

THE REASONS WHY THE SYNOPTIC PROBLEM SHOULD BE RECONSIDERED ONCE AGAIN*

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Prologue

- I. Markan Priority Reexamined
 1. Omission of Congenial Material?
 2. Addition of Elements Not Congenial to Matthew and Luke?
 3. The Place of Oral Tradition?
 4. Relationship between Omissions and Additions
 5. Harder Readings?
 6. The Dates of the Gospels?
 7. Editorial Fatigue?
 8. Conclusion of the Re-Examination
- II. Position of Luke in the Synoptic Problem
- III. Comparison between Matthew and Mark
- IV. Conclusion

Prologue

Reconsidering the Synoptic Problem is something which might be considered completely superfluous, especially when the subject is dealt with by someone who is no specialist in New Testament studies. I readily agree that the problem should have been solved decades before, or even centuries before, and the fact that it is not so seems to indicate as if the specialists of the problem would not want to solve the problem.

People might say that there is already a generally accepted opinion, which consists of the famous two theories: the two-source theory (Mark + Q) and that of Markan priority. Still, how are we to consider the fact that there always remain a certain number of scholars who disagree with this position? Does this not mean that the generally accepted opinion still fails to be persuasive, and this for some good reason?

In any case, interest in the problem is not a monopoly of New Testament scholars, and as a student of the history of ancient Christianity I also need that the problem should be definitively solved, since, in order to be able to think about what Christianity originally was, we need a clear understanding concerning, above all, the traditions surrounding Jesus Christ Himself. Thus I was obliged to approach the problem, and since I happen to have arrived at a perspective totally different from that of the generally accepted opinion, I assume it is my duty to present my ideas to possible interested readers, regardless of how many they can be¹.

* Abbreviations used in this paper (for the commentaries quoted in this paper, see the next note):
GOODACRE (2001) = M. GOODACRE, *The Synoptic Problem. A Way through the Maze*, London: Continuum (T & T Clark), 2001

¹ It is a big problem how to refer to earlier studies of the Synoptic Problem, because if one tries to be exhaustive on this point, one would not finish reading earlier studies before dying (for a bibliography of the Synoptic Problem, see e.g. T.R.W. LONGSTAFF & P.A. THOMAS (eds.), *The Synoptic Problem. A Bibliography, 1716-1988*, Macon: Mercer University Press, 1988, where 1747 books and articles in total are mentioned; I understand that this is only a portion of much more vast literature related to the Problem). So basically I decided not to be exhaustive, but solely to try to use major commentaries of the Synoptic Gospels on the key passages discussed in this paper. I think this is a reasonable attitude toward earlier studies, because, after all, a solution of the Problem should contribute to clarify interpretations of passages concerned of the Gospels.

The commentaries which could be consulted by the author of this paper are the following (enumerated in chronological order). For reference, to each bibliographical information I add a remark on the position of each commentary concerning the Synoptic Problem (especially concerning Markan priority).

For Matthew:

- F.V. FILSON, *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew* (Black's New Testament Commentaries), London: Adam & Charles Black, 1960 (p. 9: "the author of Matt. used Mk. as his basic narrative source");
- A.W. ARGYLE, *The Gospel according to Matthew* (The Cambridge Bible Commentary), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963 (p. 1: Matthew "is not the earliest Gospel. Mark's is earlier, and was extensively used both by Matthew, ... and by Luke");
- W.F. ALBRIGHT & C.S. MANN, *Matthew* (The Anchor Bible), Garden City: Doubleday, 1971 (p. CLXXXIII: "We do not regard Markan priority ... as being in any sense proved");
- D. HILL, *The Gospel of Matthew* (New Century Bible Commentary), Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1972 (p. 30: "the basic sources on which the writer of Matthew drew are the Gospel of Mark and that layer of tradition ... which is conveniently designated Q");
- E. SCHWEIZER, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (Das Neue Testament Deutsch), Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976 (p. 2: follows the "Zweiquellentheorie");
- R.T. FRANCE, *The Gospel according to Matthew. An Introduction and Commentary* (The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries), Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1985 (p. 38: "In the commentary that follows, ... I shall generally work on the assumption that where Matthew and Mark run parallel it is more likely that the Marcan version is the earlier");
- R. SCHNACKENBURG, *Matthäusevangelium* (Die Neue Echter Bibel. Kommentar zum Neuen Testament mit der Einheitsübersetzung), 2 vols., Würzburg: Echter, 1985/1987 (p. 5: Matthew is not the first Gospel; "das war vielmehr das Markusevangelium");
- J. GNILKA, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament), 2 Teile, Freiburg: Herder, 1986/1988 (2. Teil, p. 521: "Insgesamt aber läßt sich sagen, daß Mt das Mk-Evangelium neu geschrieben hat");
- W.D. DAVIES & D.C. ALLISON, Jr., *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew* (A Critical and Exegetical Commentary), 3 vols., Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988/1991/1997 (p. 98: "Mark preceded Matthew");
- R.H. SMITH, *Matthew* (Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament), Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1989 (no clear position of the author of the commentary concerning the Synoptic Problem is expressed);
- D.J. HARRINGTON, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Sacra Pagina Series, 1), Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991 (p. 6: "the Two-Document hypothesis seems to me ... to be the better, or at least most economical explanation for the development of the Synoptic Gospels");
- C.L. BLOMBERG, *Matthew* (The New American Commentary, 22), Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992 (p. 38: the solution "that places Mark earliest, with canonical Matthew and Luke dependent on Mark, remains the most plausible");
- D.A. HAGNER, *Matthew* (Word Biblical Commentary, 33A-B), 2 vols., Dallas: Word Books, 1993/1995 (p. xlvi: "The author of Matthew thus probably had as his two main sources Mark and Q");
- M.E. BORING, in: *The New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 8, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995 (p. 92: "This Commentary is written from the perspective that the two-source hypothesis ... remains the best working hypothesis for study of the synoptic Gospels");
- C.S. KEENER, *Matthew* (The IVP New Testament Commentary Series), Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1997 (p. 19: "Matthew used Mark, Q ... and some other material not employed by Mark or Luke");
- D.L. TURNER, in: D.L. TURNER, *The Gospel of Matthew / D.L. BOCK, The Gospel of Mark* (Cornerstone Biblical Commentary), Carol Stream: Tyndale House, 2005 (p. 9: "whether Mark abbreviated Matthew's discourses and expanded Matthew's narratives (minority view), or whether Matthew adapted Mark's narrative to his discourses

derived from Q (consensus), what matters most to the church is the meaning of the Gospels as literary and theological wholes”);

U. LUTZ (transl. J.E. CROUCH), *Matthew* (Hermeneia - A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible), 3 vols., Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007/2001/2005 (vol. 1, p. 41: “Matthew is the pupil, or better, the heir of his theological “fathers,” Mark and Q”).

For Mark:

S.E. JOHNSON, *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark* (Black’s New Testament Commentaries), London: Adam & Charles Black, 1960 (Markan priority is simply assumed without any noticeable discussion, e.g. in the expression “The first gospel” (p. 7));

C.F.D. MOULE, *The Gospel according to Mark* (The Cambridge Bible Commentary), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965 (p. 2: “Mark’s book is one of the earliest examples—perhaps positively the earliest—of an arrangement of these units of tradition [i.e., anecdotes and sayings of Jesus] into a connected whole”);

W.L. LANE, *The Gospel according to Mark* (The New International Commentary on the New Testament), Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1974 (p. 1: “It is generally recognized that Mark represents the earliest attempt to reduce the apostolic tradition to a written form”);

H. ANDERSON, *The Gospel of Mark* (New Century Bible Commentary), Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1976 (p. 5: “If, therefore, Mark’s Gospel actually was the oldest (as still seems most likely), ...”);

E. SCHWEIZER, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (Das Neue Testament Deutsch), Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978 (p. 1: “Die wahrscheinlichste Lösung ... ist die sog. Zweiquellentheorie”);

R. PESCH, *Das Markusevangelium* (Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament), 2 Teile, Freiburg: Herder, 1980/1982 (1. Teil, p. 15: “Im Unterschied zu Mattäus und Lukas, die bei der mk Gesamtkomposition ansetzen können und sie mit literarischem Anspruch redigieren ...”);

C.S. MANN, *Mark* (The Anchor Bible), Garden City: Doubleday, 1986 (p. 76: “Mark was derivative of Matthew and Luke”);

R.A. COLE, *The Gospel according to Mark. An Introduction and Commentary* (The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries), 2. ed., Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989 (p. 32: “Mark seems ... to have been the earliest written gospel, in our sense of the word; and this view seems so firmly established today that longer discussion is unnecessary here”);

R.A. GUELICH, *Mark 1-8:26* (Word Biblical Commentary, 34A), Dallas: Word Books, 1989 (p. xxxiii: “the consensus of the past century has viewed Mark to be a source for Matthew and Luke instead of vice versa. This approach has proven the more obvious to this writer”);

J.A. BROOKS, *Mark* (The New American Commentary, 23), Nashville: Broadman Press, 1991 (p. 25: “The question of Markan priority has not been settled, but to the present commentator it appears to be much more likely than Matthean priority”);

P. PERKINS, in: *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 8, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995 (p. 509: “this view [i.e., the two-source theory] still provides the clearest way of understanding the synoptic Gospels”);

C.A. EVANS, *Mark 8:27-16:20* (Word Biblical Commentary, 34B), Dallas: Word Books, 2001 (p. xlix: “the two-source theory has been adopted in the present commentary”);

R.T. FRANCE, *The Gospel of Mark. A Commentary on the Greek Text* (The New International Greek Testament Commentary), Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2002 (p. 44: “his [i.e., Mark’s] recording of that tradition [i.e., Jesus tradition] clearly provided Matthew and Luke with the most significant single component in their collections. In that sense I would continue to maintain the priority of Mark and the likelihood that Matthew and Luke depended on him rather than vice versa”);

F.J. MOLONEY, *The Gospel of Mark. A Commentary*, Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002 (p. 2: “the priority of Mark is the best explanation for a number of the features of Mark, Matthew, and Luke”);

D.L. BOCK, in: D.L. TURNER, *The Gospel of Matthew* / D.L. BOCK, *The Gospel of Mark* (Cornerstone Biblical Commentary), Carol Stream: Tyndale House, 2005 (p. 393: “Mark was probably our first written Gospel”);

A.Y. COLLINS, *Mark. A Commentary* (Hermeneia - A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible), Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007 (p. 95: “Although the two-source theory ... cannot explain all the similarities and differences among the Synoptic Gospels, it is widely accepted today because it provides a more adequate explanation of more of the data than any other hypothesis”).

For Luke:

E.J. TINSLEY, *The Gospel according to Luke* (The Cambridge Bible Commentary), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965 (p. 21: “The first written Christian Gospel which has survived for us is Mark. ... it appears that Matthew

I. *Markan Priority Reexamined*

First it is necessary to reexamine the theory of priority of Mark, but a methodological reflection needs to precede the discussion: although it would be much better if we could refer to various earlier studies on the Synoptic Gospels, I am afraid it is not possible from a strictly methodological viewpoint, because those studies are normally based on the two-source theory,

and Luke have used Mark as one of their sources”);

- A.R.C. LEANEY, *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Luke* (Black’s New Testament Commentaries), 2. ed., London: Adam & Charles Black, 1966 (p. 12: “In the main central block, Luke iv. 31-xxi. 38, Mark is the chief source” etc.);
- E.E. ELLIS, *The Gospel of Luke* (New Century Bible Commentary), Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1974 (p. 26: “It is more usual, and more probable, to regard Mark as the foundation document to which the Evangelist [i.e., Luke] added the Q and L materials”);
- J. ERNST, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (Regensburger Neues Testament), Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1977 (p. 22: “Die literarkritischen Untersuchungen haben als feststehenden Traditionsbestand Mk, Logienquelle und Sondergut sichergestellt”);
- I.H. MARSHALL, *The Gospel of Luke. A Commentary on the Greek Text* (The New International Greek Testament Commentary), Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1978 (p. 30: “The view that Luke used Mk. substantially as we have it seems to me to be beyond reasonable doubt”);
- J.A. FITZMYER, *Luke* (The Anchor Bible), 2 vols., Garden City: Doubleday, 1981/1985 (vol. 1, p. 63: “The solution to the Synoptic problem that is being adopted in this commentary is a modified form of the so-called Two-Document Hypothesis [i.e., the Two-Source Theory].”);
- J. KREMER, *Lukasevangelium* (Die Neue Echter Bibel. Kommentar zum Neuen Testament mit der Einheitsübersetzung), Würzburg: Echter, 1988 (p. 11: “Wie Lk selbst im Vorwort angibt, hat er Quellen benutzt. Dazu gehört mit Sicherheit das Mk-Ev ... Eine zweite schriftliche Vorlage ist mit höchster Wahrscheinlichkeit die Logienquelle Q”);
- L. MORRIS, *Luke. An Introduction and Commentary* (The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries), rev. ed., Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988 (p. 56: “Most scholars ... maintain that Mark was the first of our four Gospels to be written. They think that this Gospel was used by both Matthew and Luke. This does seem the most likely reading of much of the evidence, but we cannot say more than that”);
- J. NOLLAND, *Luke* (Word Biblical Commentary, 35A-C), 3 vols., Dallas: Word Books, 1989/1993/1993 (vol. 1, p. xxx: “The present work proceeds on the general assumption that Luke had available the Gospel of Mark, or something very like it, and that he shared additional common source material with Matthew, but that about the particular form of this shared material we cannot be too confident”);
- C.F. EVANS, *Saint Luke* (TPI New Testament Commentaries), London: SCM Press, 1990 (p. 17: “the hypothesis that Matthew and Luke had, independently of each other, made use of Mark’s Gospel” is the “position maintained in this Commentary”);
- R.H. STEIN, *Luke* (The New American Commentary, 24), Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992 (the author seems to simply accept the two-source theory (cf. p. 28));
- D.L. BOCK, *Luke* (The IVP New Testament Commentary Series), Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1994 (no clear position concerning the Synoptic Problem is expressed);
- R.A. CULPEPPER, in: *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 9, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995 (p. 7: “the commentary adopts the widely held view that Mark was the earliest of the Gospels and that Luke used a second written source, identified by the letter Q”);
- J.B. GREEN, *The Gospel of Luke* (The New International Commentary on the New Testament), Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997 (p. 15: “while we remain reasonably confident that one of Luke’s major sources was the Gospel of Mark, ...”);
- A.A. TRITES, in: A.A. TRITES, *The Gospel of Luke / P.W. COMFORT, Acts* (Cornerstone Biblical Commentary), Carol Stream: Tyndale House, 2006 (no clear position concerning the Synoptic Problem is expressed; on the other hand, at p. 7 the author says: “a first-century date of about AD 62 seems the most reasonable option for Luke-Acts”; for the date of Luke, see below).

which should precisely be reexamined in this paper. Thus we have to proceed very carefully in order to avoid any possible *petitio principii*².

