body and buried it;	⁸ἡ δὲ προβιβασθεῖσα ὑπὸ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτῆς, Δός μοι, φησίν, ὥδε ἐπὶ πῖνακι τὴν κεφαλὴν Ἰωάννου τοῦ βαπτιστοῦ. ⁹καὶ λυπηθεὶς ὁ βασιλεὺς διὰ τοὺς ὅρκους καὶ τοὺς συνανακειμένους ἐκέλευσεν δοθῆναι, ¹⁰καὶ πέμψας ἀπέκεφάλισεν [τὸν] Ἰωάννην ἐν τῇ φυλακῇ. ¹¹καὶ ἤνεχθη ἡ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ πῖνακι καὶ ἐδόθη τῷ κορασίῳ, καὶ ἦνεγκεν τῇ μητρὶ αὐτῆς. ¹²καὶ προσελθόντες οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ἤραν τὸ πῶμα καὶ	μοσεν αὐτῇ [πολλά], “Ὅ τι ἐάν με αἰτήσῃς δώσω σοι ἕως ἡμίσεος τῆς βασιλείας μου. ²⁴καὶ ἐξελθοῦσα εἶπεν τῇ μητρὶ αὐτῆς, Τί αἰτήσωμαι; ἡ δὲ εἶπεν, Τὴν κεφαλὴν Ἰωάννου τοῦ βαπτίζοντος. ²⁵καὶ εἰσελθοῦσα εὐθὺς μετὰ σπουδῆς πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα ᾗτήσατο λέγουσα, Θέλω ἵνα ἐξαυτῆς δῶς μοι ἐπὶ πῖνακι τὴν κεφαλὴν Ἰωάννου τοῦ βαπτιστοῦ. ²⁶καὶ περὶλυπος γενόμενος ὁ βασιλεὺς διὰ τοὺς ὅρκους καὶ τοὺς ἀνακειμένους οὐκ ἠθέλησεν ἀθετῆσαι αὐτήν. ²⁷καὶ εὐθὺς ἀποστείλας ὁ βασιλεὺς σπεκουλάτορα ἐπέταξεν ἐνέγκαι τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ. καὶ ἀπελθὼν ἀπεκεφάλισεν αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ φυλακῇ. ²⁸καὶ ἦνεγκεν τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ πῖνακι καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτὴν τῷ κορασίῳ, καὶ τὸ κοράσιον ἔδωκεν αὐτὴν τῇ μητρὶ αὐτῆς. ²⁹καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ἦλθον καὶ ἦραν τὸ	²³And he vowed to her, “Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom.” ²⁴And she went out, and said to her mother, “What shall I ask?” And she said, “The head of John the baptizer.” ²⁵And she came in immediately with haste to the king, and asked, saying, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.” ²⁶And the king was exceedingly sorry; but because of his oaths and his guests he did not want to break his word to her. ²⁷And immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard and gave orders to bring his head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, ²⁸and brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his
--	--	--	---

A Memorandum for the Synoptic Problem

and they went and told Jesus. ¹³Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a lonely place apart. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns.	ἔθαψαν αὐτό[ν], καὶ ἐλθόντες ἀπήγγειλαν τῷ Ἰησοῦ. ¹³Ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοὺς ἀνεχώρησεν ἐκεῖθεν ἐν πλοίῳ εἰς ἔρημον τόπον κατ' ἰδίαν καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ ὄχλοι ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ περὶ τῶν πόλεων.	πτῶμα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔθηκαν αὐτὸ ἐν μνημείῳ. ³⁰Καὶ συνάγονται οἱ ἀπόστολοι πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἀπήγγειλαν αὐτῷ πάντα ὅσα ἐδίδαξαν. ³¹καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Δεῦτε ὑμεῖς αὐτοὶ κατ' ἰδίαν εἰς ἔρημον τόπον καὶ ἀναπαύσασθε ὀλίγον. ἦσαν γὰρ οἱ ἐρχόμενοι καὶ οἱ ὑπάγοντες πολλοί, καὶ οὐδὲ φαγεῖν εὐκαίρουν. ³²καὶ ἀπηλθον ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ εἰς ἔρημον τόπον κατ' ἰδίαν. ³³καὶ εἶδον αὐτοὺς ὑπάγοντας καὶ ἐπέγνωσαν πολλοὶ καὶ περὶ τῶν πόλεων συνεδραμον ἐκεῖ καὶ προῆλθον αὐτούς.	body, and laid it in a tomb. ³⁰The apostles returned to Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. ³¹And he said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. ³²And they went away in the boat to a lonely place by themselves. ³³Now many saw them going, and knew them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns, and got there ahead of them.
--	---	---	--

