

## Introduction to the Gospels

- Background to the critical study of the Gospels as a result of the enlightenment period
- Source criticism – synoptic problem
- Form criticism
- Redaction criticism

## Source Criticism

- Literary relationship of Matthew, Mark, and Luke to each other, as against John.
  - Much similarities in Matt, Mark, and Luke
- Compare Matt 14:22-33 and Mark 6:45-52
  - Matthew has a longer version
  - Both stories end in different ways → Matthew on a confessional manner; Mark on a critical note

## Source Criticism

- Of the 661 verses in Mark, 500 appear in Matt, 350 in Luke.
- 235 verses common to Matt and Luke, and do not appear in Mark

## Source Criticism

- The similarities:
  - Often verbatim for the entire clauses and sentences – agreement in wording
    - Difficult to explain the differences among the writers – esp. if Jesus spoke in Aramaic and these agreements are in Greek
    - If compared to John, why are there so few verbal similarities (92%) unique?

## Source Criticism

- The similarities:
  - Agreement also extends to parenthetical or editorial comments,
    - e.g., Matt 24:15//Mark 13:14;
    - Matt 9:6//Mark 2:10//Luke 5:24;
    - Matt 27:18//Mark 15:10

### Source Criticism

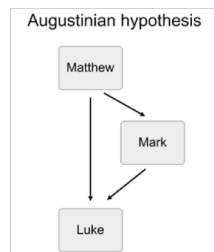
- The similarities:
  - Agreement in the order of narratives not linked together chronologically
    - Matthew’s sermon of the mount (Matt 5-7) and Luke’s sermon on the plain (Luke 6:17ff, and other places)
    - Matthew’s Parables of the Kingdom in Matt and Luke’s Parables in Luke 8 and 13

### Source Criticism

- Synoptic Problem - relates to source criticism
- Luke’s prologue (1:1-4) suggests some dependent on various sources
- Purpose: to identify the written traditions and to determine the relationships of the synoptic gospels with the hope of ascertaining the purpose of the evangelists in writing the gospels.

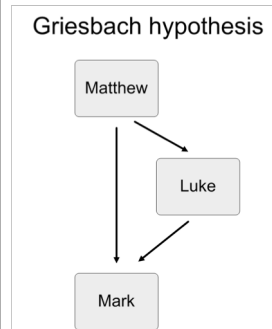
### Source Criticism: Solution

- Augustinian Hypothesis
  - Matthean priority
  - Follows canonical order
  - Wenham argues for early dating



### Source Criticism: Solution

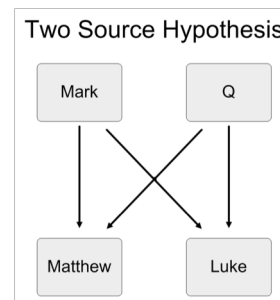
- Griesbach Hypothesis
  - Matthean priority, with Mark as the reader’s digest version of Matt and Luke



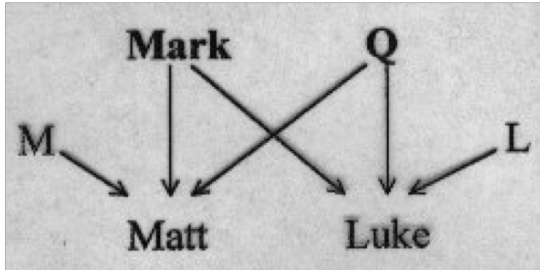
### Source Criticism: Solution

- Oxford Hypothesis
  - Variation of the hypothesis
  - Argues for Markan priority
  - 2-source hypothesis, e.g. Carson
  - 4-source hypothesis, including Q
  - 4 source hypothesis with Proto-M
  - Problem with Q

### Source Criticism: Solution

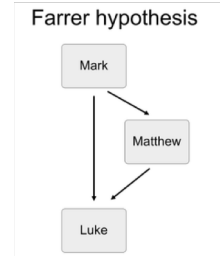


### Source Criticism: Solution Four Source Hypothesis



### Source Criticism: Solution

- Farrer Hypothesis
  - Rejects Q
  - Accept Markan priority
  - Luke uses Matthew



### Source Criticism: Solution

- Literary Independent Hypothesis
  - Eta Linnemann

### Source Criticism: Solution

- The question of Q – See Mark Goodacre
  - No one has ever seen Q
  - Difficult to sustain the existence of Q

### Source Criticism: Solution

- Pool of:
  - oral traditions
  - written sources (cf. Luke's prologue in 1:1-4)
  - Memory of the eyewitnesses?
  - See the works by Larry Hurtado, and other recent works on oral tradition

### Source Criticism: Solution

- Summary:
- Most accept Markan priority
  - The argument from length – Mark is shortest, yet not an abridgement
  - The argument from grammar - Mark's poorer writing style
    - the use of Aramaic in Mark 3:17, 7:11.
    - Redundancy – Mark 15:25; cf. Matt 27:35; Luke 23:34

### Source Criticism: Solution

- The argument from style
  - Mark's harder reading – see Mark 6:5-6//Matt 13:58; Mark 10:18//Matt 19:17//Luke 18:19; Mark 1:12//Matt 4:1//Luke 4:1
  - Mark's stylistic features in the frequent use of "immediately", "and", "and immediately"
  - Mark's use of historical present – 151 against 78 in Matt and 9 in Luke

### Source Criticism: Solution

- The argument from fatigue
  - See Matt 14:1 and 9: tetrarch → king (reproducing Mark 6:26?)
  - See Luke 9:10, 12 → feeding of 5000 in a city called Bethsaida → a deserted place (reproducing Mark 6:35)?

### Form Criticism

- Method of analysis focusing on individual, self-contained units of materials
- Champion: Bultmann
- The task: identifying the process of transmission; classifying the individual pericopes into various forms, assigning a *Sitz im Leben*, and reconstructing the history of the tradition

### Form Criticism

- Examples of Forms
  - "I AM" sayings in John
  - Pronouncement stories – Mark 2:13-17; 3:31-35
  - Parables
  - Speeches
  - Miracle stories
- What kind of changes????
- No longer in "fashion" today

### Redaction Criticism

- The way the redactors/editors/evangelists change their sources or utilise the traditions
- Task: to rediscover the evangelist's theology and setting

### A way forward

- Canonical & Narrative approach?
- Avoiding harmonising of the gospels – what about Aland's Synopsis of the Four Gospels?
- Paying attention to individual voice of the evangelist