For the reexamination of the theory of Markan priority, the current situation is rather favorable, because a brilliant New Testament scholar, Professor Mark Goodacre of Duke University, had a wonderful idea of making his works accessible on the internet, especially the one which is precisely concerned with the subject of this paper: it is his book *The Synoptic Problem*³. This book is all the more interesting, because the author defends, on the one hand, the theory of Markan priority, and criticizes, on the other, the two-source theory to the extent that he even denies the existence of Q source; as this paper totally agrees with his second position and disagrees with his first position, consultation of the book in this paper will make clearer what precisely is the difference. Another remark should be added: it is regrettable that, when discussing the problem of Markan priority, Mr. Goodacre only mentions the two-source theory and the Griesbach hypothesis⁴, because neither of them fits the position of this paper. However, with due caution, his book can be utilized as a guide for our investigation as well⁵.

1. Omission of Congenial Material?

At the outset of his explanation on Markan priority, Mr. Goodacre says⁶:

The Double Tradition pericopae must have been material that was in some way uncongenial to Mark. Our question will therefore be to ask whether the Double Tradition indeed has the character of material that looks uncongenial to the author of Mark's Gospel.

However, I think that a reflection of this sort does not fit with this initial stage of our investigation. By talking about what is congenial or uncongenial to the author of Mark, we presuppose that we already know what is the intention of the author. However, methodologically speaking, the intention of the author of a given document is an internal matter which can normally be studied and clarified only after we are sure about the outward conditions in which the document in question came into being; by "outward conditions" I mean e.g. the sources used by the author of the document in question, and the way those sources were used, etc. So at this stage of our investigation, we have to say that we do not know why Mark, if he knew the Lord's prayer, did not include it into his Gospel, simply because we do not know his intention yet⁷. In other words, Mark did not include it into his Gospel, either because Mark wrote his Gospel before he came to know the Lord's prayer, or because Mark did not want to include it into his Gospel for some reason unknown to us. Both explanations are possible, and

² As shown above, since an overwhelming majority of the commentaries quoted in the preceding note are in favor of the two-source theory (especially the priority of Mark), our discussion needs, logically speaking, to be very careful when quoting these commentaries.

³ GOODACRE (2001). Accessible on the website (<http://archive.org/details/synopticproblemw00good>).

⁴ This is also the case with another book which discusses the problem of Markan priority: P.M. HEAD, *Christology and the Synoptic Problem. An argument for Markan Priority*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

⁵ In order to facilitate a comparison between his arguments and mine, basically the following discussion is subdivided into the same sections as used by GOODACRE (2001), although I present the sections in a somewhat different manner.

⁶ GOODACRE (2001), p. 58.

⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

at this stage we are not able to decide which explanation is to be preferred.

2. Addition of Elements Not Congenial to Matthew and Luke?

Next Mr. Goodacre focuses on the passages “that Mark shares with neither of the other Synoptics”; these are “Healing of a Deaf Mute” (Mk 7:33-36), “Blind Man of Bethsaida” (Mk 8:22-26), and “Man Running Away Naked” (Mk 14:51-52)⁸. And according to him, it is more likely to think that these passages were omitted by Matthew and Luke, rather than to think that they were added by Mark; evidently, this constitutes one of the points because of which, according to Mr. Goodacre, Markan priority is to be recommended.

What is his argument? He says that, in the first two passages of Mark, Jesus uses saliva for the purpose of healing, a feature which figures neither in Matthew nor in Luke. He also notes that elements of secrecy can be observed in these healing stories peculiar to Mark, and that, according to him, “these elements of secrecy are much more scarce in Matthew and Luke” (p. 60). I readily agree with these keen observations. Furthermore, he notes that the healing story of Mark “seem to place some kind of limit on Jesus’ ability”, and here he quotes another passage of Mark (Mk 6:5), where we read (*italic Goodacre*):

He [i.e. Jesus] *could do no* mighty work there, except that he laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them.

Thus he argues (p. 61):

The Markan Jesus is a more human Jesus, a more earthly and realistic Jesus [i.e., than e.g. the Matthean Jesus].

Such an interpretation seems to me quite possible, if not to say acceptable.

However, when Mr. Goodacre comes to say that these aforementioned observations allow us to conclude that Markan priority is more plausible than the other way round, I have to confess that I cannot follow his argument. To be sure, it is possible to think that Matthew tried to change the Markan Jesus, which is a more human Jesus, into a “more reverential” Jesus, but it is equally possible to think, as Mr. Goodacre himself says, that Mark “was eager to correct the more reverential picture of Matthew”, thus humanizing the image of Jesus (p. 61). In this context, one can add that the aforementioned use of saliva by Jesus, mentioned only in Mark, possibly reflects the effort on the part of Mark to make Jesus look more like a magician (i.e., a human being with special ability), rather than a divine messenger⁹. Both glorifying and

⁸ Ibid., p. 59.

⁹ Concerning the interpretation of Mk 7:33-36 and 8:22-26, both passages in which Jesus’ use of saliva is mentioned, JOHNSON (1960) says that the use of saliva etc. in 7:33-36 “are all marks of ancient miracle tales” (p. 139), and that the miracle on 8:22-26 “is a twin of vii. 32 and contains some of its *secular* peculiarities, such as ... the use of saliva” etc. (p. 145; *italic mine*). MOULE (1965) has no significant comment on the miracle in Mk 7:33-36, and as for 8:22-26 the commentator says: “As with the deaf and partly dumb man of 7:31-7, so here, Jesus uses spittle: so with the blind man in John 9:6”; the commentator sees no special implication in the use of saliva. According to LANE (1974), “Spittle was regarded as an important curative force in Judaism and Hellenism”, and by using it “Jesus entered into the mental world of the man and gain his confidence” (pp. 266-267: commentary to Mk 7:33-35); the same comment is repeated for 8:22-26 (p. 285). ANDERSON (1976) says on Mk 7:32-35: “Spittle was believed to possess healing properties in antiquity ..., and also to have a magical effect in expelling demons” (p. 193), and on 8:22-26: “This account and the account of the cure of the deaf-mute in 7:32-37 are both peculiar to Mark ... Both have affinities with Jewish and

humanizing explanations seem to me quite possible.

Perhaps a more detailed discussion is necessary here. After having said:

Perhaps he [i.e. Mark] was eager to correct the more reverential picture of Matthew and Luke, thus in a sense 'reprimitivizing' the tradition,

Mr. Goodacre continues:

The question, however, is whether this view, on which Mark adds only a small number of archaizing traditions at the expense of much congenial material in Matthew and Luke, is more plausible than the alternative possibility, that these incidents are ones omitted by Matthew and Luke in accordance with their general redactional policies.

And then he jumps into his conclusion:

Most would feel that Markan Priority makes better sense of the data than does Markan Posteriority¹⁰.

Hellenistic healing stories, perhaps especially the latter, and feature such *secular* peculiarities as the use of saliva and the laying on of hands" (pp. 202-203; italic mine). SCHWEIZER (1978), p. 82 has nothing on the use of saliva in Mk 7: 31-37, and on Mk 8:22-26 the commentator only mentions the verbal agreement between 7:32-34 and 8:22-24, without discussing the content (p. 87). PESCH (1980), 1. Teil, p. 395 (on Mk 7:33) presents a lengthy explanation on saliva as a healing means (Heilmittel); from this explanation, the relation between magic and (the use of) saliva seems apparent. MANN (1986), p. 323 (on Mk 7:33ff.) mentions "put his fingers etc." as "these symbolic acts, common enough among Greek and Jewish healers"; however, when the same commentator says that "the element of magic can be discounted; the actions are simply symbolic, accompanied by words of healing" (p. 323), no argument is presented. On Mt 8:22-26 which the commentator regards as doublet of 7:32-37, nothing worthy of mention in our context is noted (pp. 335-337). In COLE (1989), p. 191 (on Mk 7:32-35), spitting receives no specific mention. At p. 200 (on Mk 8:23), the same commentator says: "The saliva applied by Jesus to the man's eyes is unlikely to have been used for its supposed therapeutic effect. It was simply an acted parable, to draw the man's attention to what Jesus was about to do"; however, I do not see on what such a comment is based, which categorically denies the possible magical aspect of Jesus' act. GUELICH (1989), pp. 394-395 has the following (on Mk 7:33): "The text does not say why Jesus spit or what he did with the spittle. We do know, however, that spittle supposedly had a therapeutic function in both the Greco-Roman ... and the Jewish world ... In 8:22-26 and in John 9:1-7 Jesus mixes spittle with some earth and uses it to heal blindness. In Gal 4:14 spitting has an apotropaic function against evil spirits and disease". At p. 432 (on Mk 8:23), Comment on 7:33 is referred to "regarding the therapeutic use of spittle". BROOKS (1991), p. 123 (on Mk 7:33-35) only says that "Touching a person, using saliva, uttering deep groans, and using foreign words were common in ancient healing stories", and this passage is referred to at p. 133 (on Mk 8:23). In PERKINS (1995), p. 612 (on Mk 7:31-37), the use of saliva is not mentioned at all; at p. 619 n. 322 (on Mk 8:22-26), the same commentator notes: "Eye diseases were among the most common medical ailments in the Greco-Roman world, and human saliva was commonly used as a remedy". FRANCE (2002), p. 303 discusses the use of saliva as follows: "there are several ancient accounts of the use of saliva especially in curing blindness. To debate whether this practice should be classed as magical or as purely medical is probably to draw too sharp a distinction, since folk medicine and magic ran close together"; although the commentator does not say so, this last comment allows us to suppose that practicing magic may not have seemed so eccentric to ancient people, and thus perhaps it is not so special that Jesus could be portrayed as a kind of magician. In MOLONEY (2002), pp. 149-150, no specific mention is made of the use of saliva; however, it is noteworthy that, in addition to these "gestures" (i.e., touching and spitting etc.), the commentator says that "Jesus speaks what may have been regarded in the original tradition as something of a magic word: "ephphatha" " (p. 150). In BOCK (2005), p. 463 (on Mk 7:31-37) and p. 468 (on 8:22-26), spitting receives no specific mention. In COLLINS (2007), pp. 370-371, the use of saliva is explained in detail, and concluded as follows: "the saliva of Vespasian is effective presumably because he was the emperor of Rome. Similarly, Jesus' saliva is healing because he is endowed with divine power" (p. 371). At p. 393 (on Mk 8:23), the commentator says: "As noted above, Jesus' spitting on the man's eyes is a technique of healing, since saliva was believed to be a healing substance in antiquity"; but of course this act could be seen as a part of magical technique.

However, again according to Mr. Goodacre, we now know that

those with sharp minds can often think of all sorts of reasons that an evangelist may have omitted this or added that;

in other words, nowadays “the creativity of the evangelists” is appealed to more frequently than in former times¹¹. If I understand correctly the current trend as explained by Mr. Goodacre, what matters is not the greater or smaller number of omitted or added passages, but the overall image which emerges from the passages contained (or rather retained) in each Synoptic Gospel. We have to say that the number of omitted or added passages is in itself not relevant in our investigation.

3. The Place of Oral Tradition?

Next, Mr. Goodacre discusses “the place of oral tradition” and says (p. 61):

On the assumption that Matthew is writing first, ... all he [i.e. Mark] adds is a small handful of stories, none of which is particularly striking. And he adds virtually no fresh sayings material at all.

In this way he refers again to the small number of passages added by Mark on the assumption of Matthean priority, and he call this situation “troubling” (p. 62), thus suggesting that the assumption of Matthean priority is implausible. However, I am far from certain whether one can say that, among “a small handful of stories” added by Mark (i.e., on the assumption of Matthean priority), “none is particularly striking”.

To be more precise, in this context Mr. Goodacre mentions oral tradition which, according to him, was alive throughout the first century and down to the time of Papias (early second century), and he suggests that, on the assumption of Matthean priority, Mark could have drawn more on this oral tradition.

Here he adds another remark concerning the oral nature of Mark (p. 63; italic original):

Of all the (canonical) Gospels, Mark’s is the most blatantly colloquial, the most ‘oral’ in nature. His Gospel often sounds like it is directly dependent on oral traditions, with its lively pace (*and immediately ...*), its present tenses (*and Jesus says ...*), its love of visual detail (‘the green grass’, Mk 6.39; ‘he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion’, 4.38) and its abrupt ending (16.8).