In Matthew, after Herod's comment on the rumor concerning the person of Jesus, from verse 3 a scene of the past event begins, in the course of which John the Baptist was decapitated. This scene continues down to Mt 14:12 where it is said that John's disciples, after having buried their master, reported this matter to Jesus. We expect that the recollection of the past event ends here. However, this verse 12 is connected to the following verse 13 in a curious way: Jesus, “having heard [their report, T. S.] (Ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς)”, is said to have withdrawn “from that place by ship into a lonely place secretly”. There is obviously a confusion of the timelines here, between the

past event of the decapitation of John and the “now” of Jesus’ time. Such a confusion cannot be observed in Mark, where the two timelines are neatly distinguished.

To be sure, Matthew is so weird an author as to be able to confuse the timelines. However, is it possible that Matthew wrote such a confusion with the Gospel of Mark before him, a *Vorlage* which distinguishes the things quite neatly? I think this is highly implausible, so long as we assume that Matthew is a weird but intelligent author. And the reverse explanation is completely sensible: Mark, observing a confusion in Matthew before him, simply corrected it in a proper way.

(2) Mt 26,26–28 vs Mk 14,22–24

²⁶Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” ²⁷And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you; ²⁸for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”	^{26α}Ἐσθιόντων δὲ αὐτῶν λαβὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἄρτον καὶ εὐλογήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ δὸς τοῖς μαθηταῖς εἶπεν, Λάβετε φάγετε, τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου. ²⁷καὶ λαβὼν ποτήριον καὶ εὐχαριστήσας ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς λέγων, Πίετε ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες, ²⁸τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυννόμενον εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν.	²²Καὶ ἐσθιόντων αὐτῶν λαβὼν ἄρτον εὐλογήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς καὶ εἶπεν, Λάβετε, τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου. ²³καὶ λαβὼν ποτήριον εὐχαριστήσας ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἔπιον ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες. ²⁴καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν.	²²And as they were eating, he took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them, and said, “Take; this is my body.” ²³And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. ²⁴And he said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.”
---	---	---	---

The wording is highly identical between Matthew and Mark; they differ only in two things. First, Matthew says that the pouring of Jesus’ blood is “for

the forgiveness of sins”, whereas no such expression is found in Mark. This is a theological matter which is susceptible to more than one interpretation; it need not be discussed further here. Second, the way Jesus’ disciples drank from the cup is different between Matthew and Mark: while in Matthew Jesus invites them to drink what He calls “my blood”, in Mark first they all drink from the cup, and then Jesus tells them that what they drank is “my blood”. Special attention should be paid to this second difference, which is a delicate, but significant difference.

Given that Jews are strictly prohibited to drink blood (cf. Lv 17,11), when, as in Matthew, something to drink is presented to them as “blood”, the reaction of Jews would be doubtless highly negative, or at least resistive; by “Jews” I mean not only the disciples of Jesus, but also the Jewish reader of the Gospel. Calling the content of a cup “blood” is shocking in itself, to be sure, but in Matthew more negative impact is added to the expression “blood”, in the sense that it is so called by Jesus at the very time when the disciples were about to drink. It is not unimaginable that one of the disciples, who was precisely drinking wine when Jesus pronounced the word “blood”, could vomit the wine from his mouth -- a most unholy imagination, one might say.