I find this argument hardly convincing, because the expression “and immediately” as well as the present tense “and Jesus says” can be also found in Matthew; as for the “love of visual detail” as well as “its abrupt ending”, they are susceptible to other explanations and will be discussed later. In short, I do not think that what is said here proves the so-called oral nature of Mark. Rather, if we talk about the oral nature, we would have to say that, because of their relatively simple syntactical features, all the Synoptic Gospels are oral in nature, compared e.g. with classical Greek texts which are heavily charged with stylistic sophistications.

¹⁰ These three quotations are from GOODACRE (2001), p. 61. The expression “Markan Posteriority” is a paraphrase for the so-called “Griesbach hypothesis”.

¹¹ Both quotations are from *ibid.*, p. 57.

4. Relationship between Omissions and Additions

In this section, Mr. Goodacre mentions two features of Mark (p. 63):

[If one accepts the Griesbach hypothesis, it would follow that] first, he [i.e. Mark] has a tendency, on occasions, to add clarificatory material to his sources in Matthew and Luke.

As examples for this first feature, he quotes Mk 2:15 (par: Mt 9:10, Lk 5:29), Mk 11:13 (par: Mt 21:19) and Mk 16:4 (par: Mt 28:4), the latter two passages involving the use of the explanatory conjunction γάρ.

And according to him, the second feature is the tendency that Mark makes “his sources more enigmatic, more darkly ironic, especially in the Passion Narrative” (p. 64). As examples for this second feature, he quotes Mk 14:65 (par: Mt 26:67-68, Lk 22:64). The following is his commentary on the quoted passages (p. 64):

Mark’s account here has a wonderful, dark dramatic irony, an irony that we can only perceive when we view this passage in context. People are spitting on Jesus, striking him and saying ‘Prophesy!’, little realizing that they are in the act of fulfilling Jesus’ own prophecy of 10.34 ... In Matthew and Luke there is none of this irony, and the mocking charge to ‘Prophesy!’ is explicated by means of a clarificatory question, ‘Who is it who smote you?’ (Mt. 26.68; Lk. 22.64), the ‘prophesying’ relating now purely to the issue of second sight.

Again I find this observation hardly persuasive. As I understand, the “irony” stressed here seems to lie in the fact that, according to Mr. Goodacre, Mark depicts people, by simply describing what they did to Jesus, as fulfilling without noticing the prophesy told by Jesus himself. However, one can doubt how much stress is really put in Mark on the theme of fulfillment of prophecies; it is evidently Matthew that is far more explicit on this point than Mark, and thus seems to put much more stress on that theme¹². I myself cannot help thinking that the said “irony” is, to a large extent, a product of Mr. Goodacre’s over-interpretation.

As for the addition of clarificatory material mentioned above, one can say that this has something in common with what he calls “love of visual detail”, because after all Mark’s description is more detailed than Matthew (and Luke). We will come back to this point later.

5. Harder Readings?

The question posed under this section is the following (pp. 65-66):

When Mark parallels material in Matthew and/or Luke, for example, who among the three has what one might call the ‘harder’ reading?

As the first parallel passage, Mark 1:32-34 (par: Matthew 8:16-17, Luke 4:40-41) is presented. Mr. Goodacre continues (pp. 66-67):

There are several features of interest in this pericope ..., one of which is the distinction

¹² In Matthew, the word “fulfill” (πληρῶω) is explicitly used in the following verses (13 times): Mt 1:22, 2:15, 17, 23, 4:14, 8:17, 12:17, 13:14 (ἀναπληρῶω), 35, 21:4, 26:54, 56, 27:9. In Mark, on the other hand, the same word appears only in 14:49 and 15:28 (if the latter verse should be included, as I do think, into the text of Mark).

between the number of people healed in the different accounts. In both Matthew ('all') and Luke ('each one'), everyone is healed, whereas in Mark it is 'many' who are healed. What one has to ask under such circumstances is, once more, what is more likely? Has Mark, writing third, changed the clear indication that Jesus healed everybody who came to him to the more ambiguous line that Jesus healed 'many'? Or are we to think that Matthew and Luke have both clarified their source by making clear all were healed and that there was no one who missed out? Most will think that Markan Priority provides the more likely scenario here.

However, here again an alternative interpretation can be presented, according to which Mark modified Matthew's expression "all" into "many", because at times Mark seems "to place some kind of limit on Jesus' ability" (cf. Goodacre (2001), p. 60, quoted above). For the Markan Jesus, which is "a more human Jesus", the image that some diseases were incurable even to Jesus fits better. Thus again, both explanations, i.e. an explanation according to Markan priority as well as that according to Markan non-priority, are possible.

Let us see another example of "harder readings", in which Matthew 13:58 ("And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief") and Mark 6:5 ("And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them") are compared. This passage of Mark, which tells Jesus' inability to heal the people because of their unbelief, has already been quoted above. I do not understand why here Mr. Goodacre can put this passage forward so forcibly as an argument for Markan priority, whereas we have seen above that, at least theoretically, the alternative interpretation (i.e., *not* in favor of Markan priority) can be admitted, according to which Mark modifies the image of Jesus into "a more human Jesus", whose ability as a human being is limited. Since we do not know what exactly is the intention of the author of Mark, we have to say that both interpretations are possible.

6. The Dates of the Gospels?

Next comes the assuredly difficult problem of dating the Synoptic Gospels. Mr. Goodacre says (p. 68):

Although the evidence is inconclusive, the few hints that we have are that Mark's Gospel is earlier than Matthew's and Luke's. The most decisive pointer is the question of whether or not the Gospels refer, however obliquely, to the key events of 70 CE, when Jerusalem was overrun by the Roman army after the Jewish War beginning in 66 CE. Matthew and Luke both seem to provide hints that they know of the events of 70.

Thus he presents his first example, Mt 23:37-39 (par: Lk 13:34-35), which begins by the famous phrase "Jerusalem, Jerusalem"; and he says (p. 68):

These are words that would have much more poignancy in a post-70 situation.

However, I am afraid that this example is, as Mr. Goodacre himself admits above, inconclusive. To see this point more clearly, one can refer to another passage of Luke, Lk 19:41-44, quoted here in English translation:

And when he [Jesus] drew near and saw the city [i.e. Jerusalem] he wept over it, saying, "Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace! But now they are hid

from your eyes. For the days shall come upon you, when your enemies will cast up a bank about you and surround you, and hem you in on every side, and dash you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave one stone upon another in you; because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

I think it is probable that this passage of Luke, which clearly alludes, so to speak, to the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, was put into the mouth of Jesus by Luke *ex eventu*¹³. Compared with this passage, the passage quoted above (Mt 23:37-39 & Lk 13:34-35) is much more ambiguous, and thus can be interpreted in more than one way¹⁴. Thus while Luke can be dated

¹³ Concerning how to interpret this passage (Lk 19:41-44) with regard to the problem of dating of Luke, TINSLEY (1965), p. 176 contains nothing noteworthy. LEANEY (1966), p. 246 argues: “No doubt by itself it fails to justify the conclusion that the gospel was written after A.D. 70”. ELLIS (1974), p. 226 says: “It is sometimes argued that the prophecy could not have originated in the pre-resurrection mission”; however, the commentator is critical against this view, who says: “The present passage apparently does not even accommodate the wording to the destruction of AD 70. The phraseology is largely that of the Septuagint ... In sum, there are no good grounds to disallow the oracle to the pre-resurrection mission”. ERNST (1977), p. 528, who says: “die Erinnerung an die Zerstörung Jerusalems ist für den Verfasser so lebendig, daß sie fast zwangsläufig auf den Prophetenspruch einwirken mußte”, apparently presupposes the events of 70 behind this passage. For MARSHALL (1978), p. 717, “it is ... unnecessary to hold ... that it was composed after AD 70 ... although the passage may have been edited in the light of AD 70 ..., there is no reason to doubt that the Christian interpretation of the fall of Jerusalem as the outcome of failure to accept the message of Jesus goes back to Jesus himself (Ellis, 226)”. FITZMYER (1985), vol. 2, pp. 1254-1255 discuss lengthily the problem of whether this passage is a *vaticinium ex eventu* or not; according to the commentator, “the best solution ... is the recognition that the Lucan oracle [i.e., this passage] may well go back to Jesus in some form, but that the reformulation of it in the pre-Lucan tradition was affected both by the destruction of the city itself in A.D. 70 and by allusions to that under Nebuchadnezzar in the OT” (p. 1255). KREMER (1988), p. 189, who presupposes the events of 70 behind this passage, says: “Lk hat die Worte Jesu vermutlich in S vorgefunden und hier ... eingefügt, wohl nicht zuletzt unter dem Eindruck der Zerstörung Jerusalems. Die biblische Sprache der Voraussage deutet an, daß diese zwar erst nachträglich (als *vaticinium ex eventu*) aufgrund der eingetretenen Ereignisse formuliert wurde, aber in ihrem Kern keineswegs Jesus gänzlich abgesprochen werden kann”. MORRIS (1988), p. 306 pleads for the authenticity of this passage. NOLLAND (1993), vol. 3, p. 933 also pleads for the authenticity by the following words: “Since in precise detail what actually happened when Jerusalem met its doom in A.D. 70 does not agree with this description, we can be reasonably confident that this is no prophecy after the event”. The following commentary of EVANS (1990), pp. 684-685 (on Lk 19:43-44) seems to me the most reasonable: “The language here is largely that of prophecy ... But it also contains more factual and semi-technical language less suited for a prophetic lament - *cast up a bank ... , surround ... , hem in ...* 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 ... It could be that an original poetic lament of Jesus was edited in the light of events, or a Christian prophetic oracle after the event was put in his mouth”. For STEIN (1992), p. 483, who thinks that in this passage “there is no reason to deny that Jesus spoke of Jerusalem’s *future* destruction” (italic mine), the passage is considered authentic. Authenticity is also vindicated by BOCK (1994), p. 314, and also by CULPEPPER (1995), p. 372, who says that this passage as well as another saying Jesus said after entering Jerusalem “point *ahead* to the destruction of the city during the war of 66-70 CE” (italic mine). GREEN (1997), p. 689 seems also to vindicate the authenticity of this passage by the following words: “Clearly, Jesus’ oracle [i.e., this passage] is delivered against Jerusalem. Just as clearly, his *prophetic* utterance is not a happy one, nor vindictive, but full of sorrow as he mourns the fate of the city” (italic mine). Authenticity is also presupposed in TRITES (2006), pp. 260-261. All in all, it is remarkable that, as far as the interpretation of this passage is concerned, many commentators are rather conservative; I would have to say, then, that if those conservative commentators interpret this passage in this way, they would have to be consistent in their interpretation. And another point I would like to make here is that if such a wording, which in my view clearly alludes to the actual event (of the siege of Jerusalem), does not constitute a proof against authenticity, a saying of less clear (or more ambiguous) wording attributed to Jesus should have greater chance for authenticity. Is this so in the case of our commentators? We shall see.

¹⁴ Since the problem is concerned mainly with Matthew, only the interpretation of Mt 23:37-39 with regard to the

after the events of 70, dating Matthew seems more difficult.

The second example is Mt 22:4-8 (par: Lk 14:15-24 and Thomas 64), quoted here in English translation (italic is Mr. Goodacre's):

Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited. 'Behold. I have made ready my dinner. my oxen and my fat calves are killed, and everything is ready; come to the marriage feast'. But they made light of it and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants. treated them shamefully, and killed them. *The king was angry. and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.* Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready. but those invited were not worthy.'

I know that the passage italicized here (Mt 22:7) is quite often quoted by New Testament scholars as alluding to the fall of Jerusalem in 70¹⁵. However, as an outsider to New Testament

problem of dating of Matthew will be surveyed here. FILSON (1960), p. 249 has nothing worthy of mention in our context. The same observation applies to ARGYLE (1963), p. 178, and to ALBRIGHT & MANN (1971), p. 284. HILL (1972), p. 315 mentions an interpretation, according to which Jesus " 'speaks in the great style of a prophetic oracle', and therefore the saying [i.e., this passage] could be a post-Resurrection oracle declared through a Christian prophet". SCHWEIZER (1976), p. 290 and FRANCE (1985), pp. 331-333 contain nothing worthy of mention in our context. SCHNACKENBURG (1987), vol. 2, p. 229 says: "Mt wird an die Zerstörung des Tempels und Jerusalems denken", and thus deduce also from this passage a post-70 date of Matthew. GNILKA (1988), 2. Teil, p. 305 says: "Mt führt die Redekomposition an deren Ende auf zwei bestimmte Ziele hin: die Katastrophe des Jahres 70, ... und die Parusie des Menschensohnes ... ", and thus dates this passage, as it is preserved in Matthew, after the events of 70. DAVIES & ALLISON (1997), vol. 3, p. 314 has the following: "Regarding the origin of vv. 37-9 par., ... A dominical origin has had its defenders, and it coheres with Jesus' prophetic consciousness and his prediction of the temple's destruction. Many, however, now assign the saying to a Jewish source or to the Christian community ... We remain undecided". SMITH (1989), p. 279 has nothing worthy of mention in our context. HARRINGTON (1991), p. 329 says: "In both cases [i.e., in Mt 23:34-36 and Mt 23:37-39] Matthew has taken the material from Q. ... What these verses meant in Q is hard to know if they were read before A.D. 65 or so", and thus tries to distinguish the original verses in Q (pre-70) and those as preserved in Matthew (post-70). In BLOMBERG (1992), pp. 350-351, this passage seems to be interpreted as Jesus' prophecy. HAGNER (1995), vol. 2, p. 679 says: "This pericope is apparently drawn from Q, being found in nearly verbatim agreement in Luke 13:34-35"; nothing relevant to our problem is said. BORING (1995), p. 437 says: "Matthew has relocated these words (cf. Luke 13:34-35 ...) to make them Jesus' last words in Jerusalem and its Temple before he leaves it for the final time (24:1)"; nothing relevant to our problem is said. In KEENER (1997), p. 341, as well as in TURNER (2005), pp. 303-304, this passage seems to be interpreted as Jesus' prophecy. LUTZ (2005), vol. 3, pp. 159-161 presents a detailed discussion on the origin of this passage, and according to the third hypothesis adhered to by the commentator, "this pronouncement of judgement [i.e., this passage] originated in the church", and "the speaker could be an itinerant prophet of the Q community who speaks in the name of the exalted Lord" (p. 160). In my view, it is impossible to fully support such a detailed imagination of the commentator by any hard evidence.