On the other hand, in Mark the disciples first drank from the cup; most probably, they assumed that they were drinking wine. And once they finished drinking, Jesus tells them that what they drank is “my blood”. Calling the content of a cup “blood” is shocking in itself, to be sure, but in Mark the shocking impact is not so strong, because the disciples hear such a word only after drinking from the cup; in other words, Mark cares more for the sensitivity of Jews, and so the story was smoothed, so to speak.

Then, assuming that both authors, Matthew and Mark, knew Judaism very well (which seems evident), is it possible that Matthew wrote such a passage which goes extremely against the sensitivity of Jews with the Gospel of Mark before him, a *Vorlage* which apparently shows its awareness of that

sensitivity? Again I think this is highly implausible, so long as we assume that Matthew is a weird but intelligent author. And the reverse explanation is again completely sensible: Mark, observing in Matthew what was very much against the sensitivity of Jews, simply corrected it in a proper way.

Perhaps some might argue that my arguments also concern what I call “redactional decision”. However, in my view that is not correct, because the problem contained in the first parallel passage is rather concerned with logical thinking, and the problem contained in the second with religious common sense of the time.

4. Conclusion

The conclusion of this chapter is quite clear: Matthean, and not Markan, priority is the correct solution of the Synoptic Problem. Matthew was written first, perhaps some time in the forties of the first century so that Paul could consult it when writing his epistles. Mark, when writing his own Gospel, consulted Matthew and modified the *Vorlage* by either expanding or excising. And Luke, on his part, consulted both Matthew and Mark when writing his own Gospel, some time after AD 70.

Chapter 2: The Synoptic Gospels seen from Matthean priority

The reason why the following descriptions of the Synoptic Gospels have almost no footnotes is that, for one thing, reference to earlier studies is almost meaningless, given that almost all of them, either commentaries or monographs, are based on the theory of Markan priority, the very foundation which this article intends to turn over. However, there is another reason which, for myself, is as important as the previous one: I am convinced that the Gospels can be sufficiently explored by any attentive reader by himself/herself, to the extent that the following descriptions of the Synoptic Gospels can also be understood without difficulty by such attentive reader. Thus I trust that, once a correct orientation (by which I mean, needless to say, Matthean priority) is given to the reader, he/she will be able to go on and explore the meaning and the tendencies etc. of each Synoptic Gospel by himself/herself. The Gospels are open to such readers; they are not monopolies of New Testament scholars.

Needless to say, the enumeration below of the tendencies is not exhaustive; they are mentioned here only for illustration of how things look like from the viewpoint of Matthean priority.

The quotations given below in English are from RSV.

1. The Gospel of Matthew

Date of composition

Since the apostle Paul could consult the Gospel of Matthew, the latter must have been composed probably in the forties of the first century.

The *terminus post quem* of the Gospel of Matthew is given in Mt 24,15, which seems a clear allusion (to use an oxymoronic expression) to Caligula's

finally failed attempt to have his statue placed in the temple of Jerusalem. Thus the Gospel of Matthew must have been written after this event which can be dated around the year AD 40.

However, despite what has been said just above, the dating of the Gospel of Matthew needs to be discussed elsewhere in detail, not because many studies (commentaries or monographs) based on Markan priority plead for a much later date of composition than given here, but because, even before Markan priority became prevalent in New Testament studies, the Gospel of Matthew was usually considered a composition of fairly late date²².

Author

I think that Matthew the apostle may really have been the author of the Gospel of Matthew²³. However, this point needs to be discussed in detail elsewhere.

Place of composition

Antioch is the most plausible place where the Gospel of Matthew was composed. However, this point also needs to be discussed in detail elsewhere.

Some peculiar tendencies

— **Presenting Jesus as the Messiah** of Davidic origin (Mt 1,1), i.e., the Messiah who fulfills various prophecies of the Old Testament (*passim*).

— **Anti-Jewish tendency**. The criticism is especially severe against the

²² As pointed out in W.R. FARMER, *The Synoptic Problem. A Critical Analysis*, New York: Macmillan, 1964, p. 18, quoting the monograph of Sieffert published in 1832.