¹⁵ Concerning the interpretation of Mt 22:4-8 with regard to the problem of dating of Matthew, FILSON (1960), pp. 232-233 has nothing worthy of mention in our context. ARGYLE (1963), p. 166 says about this passage: "These verses [i.e., Mt 22:6-7] are probably a later addition. They allude to the persecution of Christian witnesses after the death and resurrection of Jesus, and the destruction of Jerusalem by Roman armies in A.D. 70"; however, no concrete argument as to why such a sentence in a parable (i.e., Mt 22:7) should be thus interpreted is presented. ALBRIGHT & MANN (1971), p. 269 argues: "whatever assimilation may have taken place in vss. 5-7, there seems small justification for saying that it took place when the Church wished to accommodate the parable to the events of the first Jewish War and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. It is well to remember that the Zealots were founded shortly after A.D. 8. There is no reason to deny to Jesus in the explosive situation of the second quarter of the first century the insights of an Isaiah or a Jeremiah in like circumstances". HILL (1972), p. 302 says: "These two verses [i.e., Mt 22:6-7] ... probably represent a later addition to the original story at a time when Christian teachers and preachers were persecuted, and contain an allusion to the Jewish revolt and the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70"; however, no concrete argument as to why

such a sentence in a parable (i.e., Mt 22:7) should be thus interpreted is presented. SCHWEIZER (1976), p. 273 suggests the post-70 date of Mt 22:7 by saying this: “V. 6 f. sind also deutlich ein Einschub in die Erzählung, die früher einmal von V. 5 direkt zum Zorn des Königs (V. 7 Anfang) und zu V. 8 übergang. Hier haben die Ereignisse des Jahres 70, wo die römischen Heere Jerusalem erobert und niedergebrannt haben, die Sprache des Gleichnisses gefärbt”; however, no concrete argument as to why such a sentence in a parable (i.e., Mt 22:7) should be thus interpreted is presented. FRANCE (1985) mentions this passage Mt 22:4-8 twice, first at p. 311: “Matthew has made Jesus’ simple moral tale into an allegory of the history of salvation ..., with in v. 7 an explicit *ex eventu* reference to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 to make the application unmistakable. Underlying this view is the assumption that all three versions stem from a single original form ... It is a questionable assumption”. Second, at p. 312 (italic original): “*Their city* [verse 7], which reads very oddly in the context of the story (did all the invitees live in one city, which was not that of the king?), is clearly intended in that case to refer to Jerusalem in AD 70. This has often been taken as proof of an origin late in the first century for at least this feature of the parable, but Robinson (pp. 20-21) argues that it is stock language which not only does not require a knowledge *ex eventu*, but in fact does not correspond precisely to what happened in AD 70. since the *city* was not burnt, only the temple”. In both discussions, the position of the commentator as to the date which can be inferred from this passage remains unclear. SCHNACKENBURG (1987), vol. 2, p. 210 says: “Außerdem sind die Ablehnenden jetzt alle in einer einzigen Stadt, »ihrer Stadt«. Unverkennbar denkt Mt an Jerusalem und seine Zerstörung im Jahre 70”. GNILKA (1988), vol. 2, p. 239 says: “Es ist die Frage, ob V 7 nur einen Gerichtstosop bietet oder ob sich hier bereits die Erfahrung der Zerstörung Jerusalems im Jahr 70 durch Titus ausspricht. Die Beantwortung bietet auch eine Stütze für die Bestimmung der Abfassungszeit des Evangeliums. Gegen einen Bezug auf das Jahr 70 ist eingewendet worden, daß Jesus gemäß 28, 19f seine Jünger unmittelbar nach seiner Auferstehung zur Heidenmission aussendet, während dies nach der entsprechenden Deutung unseres V 7 erst nach der Zerstörung Jerusalems denkbar sei. Wer so argumentiert, überstrapaziert die bildhafte Aussage und verkennet die historischen und theologischen Folgen, die sich für die frühe Christenheit aus der Zerstörung Jerusalems ergaben. In der Argumentation des Mt ist diese nicht der Auslöser, aber die Bekräftigung der Hinwendung des Evangeliums an die Heidenvölker”. However, this authoritative account of a German scholar hardly answers a natural question of an outsider why such a sentence in a parable (i.e., Mt 22:7) should be interpreted in conjunction with the fall of Jerusalem in 70. I think the *Beweislast* is still on the side of those scholars who link this passage Mt 22:4-8 with the events of 70, and it still remains to be accomplished. DAVIES & ALLISON (1988), vol. 1, pp. 131-132 discusses this passage Mt 22: 4-8, or more exactly 22:7, and precisely with regard to the problem of dating of Matthew (i.e., not in the framework of a commentary to the verse). The following is the discussion: “In the middle of the parable of the great supper, Mt 22.1-10 (cf. Lk 14.15-24; Gos. Thom. 64), the redactor has inserted this [i.e., Mt 22:7] ... Most critical commentators have assumed without further ado that this line is *ex eventu*, a clear reference to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. But objections have been raised. ... In our judgement, all of these questions can be readily answered; that is, none of the objections to the standard interpretation is decisive. ... Aside from this, it suffices to remark that more than once Matthew’s redactional additions have not made for a perfectly coherent narrative: so why be troubled if such is the case in 22.1-10? ... In conclusion, when all has been said, Mt 22.7, while it does not demand a date after A.D. 70, does strongly imply one”. However, there remains an obvious question, which is repeated in this note: why should such a sentence in a parable (i.e., Mt 22:7) be interpreted in conjunction with the fall of Jerusalem in 70? In the parable (including Mt 22:7) there is nothing which suggests any direct link with the event of Jerusalem in 70; such a linkage can be made only after accumulating speculations. And when the imprecision of Matthew is to be admitted, as is the case with our commentators, the expression in singular “*their city*” (Mt 22:7) cannot have such a demonstrative force as supposed by “most critical commentators”. I have to confess that here I feel really confronted with a massive collective illusion of the majority of New Testament scholars. If they dissent my opinion, they might as well ask their intellectual neighbors and outsiders to New Testament studies how the latter read the passage in question without any preconception. I imagine that very few will point out the connection with the fall of Jerusalem, and when New Testament scholars explain their view, those outsiders will probably ask why such a connection is necessary. Next, SMITH (1989), p. 257 says: “Matthew’s version of the parable with its excess of brutality on the part of invited guests and offended king sounds like a grim meditation on the history of Israel in the light cast by the fires of the Roman sack of Jerusalem in A.D. 70”, but without presenting any argument. Concerning Mt 22:7, HARRINGTON (1991), p. 308 says: “This sentence [i.e., Mt 22:7] is usually interpreted as a description of the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and as an indication that Matthew’s Gospel was composed in the late first century. ... If Matt 22:7 does describe the events of A.D. 70, then one can see Matthew’s interpretation of the destruction of Jerusalem: God brought it about because some in Israel rejected the invitation to God’s kingdom (the gospel) and mistreated his messengers (especially Jesus)”; this view, which I find hardly persuasive, is simply not denied by the commentator. BLOMBERG (1992), pp.

studies, I cannot help thinking why this passage must be necessarily interpreted in that way; in my view, it is quite possible not to link this passage with the events of 70 at all.

The third example is Mt 24:15; 21-22 (par: Mk 13:14, 19-20; Lk 21:20-21, 23-24), which mentions “the desolating sacrilege” (Mt & Mk) or “desolation”. According to Mr. Goodacre (p. 69), in this passage

it appears likely that Matthew and Luke have redacted Mark in the light of the events of 70,

327-328 has the following: “Verse 7 is often viewed as an after-the-fact prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. But the imagery actually parallels stereotypic Old Testament and intertestamental descriptions of destruction in war ... and is not as detailed or accurate (the temple, not the entire city, was burned) as one would expect if these words had been penned after the actual fall of Jerusalem. Still, the Roman invasion of Jerusalem may be seen as a partial fulfillment of the principles enunciated here”; it should be said that the position of the commentator is not clear-cut. A remarkably sound judgement is shown in HAGNER, precisely with regard to the problem of dating of Matthew; the commentator mentions Mt 22:7 twice, first in HAGNER (1993), vol. 1, pp. lxxiii-lxxv: “The reference in 22:7 to the parable of the king who, being angry because those invited to the marriage feast did not come, “sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city” is more problematic. The reference to “troops” who “burned the city,” unnecessary and alien to the context, seems to point to the destruction of Jerusalem. Even if it does, however, the possibility remains that Jesus prophesied the event through the parable or that the words were added to the Gospel later, after the event had occurred. Thus 22:7 cannot itself be proof that Matthew as a whole is to be dated after 70. It is furthermore true that the language of the parable under consideration is hyperbolic and not necessarily to be taken literally. ... In short, far too much weight has been put on this text in the confident post-70 dating of Matthew. ... There is thus good reason to take seriously the possibility of an early (i.e., pre-70) dating of the Gospel ... The inclination toward an early date taken here, however, is just that and no more. It needs to be re-emphasized that the dogmatism of critical orthodoxy concerning a post-70 date is unwarranted. But this is no reason to give rein to a similar dogmatism concerning a pre-70 date”. Second, in HAGNER (1995), vol. 2, pp. 628-629: “A cluster of related questions emerges in the interpretation of the reference in 22:7 to the angry king who “sent his soldiers, destroyed those murderers, and burned the city.” Two main issues are raised by these words: (1) Do they refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, and (2) if so, what does this entail for the date of the Gospel? With regard to the first of these, it must be admitted from the start that the details, especially of the sending of the soldiers and the burning of the city (not hitherto mentioned in the parable), seem somewhat strange in the context of the parable. On the other hand, it may be that these details are innocent elements of the parable—simply a part of the story—and no more; i.e., they may allude to nothing beyond themselves. ... Even if one nevertheless feels compelled to understand the words as an allusion to the destruction of Jerusalem, this hardly demonstrates a post-70 date for the Gospel. Jesus is shortly to prophesy the fall of the city (24:2-26), and thus the present passage could itself be an anticipation of the future rather than *post eventum*”. BORING (1995), p. 418 has the following: “Most scholars see this [i.e., Mt 22:7] as Matthew’s retrospective view of the destruction of Jerusalem, understood as a judgment on rebellious Israel, who had rejected the Messiah, although some explain it in terms of Matthew’s reflection on Isa 5:24-25. The explanations are not mutually exclusive; if one sees influence of the Isaiah text, this is not evidence against Matthew’s post-70 date and perspective”. KEENER (1997), p. 323 says: “the burning of the city in Matthew probably refers to the destruction of Jerusalem (Jeremias 1972:33; Hare 1979:39)”. TURNER (2005), p. 280 says concerning Mt 22:7: “The king’s angry treatment of his treacherous subjects portrays the judgment of the Jerusalem establishment (cf. 21:41-45). The burning of the Temple in AD 70 is at least a partial fulfillment of this veiled prophecy (Blomberg 1992:328)”. LUTZ (2005), vol. 3, p. 54 says: “v. 7 is strange even for readers who are familiar with Jewish parables. ... In my judgment the strange v. 7 makes sense only if it was prompted by the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. We cannot explain it simply as a traditional topos”. Here again, I argue that the *Beweislast* as to the question why such a sentence in a parable (i.e., Mt 22:7) should be interpreted in conjunction with the fall of Jerusalem in 70 is still on the side of those scholars who link this passage Mt 22:4-8 with the events of 70, and it still remains to be accomplished; I argue again that such a linkage is not obvious at all. It should be noted that the same commentator says elsewhere (LUTZ (2007), vol. 1, p. 58): “The terminus a quo [i.e., of the Gospel of Matthew] is the formation of the Gospel of Mark and the destruction of Jerusalem (22:7)”, without any further explanation at all.

and he adduces some elements from Luke, such as “Jerusalem surrounded by armies” and “Jerusalem trodden down by the Gentiles”. However, here he adduces nothing from Matthew. As discussed above, Luke is probably to be dated after the events of 70, but the dating of Matthew remains unclear. And in this third example I see virtually no significant textual difference between Matthew and Mark¹⁶. Thus I have to say that his argument is unsupported