²³ For one thing, in the *Apology* of Socrates, written down by Plato and which pretends to faithfully reproduce the sayings of the author's master (Socrates), Plato himself figures only in passing and in a cursory manner. The same cursory appearance can be observed also on Matthew in the Gospel of Matthew which I assume pretends to faithfully reproduce the sayings of the author's master (Jesus).

scribes and the Pharisees (Mt 23 and *passim*), but it is also directed toward Jews in general (Mt 27,25).

— **Stressing the imminence of the end of the world.** This tendency can be observed throughout the Gospel. To mention just a few examples, Mt 10,23: “for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel, before the Son of man comes”, can only be interpreted in this sense, i.e., indicating the imminence of the end of the world; as an outsider to New Testament studies, I can hardly believe that such a sentence could have been written after the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem. Mt 11,13-14: “For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John; and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come”, can also be interpreted solely in the context of the imminent end of the world; the cessation of the prophecy is evidently related to the imminent end of the world. It should also be noted that only the Gospel of Matthew considers John the Baptist the Elijah of the second coming, an identification which can be found in no other canonical Gospels. In my view the prophecy of Mt 24 (par: Mk 13) should of course be ascribed to Matthew (and not to Mark); thus this prophecy can also be counted as another example of Matthew’s stressing the imminence of the end of the world.

— **Mention of “mountain”** to indicate the divine origin, nature or manifestation of Jesus (Mt 4,8; 5,1; 17,1; and 28,16). These passages show Jesus as almost a super-human being, if not to simply say the Son of God.

2. The Gospel of Mark

Date of composition

Given the very early dating of Matthew as mentioned above, I think that, also for the Gospel of Mark, a dating before AD 70 is preferable, although nowadays scholars tend to regard Mark as a Gospel of post-70. The reason

why an ante-70 date is preferable is that, in my view, the prophecy of Mk 13 which, according to my interpretation, Mark simply copied from Matthew without any major modification (also see below), becomes largely meaningless after the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Author and place of composition

Seeing that the author could manipulate some Aramaic expressions, a most plausible candidate for the author of the Gospel of Mark is a Palestinian Jew, whose native language was Aramaic, but who also knew Greek to a certain extent. Thus the plausible place of composition is already suggested: Palestine of Jews is the likely place where the Gospel of Mark was composed.

Some peculiar tendencies

— **Severe criticism against the disciples of Jesus.** Compared with Matthew, the unbelief of the disciples is stressed (cf. Mk 4,40: “Have you no faith?”, a stronger criticism compared with par Mt 8,26: “Why are you afraid, O men of little faith?”); so is their incomprehension (cf. Mk 6,52: “for they [i.e., the disciples] did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened”, an expression which is lacking in par Mt 14,22–33). In Mk 8,14–21 Jesus repeatedly says “Do you not yet understand” (vv. 17 and 21), and in Mark there is no concluding sentence, whereas, according to par Mt 16,12, the disciples finally realized: “Then they [i.e., the disciples] understood that he [i.e., Jesus] did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees”. In Matthew, Judas is depicted as repenting just before committing suicide (Mt 27,4), but Mark has no such information; thus reading solely Mark, one can imagine that Judas, after betraying Jesus, simply fled.

However, the strongest criticism against the disciples of Jesus lies, in my view, in the fact that, **according to the Gospel of Mark, the male disciples of**

Jesus cannot be witnesses of Jesus' resurrection, because "they [i.e., the women who visited very early on the first day of the week] went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to any one, for they were afraid" (Mk 16,8). This means that, according to Mark, the male disciples of Jesus (the apostles etc.) were not informed of the fact that the tomb of Jesus was empty. Thus according to Mark, they have no qualification at all to pretend to be witnesses of Jesus' resurrection, because they did not even know that their master's tomb was empty. I think that this interpretation provides a clear explanation for the abrupt end of the Gospel of Mark in Mk 16,8, and this explanation becomes still clearer on the basis of Matthean priority.