¹⁶ Concerning the interpretation of Mt 24:15; 21-22 with regard to the problem of dating of Matthew, FILSON (1960), p. 255 has nothing worthy of mention in our context. ARGYLE (1963), p. 182, commenting on the expression “the abomination of desolation”, says: “The prophecy was reinterpreted and applied to some act of desecration by the Romans, such as the plan of the Emperor Gaius Caligula (A.D. 35-41) to set up his image in the temple, or the erection of the statue of Titus on the site of the ruined temple in A.D. 70. Luke (21: 20) interprets the expression to mean ‘when you see Jerusalem encircled by armies, then you may be sure that her destruction is near’”. Curiously enough, ALBRIGHT & MANN (1971), p. 295 has nothing worthy of mention in our context. HILL (1972), p. 321 says: “The phrase **desolating sacrilege** comes from Daniel ... ; Mk 13.14 may have had in mind Caligula’s threat of similar desecration (A.D. 40), while Lk. 21.20 refers it to the siege of Jerusalem. Matthew refers explicitly to the Temple (**the holy place**), ‘but he does not have any more explicit references than Mark to the Jewish War or the withdrawing of the Christians from Jerusalem in A.D. 68’ (Stendahl, in Peake, 692e)”. SCHWEIZER (1976), p. 295 has nothing worthy of mention in our context. FRANCE (1985), pp. 340-341 says: “The *desolating sacrilege* is a literal Greek rendering of the phrase rendered ‘the abomination that makes desolate’ in Daniel 11:31; 12:11, which itself echoes the similar language of Daniel 9:27. ... Jesus thus looks for a repetition of this act of sacrilege, committed in the holy place (which would normally mean the temple itself ...) ... Mark 13:14, in defiance of the rules of grammar, makes *standing* a masculine participle, suggesting a personal ‘abomination’; Matthew has substituted the more correct neuter ... Suggestions for the identification of such an ‘abomination’ in the period before the destruction of the temple include the emperor Gaius’ attempt to set up a huge statue of himself in the temple (AD 40-41, and therefore far too early to be an immediate precursor of the crisis ... — in any case, the plan was never carried out); the desecration of the temple by the Zealots in the winter of AD 67/8, shortly before the Roman siege began ...; or the appearance of the Roman standards ... in the temple at its actual destruction in AD 70. ... Whatever the precise fulfilment of Jesus’ warning, it seems clear from what follows that it is in the events of the Jewish War of AD 66-70 that he sees the reappearance of Daniel’s *desolating sacrilege*”. SCHNACKENBURG (1987), vol. 2, p. 235 says: “Wer oder was mit dem Greuel der Verwüstung [i.e., the expression of Mt 24:15] gemeint ist, ist bis heute umstritten: der Antichrist - eine lange einflußreiche Deutung - ? ein Geschehnis im Jüdischen Krieg? oder die Entweihung des Tempels bei der Erstürmung Jerusalems?” In GNILKA (1988), vol. 2, pp. 320-323 Mt 24:15 is discussed, but there is no discussion as to the dating of Matthew in connection with this verse. DAVIES & ALLISON (1997), vol. 3, discusses Mt 24:15 in a scattered manner. To quote only the passages related to the dating of Matthew, the commentators say: “if Matthew wrote after AD 70, the prophecy of the temple’s destruction would inevitably have been seen as fulfilled. But v. 15 implies that the temple will yet play a rôle in history. Did Matthew, like other ancient Jew and (probably) the author of Barn. 16.3-4, expect the temple to be rebuilt (and then destroyed again) before the end?” (p. 330), “Plummer, p. xxxii, suggesting a date for Matthew between AD 70 and 75. Favouring this is the local nature of vv. 15ff. (‘those in Judaea’) and the ‘immediately’ of v. 29. ... But most recent commentators have rightly preferred a later date for our Gospel” (p. 330), “Whether the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 is directly referred to in vv 15ff. or is instead indirectly included in the tribulations of vv. 15ff. we are uncertain” (p. 331), and “Many have supposed that, in the pre-Markan tradition, the phrase [i.e., “the abomination of desolation”] was applied to the attempted desecration of Caligula in AD 40. Whether that is so or not, Luke seems to refer it to the destruction of the temple in AD 70 (21.20), and many commentators think this also the reference in Matthew. That is possible” (pp. 345-346). However, this last comment is completely unconvincing, because between Luke and Matthew the wording is greatly different; in this passage, one cannot argue Matthew and Luke together. And curiously enough, the commentators do not discuss the expression “let the reader understand” in conjunction with the problem of dating Matthew; they makes only this curious remark, which is not convincing: “ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω. So Mark. ‘The reader’ can mean either the reader of Matthew ... or the reader of Daniel ... The latter is more likely” (p. 346). It seems that SMITH (1989), p. 285 no specific discussion on Mt 24:15 in conjunction with the problem of dating Matthew. HARRINGTON (1991), p. 337 says: “The parenthesis [i.e., (let the reader understand)] is often interpreted as a reference to the threat by the emperor Caligula in A.D. 40 to set up a statue of himself in the Jerusalem Temple. In other words, the reader is directed to find an analogy between what transpired under Antiochus

as far as the dating of Matthew is concerned¹⁷.

The fourth example is Mt 27:32 (par: Mk 15:21, Lk 23:26), where only Mark has the addition “the father of Alexander and Rufus”. According to Mr. Goodacre (p. 70),

the only obvious reason for mentioning a character’s children is that the children are expected to be known by the reader.

However, I find this interpretation hardly persuasive. After all, here Mark is, time and again, more detailed than Matthew and Luke. Thus we can ask: is a more detailed description of Mark simplified in Matthew and Luke, or rather is Mark adding a detail to a simple description of Matthew (perhaps we can leave Luke aside here, because the above discussion seems to suggest that Luke probably postdates Mark)? I have to repeat again that both explanations are possible.

7. Editorial Fatigue?

According to Mr. Goodacre, all the arguments adduced hitherto can be labelled as circumstantial evidence. He continues (p. 71):

IV Epiphanes in the second century B.C. and under Caligula in A.D. 40. Luke 21:20 interprets the “abomination” as the Roman attack on Jerusalem in A.D. 70”. BLOMBERG (1992), pp. 357-359 (commentary to Mt 24:15-20) as well as pp. 41-42 (discussion on the date of Matthew) mention Mt 24:15, to be sure, but no clear-cut discussion as to the dating of Matthew in conjunction with this verse is made in these pages. HAGNER (1995), vol. 2, p. 701 notes on Mt 24:15: “Matthew writes about this before A.D. 70 in my opinion. The lack of exact, detailed correspondence with the actual events makes difficult the conclusion that Matthew’s prophecy is a *vaticinium ex eventu* ... If Matthew means by the “abomination that desolates” something to be accomplished by the Romans in A.D. 70, that does not prevent the elastic symbol from also being applied to something lying in the future. But that possibility is not in the evangelist’s mind”. BORING (1995), pp. 442-443 says: “Matthew found it [i.e., the phrase “desolating sacrilege”] in his Markan source, where it is apparently applied to the desecration of the Temple and destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. It is not clear whether Matthew looks back on this prediction as already fulfilled in the events of 70, thus historicizing this part of the discourse, or whether (more likely) he regards this as an ominous event still to come”; however, if the Gospel of Matthew was composed in the period 80-100, as argued by the same commentator (p. 106), it is utterly impossible to think that Matthew regards this verse as pointing to “an ominous event *still to come*”. KEENER (1997), p. 349 discusses Mt 24:15 in conjunction with the date implied by the verse, but no clear-cut conclusion is drawn from the discussion. TURNER (2005), p. 313 says: “Jesus’ reference to the sacrilegious desecration of the Temple in 24:15 calls up a complex typology of prophecy and fulfillment ... Several historical events comprise a sort of continuum of fulfillment, including (1) Nebuchadnezzar’s conquest in 605 BC ... (3) the Roman conquest of the Hasmonean Kingdom in 63 BC, (4) the planned but unaccomplished setting up of a bust of Caligula in the Temple (AD 40-41), ... (6) the Roman destruction of AD 70 itself, (7) the further desolation of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 135 ... and (8) the ultimate sacrilege of the Antichrist”; in my view, lack of specificity of this interpretation seems to derive from the fact that the expression “let the reader understand” is not discussed at all in this connection. The structure of LUTZ (2005), vol. 3 is very much complicated for our task, which consists in the investigation of the interpretation of Mt 24:15 in conjunction with the dating of Matthew, but it is natural that the commentator, who presupposes a post-70 date for Matthew, should “assume that with vv. 15-20 the reader of the Gospel of Matthew thought of the earlier events of the Jewish War” (p. 195), and he adds: “I think that most of Matthew’s readers connected the text with the Jewish War and the flight of the churches from Judea at the beginning of the Jewish War. The traditional sense of the text is an initial argument in support of this conclusion” etc. (p. 196).

¹⁷ In my own view, while Lk 21:20 alludes to the siege of Jerusalem in 70, Mt 24:15 as well as Mk 13:14 alludes, by the expression “let the reader understand”, to Gaius’ unsuccessful attempt to set up a statue of himself in the temple of Jerusalem, and the implication of the expression is: “let the reader think how to act if such a thing ever happens once again”. Thus in my view, this verse (Mt 24:15 and Mk 13:14) sets as *terminus post quem* Gaius’ that attempt, and as *terminus ante quem* the end of the Jewish War in 70.

We need something decisive. We need fingerprints on the gun. Happily, there is one fresh category left to consider, that of editorial fatigue in Matthew and Luke. Previous scholars had seen hints of this but until recently its potential for solving the Synoptic Problem had not been realized.

So let us see this section “Securing a Conviction: Editorial Fatigue” which, according to him, is decisive for the problem of priority of the Synoptic Gospels. Before continuing the discussion, I find that in this part of his book, in just a few pages Mr. Goodacre quotes much more numerous examples than he did in earlier discussions. If one compares his book to a piece of music, for instance a fugue, this part of the book can be considered a kind of *stretta*; so this part should be examined most carefully, because here the author tries to overwhelm the reader by his numerous examples. Here we can concentrate on the examples concerning Matthew’s said “editorial fatigue”.

The first example, which is presented rather lengthily, is Mt 8:1-4 (par: Mk 1:40-45, Lk 5: 12-16). Here Matthew says at the beginning of the story “Many crowds followed” Jesus, and then he makes Jesus say to a leper, now cleansed (Mt 8:4): “See that you say nothing to any one; but go, show yourself to the priest” etc. (the underlined expression is also found in Mk in an almost identical wording). Thus we see here an inconsistency in Matthew, and according to Mr. Goodacre this is an example of Matthew’s editorial fatigue. Surely we have to accept the fact that Matthew wrote such an inconsistent description of the story; although I assume that Matthew is an intelligent author, it seems that, from time to time, he writes such stupid or incredible things. However, the explanation of the fact can be different from that proposed by Mr. Goodacre: as far as this example is concerned, Mark, consulting Matthew, may have simply corrected the apparent error of Matthew, and Luke, for his part, may have followed Mark. Both explanations are possible.

Let us see the next second example, as presented by Mr. Goodacre (p. 73):

This is not an isolated example. One that seems similarly persuasive is the story of the Death of John the Baptist (Mk 6.14-29//Mt.14.1-12). For Mark, Herod is always ‘king’, four times in the passage (Mk 6.22, 25, 26, 27). Matthew apparently corrects this to ‘tetrarch’ (Mt. 14.1). This is a good move: Herod Antipas was not a king but a petty dependent prince and he is called ‘tetrarch’ by the Jewish historian Josephus (Ant. 17.188; 18. 102, 109, 122). This kind of precision is typical of Matthew. Later, he will specify that Pilate (Mk 15.1, 4, 9,12, 14, 15,43,44) is properly called ‘the governor’ (Mt. 27.2, 11, 14, 15,21,27,28.14), and ‘the high priest’ (Mk 14.53) is ‘Caiaphas the high priest’ (Mt. 26.57). Earlier, in his Birth Narrative, Matthew tells us that Herod the Great is a ‘king’ (2.1, 3) and that Archelaus is not (2.22). More is the shame, then, that Matthew lapses into calling Herod ‘the king’ halfway through the story of John the Baptist’s death (Mt.14.9), in agreement with Mark (6.26).

Of course, here Mr. Goodacre presents the matter in favor of Markan priority; however, it is possible to present an alternative interpretation in the reverse direction, and one can argue that, whereas Matthew is inconsistent in the title of Herod, Mark consistently calls him ‘king’, thus correcting the inconsistency of his *Vorlage*. Both explanations are possible.

Mr. Goodacre continues using this example for illustrating his position (pp. 73-74):

There is, further, a more serious inconsistency in the same verse. The story in Mark is that Herodias wanted to kill John because she had a grudge against him: 'But she could not because Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him'. (Mk 6.19-20). In Matthew's version of the story, this element has dropped out: now it is Herod and not Herodias who wants him killed (Mt. 14.5). When Mark, then, speaks of Herod's 'grief' at the request for John's head, it is coherent and understandable: Herodias demanded something that Herod did not want. But when Matthew in parallel speaks of the king's grief (Mt. 14.9), it makes no sense at all. Matthew had told us, after all, that 'Herod wanted to put him to death' (14.5).

The obvious explanation for the inconsistencies of Matthew's account is that he is working from a source.

Later I will have to return precisely to this example in order to present *my* solution to the problem of priority among the Synoptic Gospels, but for the moment this much can be said: when Mr. Goodacre says that Herod's grief "makes no sense at all", I am afraid he goes a little too far, because even if Herod wanted to put John the Baptist to death, it is another thing to show to the people attending the party John's head severed from his body; when Herod was obliged to show them such a grotesque spectacle, I think he, as a human being, could feel sorry. So the said inconsistencies might not be that inconsistent.

Let us see Mr. Goodacre's conclusion as to the "editorial fatigue" of Matthew, part of which has already been quoted above (p. 74):

The obvious explanation for the inconsistencies of Matthew's account is that he is working from a source. He has made changes in the early stages that he fails to sustain throughout, thus betraying his knowledge of Mark. This is particularly plausible when one notes that Matthew's account is considerably shorter than Mark's: Matthew has overlooked important details in the act of abbreviating.

To this explanation, however, another equally possible explanation can be opposed: Matthew's inconsistencies may have been consistently corrected by Mark. And at least in one case, the said inconsistency of Matthew might not be so inconsistent.

8. Conclusion of the Re-Examination

Here we repeat only the result of our re-examination of the theory of Markan priority, in accordance with the presentation of Mr. Goodacre's book¹⁸:

¹⁸ In the conclusion of this chapter "Markan priority" of Mr. Goodacre's book, another section called "Mark as the middle term" precedes all the other sections. In this section "Mark as the middle term", the author says (p. 81):

the key Synoptic fact is that Mark is the middle term. Both in matters of order and wording, Matthew and Luke often agree with Mark. It is less usual for Matthew and Luke to agree with each other against Mark. The two common ways for this to be explained have been Markan Priority (the majority) or Markan Posteriority (a minority).

However, in our re-examination we have seen repeatedly that Matthew and Luke can, or rather should, be dealt with separately. It is not correct to limit, for explaining the problem of priority among the Synoptic Gospels, the discussion to only two possibilities, i.e. Markan Priority and Markan Posteriority.

- (a) Omission of Congenial Material? → Inconclusive
- (b) Addition of Elements Not Congenial to Matthew and Luke? → Inconclusive
- (c) The Place of Oral Tradition? → Inconclusive
- (d) Relationship between Omissions and Additions → Inconclusive
- (e) Harder Readings? → Inconclusive
- (f) The Dates of the Gospels? → Probably Luke can be dated after the events of 70; the dating of Matthew, on the other hand, remains unclear.
- (g) Editorial Fatigue? → Inconclusive

Thus *pace* Mr. Goodacre, the conclusion of our re-examination is that so far no conclusive argument in favor of the theory of Markan priority has been found.

Other issues not mentioned in the chapter of Mr. Goodacre's book should be briefly discussed here; Here I follow the order of the summary of discussions of earlier studies as presented in Evans' commentary on Mark¹⁹. First, it "has often been observed that Mark's literary style lacks the polish and sophistication that one regularly encounters in Matthew and Luke"²⁰. However, I find that arguments of this kind (elegant Greek, clumsy Greek etc.) are often simply no more than an expression of the confidence of those who argue in this way about their excellent ability of understanding Greek. Even if Mark wrote more badly than Matthew, if he had something he wanted to say, he would have written in his bad Greek, just as I am now writing in my bad English.

Second, concerning what Evans calls "propriety"²¹, this apparently has to do with the tendency or the intention of the author of Mark; and as mentioned above, the tendency or the intention is an internal matter which can be discussed only after we are sure about the outward conditions in which the document in question (in this context, the Gospel of Mark) came into being. It is not proper to discuss on propriety at this stage of the investigation.

Third, in the section called "3. *Agreements*"²², it seems that arguments of diverse nature are put together; therefore my discussion can only be selective. As for Mark's paratactic *καί* instead of *δέ* of Matthew and Luke (in "(a) *Grammatical corrections*"²³), it is not impossible that here Mark simply follows the example of the Septuagint; in other words, it is not impossible to think that such a paratactic use of *καί* is sanctified, so to speak, by its frequent use in the Septuagint. As for the use of *παίειν* in Mk 14:47 instead of *πατάσσειν* in Mt 26: 51 and Lk 22:49 (in "(b) *Stylistic improvements*"²³), is it not possible to think that the level of Greek of Mark was so bad that he did not even recognize the difference between these two Greek words? I think one can think this way, if Mark was not a native Greek speaker, but his mother tongue was a Semitic language (as in the case of a Palestine Jew). Next Evans mentions "(c) *influence of Q*", but I think this is, methodologically speaking, simply wrong. Q is a hypothesis closely related to the theory of Markan priority, or rather one can even say is Q is a hypothesis which can be argued on the basis of Markan priority; then it is not correct to refer to Q when discussing the problem of priority among the Synoptic Gospels. As for "(d)

¹⁹ EVANS (2001), pp. xlix-lviii; in what follows, the last section of this part "7. *Interpretation and result*" will not be touched upon, because it seems to me not necessary to do so.

²⁰ Ibid., p. xlix.

²¹ Ibid., p. li.

²² Ibid., p. liii.

²³ Ibid., p. liii.

Influence of oral tradition as witnessed by John”, although I am not quite sure how this point is related to our problem, it is not necessary to think of such a complicated thing as “oral tradition as witnessed by John”, if we suppose that, for the composition of his Gospel, John simply consulted Matthew or Luke, or both. Next, in our context “(e) Possible contact between Luke and Matthew” is simply an unnecessary complication of the discussion and thus can be neglected, and to argue about “(f) Textual corruption” is, methodologically speaking, not correct; if we would argue each time that “We cannot assume that the respective texts of the extant Gospels, at least as textual critics have reconstructed them, are identical to the autographs”²⁴, our discussion on the Synoptic Gospels would be deprived of its basis. As for “(g) Agreements in omissions”, the topic can be discussed in conjunction with other similar topics, since, after all, the matter is concerned with the presence or absence of such and such material in each Gospel, and with how to explain the difference between the Synoptics.

As for the next section “4. Divergences”, in which three points are mentioned, to discuss here the first point “(a) Distribution of Q” is not correct from a methodological viewpoint, for the reason mentioned above. As for “(b) The Christmas story” and “(c) The Easter accounts”, such complex stories need necessarily to be explained with the intention of the authors taken into consideration; and as mentioned above, this, i.e. taking the intention of the authors into consideration, cannot be done at this stage of our investigation. In other words, these are not valid examples for our discussion here.

The difficulty I feel for the section “5. Difficulty” is that the examples presented are so diverse; therefore my refutation of the arguments based on these examples needs to be done *separatim*. As for (a), which is concerned with Mt 9:2/Mk 2:4, although the commentator (Evans) says: “Matthew’s readers, unfamiliar with Mark, are left to wonder why Jesus is said to have “seen their faith”, I argue that the Matthean Jesus evidently could have seen the faith of those who carried the paralytic, lying on the bed, all the way through; to show one’s faith one does not need to remove the roof of a house. Since the example (b) is concerned only with Mark and Luke and not with Matthew, I skip it. As for (c), which is concerned with Mt 19:17/Mk 10:18, I find Evans’ discussion not conclusive; in any case, here the difference between Matthew and Mark is not great and, *pace* Evans, not significant at all. As for (d), which is concerned with Mt 20:20-21/Mk 10:35-37, it is evident in my view that, even if the question concerned was posed by the mother of James and John, Jesus could address his reply not to the mother but to her sons themselves, since the wish expressed by their mother is primarily theirs, not only hers.

The next section “6. Material unique to Mark” has already been touched upon above to some extent; we need not repeat the remarks made above. The following point, which has not been touched upon above, seems very important. Evans, apparently as expressing an opinion adhered to by the majority of scholars, says: “If we accept the Griesbach-Farmer hypothesis [or if we accept Matthean priority], we would then have to explain why Mark would choose to add these odd, potentially embarrassing materials, only to omit the Sermon on the Mount/Plain, the Lord’s Prayer, and numerous other teachings and parables found in the larger Gospels”²⁵. However, I think this kind of argument cannot stand, if we follow the normal assumption as to the date of Mark and Q: given that, while Mark is normally dated to the 60s, Q is normally

²⁴ Ibid., p. liv.

²⁵ Ibid., p. lvii.

dated earlier (to the 40s or 50s, or perhaps even to the 30s), after all Mark was in a position to be able to consult Q. Thus the same problem why Mark omitted the Sermon on the Mount/Plain etc. remains to be answered even with the majority's opinion; in other words, Mark omitted an important part of the tradition related to Jesus, for reason(s) unknown to us.

Lastly, still another point needs to be discussed: it is quite often said that it is difficult to think that Mark is a Gospel abridged from Matthew, for example, because in many parallel passages Mark's pericope is more detailed than Matthew's; and this observation is quite often adduced in favor of the theory of Markan priority. However, in my view this argument is not decisive at all; for one thing, we can generally assume that any tradition deemed as sacred tends to expand rather than to contract, and if this is the case also with the Synoptic Gospels, it would then follow that it is a shorter pericope which represents the more original stage of the tradition. It should be clear that here I am not suggesting any general rule, but simply arguing that one can think otherwise. And omissions of entire pericopes have already been discussed above.

After all, we have to look for our own way out "through the maze".

II. *Position of Luke in the Synoptic Problem*

Next, the position of the Gospel of Luke in the Synoptic Problem needs to be discussed, although my view on this problem has already been suggested fairly clearly above.

When the Synoptic Problem is discussed, it is customary that all the three Synoptic Gospels are taken into consideration. However, I argue that it is not necessary to do so, because of the following passage quoted in Greek, which stands at the very beginning of Luke:

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

Although this passage has been commented many a time, in my view one aspect of it, which is precisely concerned with the Synoptic Problem, has somehow been neglected: it is concerned with the word διήγησις "narrative" (verse 1)²⁶. Here Luke says: "Many (πολλοὶ)

²⁶ In the following commentaries of Luke, there is no discussion at all concerning the term διήγησις "narrative": TINSLEY (1965), p. 23; LEANEY (1966), p. 77; ELLIS (1974), p. 65; CULPEPPER (1995), pp. 39-40; TRITES (2006), p. 33 (the term *diēgēsis* is mentioned, but not discussed). ERNST (1977), p. 47 translates διήγησις by "Bericht", and he says: "Die Einstufung als »Bericht« (διήγησις) ... kennzeichnet vor allem die eigene schriftstellerische Absicht des Lk". However, Ernst fails to note that the term διήγησις is, strictly speaking, used for the activity of earlier authors rather than that of Luke himself. MARSHALL (1978), p. 41 discusses the term διήγησις, but in a context totally different from ours. The discussion of the term διήγησις in FITZMYER (1981), p. 292 contains several useful comments, such as "The term *diēgēsis*, "a narrative account," was often used in classical and Hellenistic Greek literature of historical writing", and "Etymologically, it would denote a composition that "leads through to an end," a comprehensive story which aims at being something more than a mere collection of notes or a compilation of anecdotes". However, these useful comments are not applied to the very context of this verse Lk 1:1, in order to solve the problem what the term διήγησις means precisely in this context. For the discussion in KREMER (1988), see the next note. According to MORRIS (1988), p. 72, "many" authors earlier than Luke "had set out to compose a narrative, a

have undertaken to compile a narrative of things etc.”, and in saying so he means that he consulted at least two narratives of things related to the life of Jesus. I say “at least two”, because otherwise Luke could not have said: “Many have undertaken”. And what is a “narrative” of things related to the life of Jesus? Can something like Q be called a narrative? Hardly, I would say²⁷. What we imagine as a narrative of things related to the life of Jesus is, in my view, nothing less than a Gospel itself. Thus we have to admit that Luke, at the time of composition of his own Gospel, consulted at least two Gospels, if not to say more. Then what were the two Gospels Luke consulted at the time of his composition? They must have been Matthew and Mark²⁸. And if this is the case, we need not take Luke into consideration when discussing the problem of priority of the Synoptic Gospels.

One might say that this argument on Luke is too quick and brief to be persuasive. Although I think this brief argument suffices, perhaps it is not useless to present another argument, this time referring to the famous (but hardly well studied) *Canons of Eusebius*, which we find printed e.g. just before the edition of Matthew in Nestle-Aland. When we look into the part of the *Canons* related to the description of the Passion, a very close parallelism between Matthew and Mark can be observed, as is shown below (in the table below, “Mt 274” “Lk 260” etc. refer to the sections introduced by Eusebius into the texts of the Gospels):

Matthew	Luke	Mark	John	Canons
Mt 274	= Lk 260	= Mk 156	= Jn 20	I
Mt 274	= Lk 260	= Mk 156	= Jn 48	I
Mt 274	= Lk 260	= Mk 156	= Jn 96	I

general term which leaves it open whether they had written gospels or some other kind of narrative. He does not say who they were but most agree that Mark was one of them”; however, Morris fails to fully explain this text which says that more than one author undertook the composition of a narrative (who is the second author?). NOLLAND (1989), vol. 1, p. 6 has the following: “At issue is whether the διήγησιν is primarily that of the witnesses (i.e., an oral narrative) or whether the oral tradition becomes narrative through the literary efforts of the “many” [in my view, such a matter is not at issue at all, T. S.]. The literary context here strongly favors the latter because of the use of διήγησις for the ordered narrative presentation of events in a literary work (cf. Lucian, *How to Write History*, 55)”. Regrettably, the problem of who wrote such narratives before Luke is not addressed by Nolland. EVANS (1990), p. 124 has a very thoughtful comment on the term διήγησις, which begins with the following: “This [i.e., the term in question] is important as indicating how Luke understood the works of his predecessors, and by implication his own”. However, it seems that from his comment no final deduction as to the meaning of the term in precisely this context has been made. The same criticism applies also to STEIN (1992), p. 63. BOCK (1994), p. 31 has the following: “Luke describes his work as a narrative, *an account (diēgēsis)*. Such narratives came in both oral (8:39; 9:10) and written forms (Heb 11:32). The ambiguity of the term means that Luke may be referring to more than the sources biblical scholars mention today when they discuss the Synoptic problem (Mark, Q, L, M or Matthew). However, the remark that *many have undertaken to draw up ...* such an account suggests mostly written sources”. The commentator does not notice that, among the aforementioned “sources biblical scholars mention today” (I mean “Mark, Q, L, M or Matthew”), there are several “written sources”. Why does not he think straightforwardly that these can be the written sources implied in the term διήγησις? In GREEN (1997), p. 38, although the Greek term itself is not quoted, the term *diēgēsis* seems to be discussed. However, the very problem how to interpret the term in the precise context of this verse is not addressed by the commentator.

²⁷ KREMER (1988), p. 23 argues: “Mit »viele« (wohl eine gängige Übertreibung) sind vor allem Mk und die Verfasser von Q gemeint. Ihre Schriften werden verallgemeinernd als »Bericht« bezeichnet.” This interpretation of Kremer is simply wrong, because the term διήγησις, “a narrative account”, can in no way be applied to a document like Q, which is not a narrative at all.

²⁸ Of course one might say that, as Luke says “Many have undertaken”, he could consult a third Gospel; but we will never know what was the third Gospel in question. In any case, what is certain at the very least is the *plurality* of the narrative(s) consulted by Luke.