This much of explanation might cause a reaction that the Gospel of Mark on the basis of Matthean priority might look "combative"²⁴. However, the next tendency which I suggest, combined with this tendency, might provide a different explanation as to why Mark was so critical against the disciples of Jesus.

— **Presenting himself** (i.e., the author of the Gospel of Mark) **as someone who really understands Jesus** (or Jesus Christ). This tendency, which might not appear clearly at first sight, can be illustrated by the following passages. (1) As is well known, Mark lacks the description of Jesus' Nativity, whereas Matthew presents Jesus as born of Davidic descent (Mt 1,1). However, the description of Matthew contains a sheer contradiction, in that he also includes into his Gospel Jesus' own saying, according to which the Messiah cannot be a

²⁴ J.S. KLOPPENBORG, "The Theological Stakes in the Synoptic Problem", in: F. van SEGBROECK et al. (eds.), *The Four Gospels 1992. Festschrift Frans Neirynck* (BETHL, 100), vol. 1, Leuven: University Press & Peeters, 1992, pp. 93–120, on p. 108. See also D.B. PEABODY, "Reading Mark from the Perspectives of Different Synoptic Source Hypotheses. Historical, Redactional and Theological Implications", in: FOSTER et al. (eds.), *New Studies*, pp. 159–185, on p. 168.

son of David (Mt 22,42-45); an attentive reader of the Gospel of Matthew can observe this contradiction without difficulty. Thus I suggest that Mark, as an attentive reader of the Gospel of Matthew, preferred to follow Jesus' own saying, and consequently eliminated the description of his Davidic descent together with the entire genealogy; and in my view, this attitude of Mark, which is not necessarily "combative", can be described as that of someone who really understands Jesus. (2) The Gospel of Mark contains a passage which is a *Sondergut* of the Gospel, and in which a scribe interprets correctly the teaching of Jesus (Mk 12,32-33); this scribe is praised by Jesus himself with the expression: "You are not far from the kingdom of God" (Mk 12,34). I suggest that this scribe reflects best the position of the author of the Gospel of Mark, which, again, can be described as that of someone who really understands Jesus. And if such a tendency really works in the Gospel of Mark, the aforementioned criticism against the disciples of Jesus becomes more understandable.

— **Criticism against Jews considerably mildened.** This tendency is clearly understood when comparing the two Gospels, Matthew and Mark. However, this does not necessarily mean that all the Jews are justified. For instance, a passage just after the scene of the aforementioned laudable scribe contains criticism against some scribes (Mk 12,38-40). Is this criticism against scribes a general criticism against all the scribes? I do not think so; rather, it seems that the author of Mark himself distinguished good scribes and bad scribes, which can be quite normal as a reflection.

— **Not necessarily stressing the imminence of the end of the world; or rather, it is doubtful whether the author of Mark really stresses the imminence of the end of the world.** On the basis of Matthean priority it appears that Mark simply copied the prophecy of Mk 13 from Matthew without any major modification and, I should like to add, without expressing his own value judgement. Then, what did Mark think concerning the end of

the world, a notion which was not necessarily unpopular at his time? We cannot be certain on this point, but there is the so-called “Parable of the Growing Seed” (Mk 4,26–29), which is a *Sondergut* of the Gospel of Mark. This parable may be interpreted as expressing the imminence of the end of the world, but it can also be interpreted as simply stating a circular (or seasonal) rotation of time during which things grow; I myself would rather prefer the latter interpretation, although without any decisive argument. Furthermore, in Mark the mention of Elijah of the second coming in Matthew is changed into that of the historical Elijah (Mk 9,13); this might be an indication that the imminence of the end of the world is not necessarily stressed in Mark.

Additional comment

In order to fully appreciate the tendencies of the Gospel of Mark, it is of capital importance to reconstitute Mk 15,28 to the text of the Gospel:

Καὶ ἐπληρώθη ἡ γραφή ἣ λέγουσα· καὶ μετὰ ἀνόμων ἐλογίσθη.

And the scripture was fulfilled which says, “He was reckoned with the transgressors”.