	Lk 262		= Jn 113	IX
	Lk 262		= Jn 124	IX
Mt 275		= Mk 157		VI
Mt 276	= Lk 74	= Mk 158	= Jn 98	I
Mt 277		= Mk 159	= Jn 98	IV
Mt 278	= Lk 263	= Mk 160		II
	Lk 264			X
Mt 279		= Mk 161	= Jn 72	IV
Mt 279		= Mk 161	= Jn 121	IV
Mt 280	= Lk 269	= Mk 162	= Jn 122	I
			Jn 123	X
Mt 281	= Lk 268	= Mk 163		II
Mt 282		= Mk 164		VI
Mt 283				X
Mt 284	= Lk 266	= Mk 165	= Jn 55	I
Mt 284	= Lk 266	= Mk 165	= Jn 63	I
Mt 284	= Lk 266	= Mk 165	= Jn 65	I
Mt 284	= Lk 266	= Mk 165	= Jn 67	I
Mt 285	= Lk 265	= Mk 166		II
Mt 285	= Lk 267	= Mk 166		II
Mt 286		= Mk 167		VI
Mt 287		= Mk 168	= Jn 152	IV
Mt 288		= Mk 169		VI
	Lk 273			X
	Lk 274		= Jn 227	IX
	Lk 274		= Jn 229	IX
	Lk 274		= Jn 231	IX
Mt 289	= Lk 275	= Mk 170	= Jn 126	I
	Lk 276			X
Mt 290		= Mk 171		VI
	Lk 278			X
Mt 291	= Lk 279	= Mk 172	= Jn 156	I
			Jn 157	X
Mt 292		= Mk 173		VI
Mt 293		= Mk 174	= Jn 107	IV
Mt 294	= Lk 281	= Mk 175	= Jn 161	I
Mt 295	= Lk 282	= Mk 176	= Jn 42	I
Mt 295	= Lk 282	= Mk 176	= Jn 57	I
Mt 296	= Lk 280	= Mk 177		II
	Lk 283			X
Mt 296	= Lk 284	= Mk 177		II
Mt 297		= Mk 178	= Jn 70	IV
Mt 298		= Mk 179		VI
Mt 299		= Mk 180	= Jn 103	IV
Mt 300	= Lk 285	= Mk 181	= Jn 79	I
Mt 300	= Lk 285	= Mk 181	= Jn 158	I
Mt 301	= Lk 286	= Mk 182		II
Mt 302	= Lk 287	= Mk 183	= Jn 160	I
	Lk 288			X
Mt 303				X
Mt 304	= Lk 289	= Mk 184	= Jn 170	I

			Jn 171	X
Mt 305		= Mk 185		VI
		Mk 186		X
Mt 306	= Lk 290	= Mk 187	= Jn 162	I
			Jn 163	X
Mt 306	= Lk 290	= Mk 187	= Jn 174	I
Mt 307		= Mk 188	= Jn 164	IV
			Jn 165	X
Mt 308	= Lk 305	= Mk 189		II
	Lk 306			X
Mt 309		= Mk 190		VI
Mt 310	= Lk 297	= Mk 191	= Jn 69	I
	Lk 298			X
Mt 311		= Mk 192		VI
Mt 312	= Lk 299	= Mk 193		II
Mt 313	= Lk 294	= Mk 194	= Jn 172	I
			Jn 173	X
Mt 314	= Lk 291	= Mk 195	= Jn 166	I
			Jn 167	X
Mt 314	= Lk 291	= Mk 195	= Jn 168	I
			Jn 169	X
Mt 315	= Lk 292	= Mk 196	= Jn 175	I
Mt 316	= Lk 293	= Mk 197		II
Mt 317	= Lk 295	= Mk 198		II
	Lk 296			X
Mt 318	= Lk 300	= Mk 199	= Jn 176	I
Mt 319				X
	Lk 301			X
			Jn 177	X
Mt 320	= Lk 302	= Mk 200	= Jn 178	I
			Jn 179	X
Mt 320	= Lk 302	= Mk 200	= Jn 180	I
			Jn 181	X
	Lk 303		= Jn 182	IX
	Lk 303		= Jn 186	IX
	Lk 303		= Jn 190	IX
	Lk 304			X
	Lk 307		= Jn 182	IX
	Lk 307		= Jn 186	IX
	Lk 307		= Jn 190	IX
	Lk 308			X
			Jn 191	X
Mt 321		= Mk 201	= Jn 192	IV
			Jn 193	X
Mt 322	= Lk 309	= Mk 202		II
Mt 323		= Mk 203	= Jn 183	IV
Mt 324				X
Mt 325	= Lk 310	= Mk 204	= Jn 184	I
Mt 326	= Lk 311	= Mk 205	= Jn 188	I
			Jn 189	X
	Lk 312		= Jn 182	IX

	Lk 312		= Jn 186	IX
	Lk 312		= Jn 190	IX
Mt 326	= Lk 313	= Mk 205	= Jn 194	I
			Jn 195	X
Mt 327				X
Mt 328	= Lk 314	= Mk 206	= Jn 196	I
Mt 329		= Mk 207	= Jn 185	IV
Mt 329		= Mk 207	= Jn 187	IV
Mt 330		= Mk 208		VI
Mt 331	= Lk 315	= Mk 209	= Jn 197	I
	Lk 316			X
Mt 332	= Lk 318	= Mk 210	= Jn 197	I
Mt 333		= Mk 211	= Jn 203	IV
Mt 334	= Lk 321	= Mk 212	= Jn 201	I
		Mk 213		X
			Jn 202	X
Mt 335	= Lk 324	= Mk 214	= Jn 199	I
			Jn 200	X
Mt 336	= Lk 317	= Mk 215	= Jn 198	I
Mt 336	= Lk 319	= Mk 215	= Jn 198	I
	Lk 320			X
	Lk 277	= Mk 216		VIII
Mt 337		= Mk 217		VI
Mt 338	= Lk 322	= Mk 218		II
Mt 339	= Lk 325	= Mk 219		II
	Lk 326			X
Mt 340	= Lk 327	= Mk 220		II
Mt 341		= Mk 221		VI
Mt 342	= Lk 323	= Mk 222		II
Mt 343	= Lk 329	= Mk 223	= Jn 204	I
Mt 344	= Lk 328	= Mk 224		II
Mt 345				X
			Jn 205	X
Mt 346	= Lk 330	= Mk 225		II
Mt 347		= Mk 226		VI
	Lk 331			X
Mt 348	= Lk 332	= Mk 227	= Jn 206	I
			Jn 207	X
Mt 349	= Lk 333	= Mk 228	= Jn 208	I
Mt 350		= Mk 229		VI
	Lk 334			X
Mt 351				X
	Lk 335	= Mk 230		VIII
Mt 352	= Lk 336	= Mk 231	= Jn 209	I
			Jn 210	X
Mt 352	= Lk 336	= Mk 231	= Jn 211	I
Mt 353	= Lk 337	= Mk 232		II
Mt 354	= Lk 338	= Mk 233		II
			Jn 212	X
Mt 355				X
	Lk 339			X

Lk 340	= Jn 213	IX
	Jn 214	X
	Jn 216	X
Lk 340	= Jn 217	IX
	Jn 218	X
Lk 341	= Jn 221	IX
Lk 341	= Jn 223	IX
	Jn 224	X
Lk 341	= Jn 225	IX
	Jn 226	X
Lk 342		X

In this table which is compiled according to the order of pericopae of Matthew (thus the pericopae of Matthew is necessarily arranged in ascending order), we see that also the pericopae of Mark happens to be arranged in strictly ascending order. If we leave aside those pericopae which are not shared by both Gospels, between the two Gospels the degree of coincidence of the order of pericopae is perfect, that is to say, the order of the pericopae is not disturbed at all between Matthew and Mark; such a coincidence cannot be observed in any other combination of the Gospels. This extremely high degree of coincidence compels us to compare Matthew and Mark by themselves, leaving aside Luke, because such a coincidence suggests that, at least as far as the order of the episodes of the Passion is concerned, either Matthew followed Mark through and through, or Mark followed Matthew through and through; thus one can expect that, between the two, there will be a clear-cut answer concerning the problem of priority. This is the problem we should try to solve.

III. *Comparison between Matthew and Mark*

Here two examples will be discussed. Perhaps one might say that two examples are too few to be persuasive; however, I hope to be able to show that these two examples are sufficiently convincing in themselves.

(1) The first example is from Mt 14: 1-13 & Mk 6: 14-33 (Decapitation of John the Baptist), quoted here in English translation in parallel columns:

Mt 14:1 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard about the fame of Jesus; 2 and 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." 3 For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison, for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; 4 because John said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." 5 And though he wanted to put him to death, he feared the people, because they held him to be a prophet. 6 But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before the company, and pleased Herod,

Mk 6: 14 King 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." 15 But others said, "It is Eli'jah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." 16 But when Herod heard of it he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised." 17 For Herod had sent and seized John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; because he had married her. 18 For John said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." 19 And Herodias

7 so that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. 8 Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter." 9 And the king was sorry; but because of his oaths and his guests he commanded it to be given; 10 he sent and had John beheaded in the prison, 11 and his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. 12 And his disciples came and took the body and buried it; and they went and told Jesus. 13 Now 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.

had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, 20 for 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. 21 But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and the leading men of Galilee. 22 For when Herodias' 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." 23 And he vowed to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom." 24 And she went out, and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the baptizer." 25 And 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." 26 And the king was exceedingly sorry; but because of his oaths and his guests he did not want to break his word to her. 27 And immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard and gave orders to bring his head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, 28 and brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. 29 When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb. 30 The apostles returned to Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. 31 And 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. 32 And they went away in the boat to a lonely place by themselves. 33 Now 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". Here we observe that there is a confusion of the timelines, 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.

The important point is this: it is an undeniable fact that Matthew is so weird an author as to be able to confuse the timelines. However, is it possible that, if Markan priority holds true, can Matthew, then, have written such a confusion with the Gospel of Mark before him, a *Vorlage* which distinguishes things quite neatly? I think this is highly implausible, so long as we assume that Matthew is an intelligent, though weird, author. And the reverse explanation is completely sensible: it is completely understandable that, Mark, observing a confusion in Matthew before him, simply corrected it in a proper way²⁹.

²⁹ Consulting the commentaries on Matthew to see if the point made here concerning Mt 14:1-13 is discussed or mentioned at all, I find no comment relevant to our investigation in FILSON (1960), ARGYLE (1963), GNILKA (1988), SMITH (1989), BLOMBERG (1992), KEENER (1997), and TURNER (2005) in loco respectively. To my surprise, ALBRIGHT & MANN (1971), p. 177, commenting on the word "withdrew" of verse 13, says: "This withdrawal is a direct response to the news of John's death". HILL (1972), p. 246 also contains the following surprising remark: (commenting on verse 13) "The time reference is to verse 12". SCHWEIZER (1976), p. 207 says: "Der Bericht der Johannesjünger [of verse 12] verbindet die Geschichte mit V. 13", without making any comment on the confusion of the timelines. To be fair to the commentator, I should add that he actually discusses the problem related to the timelines at p. 206; but his conclusion is that "Matthäus hat also nicht realisiert, daß die Geschichte [of the decapitation of John the Baptist] bei Markus nachgeholt wird", and the problem of the confusion of the timelines is not seriously addressed. In FRANCE (1985), the problem of the timelines is touched upon at p. 233, but in a manner not thorough at all: "At that time is one of the Matthew's connecting phrases which is not to be pressed chronologically, since vv. 13ff. will go on to record Jesus' action on hearing news of John's death, an event which is presupposed in these verses as already in the past." Apparently SCHNACKENBURG (1985), p. 132 is aware of the problem of the confusion of the timelines: "Mit der zusammenhängenden Darstellung schafft sich Mt eine Schwierigkeit: Das Urteil des Herodes über Jesus setzt den Tod des Johannes voraus, der erst nachher erzählt wird; aber das ist jetzt kein erklärender Rückblick wie bei Mk, sondern eine in das Wirken Jesu eingeordnete Erzählung. Nach Mt zieht sich Jesus, als er vom Tod des Johannes hört, in eine einsame Gegend zurück". However, the commentator explains this incongruity ("Unstimmigkeit") in an unsatisfactory manner: "Diese Unstimmigkeit deckt die Intention des Mt auf ..." (pp. 132-133). DAVIES & ALLISON (1991), vol. 2, p. 485 says: "ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς. This redactional phrase replaces the much lengthier Mk 6.30f.", thus showing a careless reading of this verse on the part of the commentators, because, as shown above, this so-called "redactional phrase" introduces a palpable error into the text. HARRINGTON (1991), p. 219 is apparently aware of the problem from what the commentator says: "hearing this: in Matthew's narrative what Jesus heard was the report of John's death (14:12), though the sequence is awkward since the story of John's death was a flashback"; however, no reflection follows this remark. The problem of the confusion of the timelines is mentioned in HAGNER (1995), vol. 2, p. 417 as follows: "Matthew's ἀκούσας, "when he heard", ties this passage [i.e., verse 13] to the end of the preceding one about the death of John the Baptist. That is, in Matthew when Jesus heard of the death of John, he went off by himself for a while. The effect of this, however, is to ignore the fact that the story of John's death was a flashback and so to throw the entire sequence of narratives that follow back to that earlier time. Perhaps Matthew regarded John's death as having occurred only a few days earlier (thus McNeile)". However, this last remark can hardly be a sufficient explanation to the problem. The comment of BORING (1995), p. 323 is interesting in our context: "Matthew continues to follow the Markan order, directly connecting it [i.e., Mt 14:13ff.] to the preceding story [i.e., Mt 14:1-12], ignoring the Markan structure in which the story of John's death is a flashback. Matthew has little interest in such "realistic" chronology—in this very context, for instance, he has evening come twice on the same day (14:15, 23), and has Jesus depart in a boat, although the last mentioned location was the synagogue in landlocked Nazareth (13:54)"; it is as if the commentator suggested that investigating such chronological problem is of no importance. However, I think the reverse explanation can be made here: if Matthew is interested very little in a realistic chronology, while Mark writes correctly from chronological viewpoint, why does Matthew not follow Mark, if the former had the latter before him? Rather, the fact that Matthew's chronology is different from Mark's strongly suggests, in my view, that Matthew did not have Mark as his *Vorlage*. Lastly, it is noteworthy that such a voluminous commentary as LUTZ (2001), vol. 2, in loco, has no relevant remark concerning the problem of the timelines.

Since the problem of the confusion of the timelines lies only in Matthew, consulting commentaries on Mark is not

I understand that the way this argument of mine is presented is in sheer contrast with the way what Mr. Goodacre calls “editorial fatigue” is presented; the reader will judge which way of explanation is more plausible.

(2) Our second example is concerned with the scene of the so-called “institution of the Lord’s Supper”; the passage in question is Mt 26:26-28 and Mk 14:22-24, quoted again in English translation in parallel columns:

Mt 26:26 Now 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.” 27 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you; 28 for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”

Mk 14:22 And as they were eating, he took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them, and said, “Take; this is my body.” 23 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. 24 And 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. I think 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”. I would like to draw attention to this second difference, which is tiny to be sure, but nonetheless significant. The important point is this: 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; here by “Jews” I mean not only the disciples of Jesus, but also the Jewish (or Jewish-Christian) 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. On the other hand, in Mark the disciples first drink 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, if Markan priority holds true, can Matthew have written such a passage which goes extremely against the sensitivity of Jews³⁰, and with the Gospel of Mark before him, a *Vorlage* which apparently shows its awareness to that sensitivity? Again I think this is highly implausible, so long as we assume that Matthew is an intelligent, though weird, author. And the reverse explanation is completely sensible: it is completely understandable that

necessary here.

³⁰ We see that this point, that Jesus’ exhortation to drink “my blood” was so much against the sensitivity of Jews, is depicted in a more intensified manner in chapter 6 of the Gospel of John; more precisely, see Jn 6:60.

Mark, observing in Matthew what was very much against the sensitivity of Jews, simply corrected it in a proper way³¹.

³¹ Consulting first the commentaries on Matthew to see if the point made here concerning Mt 26:26-28 is discussed or mentioned at all, I find no comment relevant to our investigation in FILSON (1960), ARGYLE (1963), ALBRIGHT & MANN (1971), HILL (1972), SCHWEIZER (1976), FRANCE (1985), SMITH (1989), KEENER (1997), and TURNER (2005), in loco respectively. SCHNACKENBURG (1987), pp. 260-261, commenting on Mt 26:27-28, at least lays hand on the problem: "Bei Mt wird die Kelcheucharistie parallel zur Brothandlung formuliert: dem »eßt« entspricht »trinkt daraus alle«, während es bei Mk heißt »und sie tranken daraus alle«. Die mt Form wird Angleichung an die Liturgie der Gemeinde sein"; I find this last remark hardly convincing. GNILKA (1988), p. 399 clearly shows the "tiny" difference between Matthew and Mark; however, what the commentator says as explanation: "Daß bei Mk das Deutewort erst gesprochen wird, nachdem alle getrunken haben, mag Mt inkonzinn erschienen sein. Ermacht aus der berichthaften Bemerkung [of Mk] einen Imperativ" (p. 400) is hardly satisfying. Equally, the comment in DAVIES & ALLISON (1997), vol. 3, p. 472: "πίετε ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες. Mark opens with καὶ ἔπιον: 'and they all drank of it'. Matthew, again enhancing the parallelism with v. 26, has turned a narrative statement into an imperative of Jesus" is not satisfying at all. HARRINGTON (1991), pp. 367-368 says: "Drink from it, all of you: What Mark 14:23 expresses in narrative form ("and all drank from it"), Matthew expresses as a command from Jesus. This charge [sic], which introduces a symmetry between the bread and the cup, perhaps reflects the "liturgical" formula current in the Matthean community, and contributes to the theme of Jesus taking control of events in the passion". While the liturgical aspect of the problem related to this change cannot be excluded, this explanation would lead us to another problem of the same kind: why did Mark not provide the Markan community with such liturgical formula? All in all, I think this kind of explanation is hardly convincing. BLOMBERG (1992), in loco, contains no comment relevant to our investigation. However, in a sense the following remark of his would serve to illustrate the point of our discussion (p. 391): "But again Jesus adds new meaning. As they all drink, he proclaims that the cup stands for his blood about to be shed in his death on the cross"; I imagine that, by such a sudden proclamation, some of his disciples could have vomited what they were drinking because of shock. HAGNER (1995), vol. 2, p. 771 notes that "tiny" difference between Matthew and Mark, but from it no significant observation is made. The difference in question between Matthew and Mark is pointed out (of course, as "Matthew's changes") in BORING (1995), p. 471 as follows: "Matthew's most distinctive changes to the Markan meaning are these: (1) The Markan narrator's words about the cup, "and they all drank of it," are made into a parallel command to the words over the bread, so that each action comprises a command of Jesus and the disciples' obedient response" etc; however, the meaning of this precise "change" is not explicated further. Lastly, again it is noteworthy that in a commentary of more than twenty pages on the Lord's Supper (thus only four verses, Mt 26:26-29) that one can find in LUTZ (2005), vol. 3, pp. 364-385, a commentary which normally should be called "full-fledged", no relevant remark concerning the difference in question between Matthew and Mark can be found.

Consulting next the commentaries on Mark to see if the point made here concerning Mk 14:22-24 is discussed or mentioned at all, I find no comment relevant to our investigation in JOHNSON (1960), MOULE (1965), COLE (1989), BROOKS (1991), MOLONEY (2002), BOCK (2005), in loco respectively. Also LANE (1974) has no relevant comment at all, and the commentator's remark: "Jesus passed the common cup from which all were to drink, and spoke the second word of institution" (p. 507; it is not clear here which was prior, disciples' drinking or Jesus' speaking) seems to suggest that he was not aware of the difference in question between Matthew and Mark; the same thing can be said concerning the following comment of PERKINS (1995), p. 703 on Mk 14:22-25: "While they are eating, Jesus speaks the words about his death over the bread and wine". The remark of ANDERSON (1976), p. 314: "Schweizer (*GNM*, p. 304) rightly observes that since the disciples had all drunk of the cup before Jesus spoke the cup-word, 'there is no implication here that Jesus' saying altered the wine in any substantial or material way'", although interesting from another perspective, is totally irrelevant to our investigation here. The comment of SCHWEIZER (1978), p. 166 includes a remark similar to the preceding one: "Die Notiz, daß „alle daraus tranken“, richtet sich vielleicht gegen solche, die aus asketischen oder Spar-Tendenzen den Wein weglassen wollten; es gibt Berichte über solche Feiern. Nicht ganz nebensächlich ist, daß die Jünger vor dem Spruch Jesu trinken, also kein Gedanke daran vorliegt, daß das Wort Jesu den Wein substanzhaft, materielle verändert"; of course, this comment is totally irrelevant to our investigation here. The following remark of PESCH (1980), vol. 2, p. 358 seems to try to interpret Mk 14:23-24 along the line of Mt 26:27-28: "Die Notiz „und sie tranken alle daraus“ (πάντες in betonter Schlußstellung!) verdeckt, wird sie nicht als Hysteronproteron ... durchschaut, den Sachverhalt, daß Jesu Deutewort - wie beim Brogestus - das Austeilen des Bechers begleitet"; if this understanding of mine is correct, I cannot agree with the commentator, because there is no

Thus these two examples strongly suggest that it is not Matthew who consulted Mark, but Mark who consulted Matthew. In other words, Matthean priority is to be preferred to Markan priority.

IV. *Conclusion*

Although the conclusion of this paper is quite clear, it is rehearsed here for convenience's sake:

- (1) arguments in favor of Markan priority are inconclusive; on the contrary, there are arguments which strongly suggest that Matthean priority is more plausible.
- (2) It is probable that Luke consulted both Matthew and Mark; and Luke can be dated after the events of 70.
- (3) Because of Luke's dependence on Matthew and Mark, there is no need to posit the existence of Q.

Instead of adding further explanations to this conclusion, at the end of this paper I would rather note two points which can be made on the assumption of Matthean priority.

The first point is concerned with from where Paul the apostle got information about what he knows that Jesus said. After all, is it not from the Gospel of Matthew? In my view, Paul's firm insistence on Jesus' instructions, as we can see e.g. in the chapter 7 of the 1st Corinthians, can hardly be explained unless we suppose that here Paul is based on a written document. In this connection, supposing that Paul knew the Gospel of Mark would not suffice, because Paul knew e.g. that Jesus Christ was "descended from David according to the flesh" (Romans 1:3).

reason not to interpret the text as it is. MANN (1986), p. 578 makes the following remark which, although quite relevant to our investigation, cannot be adhered to: "They all drank from it: Presumably this expression indicates a single cup, though this again is of no assistance in determining the character of the meal. Matt 26:27 has an injunction: "All of you drink from this." Some discussion arises from time to time as to the meaning to be attached to the narrative statement here, and the command in Matthew, with the suggestion made from time to time that what is reflected is a polemic against some practice unknown to us. This is perhaps searching for a controversy where none can be found: it is far more likely that the words reflect the sharing of the disciples in the blessings of the (New) Covenant. Furthermore in strong contrast to the material which precedes this narrative, there is no discernible note of controversy here". Although what the commentator suggests here is expressed in a veiled way and thus not very clear, as far as our investigation is concerned, the prohibition of drinking blood was (and is) a real concern for Jews. EVANS (2001), vol. 2, p. 392 has the following: "καὶ ἔπιον ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες, "and all were drinking from it." ... Now they all drink from the common cup; but Jesus has not yet explained what the cup signifies". Evans' explanation is correct, in the sense that drinking comes first, and Jesus' explanation comes afterward. However, his translation of the Greek expression is not correct; the correct translation of ἔπιον πάντες (aorist) is "all of them drank", and not "all were drinking". Next, I can say that the voluminous commentary of FRANCE (2002), at p. 569, contains no remark relevant to our investigation. Lastly, COLLINS (2007), p. 656 says (italic is the commentator's): "Just as Jesus "took" bread in v. 22, v. 23 says that he "took a cup". Here however, instead of giving praise (to God) as in v. 22, he "gave thanks". Such variation is typical of Jewish prayers in the first century CE. Language of "thanksgiving" later became typical of early Christian ritual meals. It is noteworthy that the sayings related to the cup are narrated *after* all of the Twelve had drunk from it (v. 23). This order of events supports the reading of this passage proposed above, namely, as an interpretation of the death of Jesus before the event, not as a liturgical text". It is noteworthy that, among all the commentaries that I have consulted, it is only this commentary of Collins that mentions the importance of the order of events; however, his perspective is of course different from mine, and there is no comparison between Matthew and Mark concerning this detail.

And as the Gospel of Matthew mentions not only the Davidic descent of Jesus Christ, but also the institution of the Lord's supper (cf. the chapter 11 of 1st Corinthians) etc., it provides a very simple explanation to the problem. If Matthean priority is to be accepted, one can reconsider this problem concerning Paul.

The second point is concerned with how to understand the Gospel of Mark. If Matthean priority is to be accepted, Mark needs to be understood mainly from its additions and omissions in comparison with Matthew; I suppose that this way of interpreting Mark has hardly been undertaken, and thus it is all the more worth trying. In such an attempt, we immediately understand, first of all, that the tendency of Mark to judge the disciples of Jesus in a negative perspective is, on the assumption of Matthean priority, still more intensified. This tendency has already been pointed out by many scholars, to be sure, but I think that, because of the theory of Markan priority, its real significance has been obscured to a considerable extent. For one thing, is it not possible to interpret the very last passage of Mark (Mk 16:1-8) as an affirmation on the part of the author that the disciples of Jesus did actually not witness His resurrection, and that, strictly speaking, they cannot be its witnesses? If this interpretation proves to be true, it would then become necessary to thoroughly reconsider the intention by which the Gospel of Mark was written. Here I am not necessarily suggesting that Mark is an anti-Christian Gospel; although it can be a Gospel against the disciples of Jesus, I do not think it is against Jesus Himself, whom the author of Mark calls Christ (Mk 1:1)³². Furthermore, looking afresh at Mark on the assumption of Matthean priority makes it still clearer that in Mark, compared with Matthew, judgement on Jews, especially the Pharisees and the scribes, is considerably mildened, because on the assumption of Matthean priority it follows that, for example, Mark eliminated (or simply did not copy) the vehement criticism against the Pharisees and the scribes which can be seen in the chapter 23 of Matthew. From where does this much milder attitude toward these religiously practical Jews come? Does this not suggest a kind of Jewish-Christian (if not to simply say Jewish) origin of Mark?³³ In any case, if Matthean priority is to be accepted, one can reconsider the Gospel of Mark once again, and this reconsideration will thoroughly change our view on the Gospel of Mark, perhaps even on Christian origin itself.

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³² Of course, the interpretation of this verse can be different if the author of Mark used the term "Christ" in an ironical sense.

³³ In my view, probably the position of "one of the scribes", who figures in the episode "The Great Commandment" (Mk 12:28-34; the passage Mk 12:32-34 is classed into Canon X by Eusebius of Caesarea), as well as his attitude toward Jesus, best represent the author's own position and attitude.