In my view, this verse Mk 15, 28, which is an indispensable passage corresponding to Mk 14,49 (“But let the scriptures be fulfilled”, a rare mention of the fulfilment of the prophecy in Mark, and which requires a reference to a specific prophecy), completes the image of Jesus Christ in Mark, in the sense that Jesus “Christ, the Son of God” (Mk 1,1) was condemned as a sinner²⁵ in accordance with the scripture, because of the incomprehension of the people, and especially because of his own disciples (some of the disciples even betrayed Jesus!).

²⁵ Theologically it is doubtless possible to continue as follows: “sinner, on behalf of us ...”.

3. The Gospel of Luke

Date of composition

As already mentioned above, the Gospel of Luke is a Gospel of post AD 70. This much is evident; I am unable to provide any further precision for the moment. Elsewhere I argued that the Gospel according to Thomas is closely related to the Gospel of Luke, which I do not think is my original discovery²⁶. However, since in my view the Gospel of Thomas should be dated to the second century²⁷, this relationship between Thomas and Luke does not help to date the latter, which was, *a priori*, most probably a composition of the first century AD.

Author and place of composition

No indication as to the author as well as the place of composition can be found (by myself, at the very least) in the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles themselves. Does the fact that, later in the second century, Marcion, who originated from Asia Minor, retained solely the Gospel of Luke (of course in his abridged version) mean that the Gospel of Luke circulated notably in Asia Minor? Of course, the matter is uncertain.

Some peculiar tendencies

— **Stressing the historicity of Jesus.** This tendency is evident notably in the mention of “Augustus etc.” (Lk 2,1) or “Tiberius etc.” (Lk 3,1). And one can perhaps understand along this line the fact that, in Luke, Jesus’ sermon is

²⁶ TODA S., “The Gospel of Thomas Revisited Once More”, *The Annual Report on Cultural Science* (Graduate School of Letters, Hokkaido University) 142 (2014), pp. 63–78, on pp. 70–72.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 73–77.

presented not on a mountain but on a “level place” (Lk 6,17): as mentioned above, mountain as a place in Matthew has the effect of stressing the divine nature etc. of Jesus, and thus it can deprive the sermon of a concrete historical context, which, according to my interpretation, was something to be avoided in Luke’s view. Thus Luke presented Jesus’ sermon in a different way than Matthew. Similarly, Matthew’s description of Jesus after resurrection is not quite realistic (with, again, the mention of mountain); this is perhaps the reason why Luke describes several events in which the resurrected Jesus appeared, and which are all somehow related to Jerusalem so as to be consistent with later history of the primitive church which of course began from Jerusalem.

— **Stressing forgiveness given by Jesus.** This tendency is evident notably in the pericope of Jesus’ forgiving Peter before the latter’s denial (Lk 22,31-34), forgiving one of the criminals on the cross (Lk 23,39-43) etc.; needless to say, it is also reflected e.g. on the famous parable of the prodigal son (Lk 15,11-32). In this context, I am strongly inclined to regard Jesus’ saying of ultimate forgiveness (Lk 23,34a) as a part of the authentic text of Luke, although the textual criticism of the New Testament has relegated it to the apparatus criticus for a long time.

Additional comment

The Acts of the Apostles has the following passage: “So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us etc.” (Act 1,21-22). In the discussion of the Synoptic Problem, the expression “beginning from the baptism of John” is sometimes mentioned as coinciding with the Gospel of Mark (and not with Matthew). This expression itself can be variously interpreted, but it is assuredly possible that Luke, when writing this expression, had in mind the very beginning

verses of the Gospel of Mark. Then, what does it mean? I would suggest that Luke, who in my view had in hand two Gospels, i.e. Matthew and Mark, perhaps thought himself that the Gospel of Mark, which is shorter than the Gospel of Matthew, was more original because of its greater brevity, and thus acted accordingly, i.e., preferring Mark to Matthew in many cases etc. In other words, it is not impossible to think that many phenomena which might seem at first sight to support Markan priority ultimately derive from Luke's intention (or his interpretation), i.e., the fact that Luke himself preferred Mark to Matthew as the more original Gospel.