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Paul N. Anderson

Mark, John, and Answerability: Interfluentiality and Dialectic between the Second and Fourth Gospels

Discerning the relation between Mark and John has been an elusive endeavor, though an extremely important matter to assess rightly. Upon a fitting assessment of this relationship hinge one's views of the composition and tradition development of the Second and Fourth Gospels, John's relationship to the Synoptic Gospels overall, the material from which to construct one's view of the historical Jesus, and a host of other literary, historical, and theological issues. The Markan-Johannine relationship, however, is best approached as an investigation of intertextual analysis rather than narrow source criticism. This is not simply a factor of preference – one critical school over another; rather, it is the result of empirical judgments based upon the linguistic facts that while these texts betray many similarities, there are not enough identical similarities to infer a particular source-dependent relationship between written texts.¹ Then again, literary radical-independence theories also fail to account for the many similarities and apparent points of contact between the Johannine and Markan traditions, so one's approach must be more dynamically resilient than conventional literary dependence/independence theories have normally allowed.²

* I dedicate this paper to Prof. Frédéric Manns on occasion of his 70th birthday. An earlier form of this essay was presented at a joint session of the Johannine Literature and the Synoptic Gospels Sections of the Society of Biblical Literature meetings in Denver, 2001.

¹ For full critical analyses of modern Johannine source and composition theories, including Bultmann's composition theories and leading views regarding John's relation to Mark and other Synoptic traditions, see Anderson, *The Christology*, 33-136.

² While Gardner-Smith, *Saint John*, is correct to infer John's overall independence from the Synoptics, its tradition is not isolated. Rather, it should be considered *autonomous* – albeit with several levels and types of dialectical engagement intertraditionally and intratraditionally. Therefore, a larger theory of John's *dialogical autonomy* is required to do justice to the phenomenological data. I have described the eight components of that overall theory elsewhere in Anderson, *The Riddles*, 125-156; and Id., *The Fourth Gospel*, 37-41. See the new introduction in the third printing of *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel*, xxxv-lxxxiv, for an outlining of the major components; see also a critical engagement of over forty reviews in the epilogue, *ibid.*, 330-358.

Since the publishing of Alan Culpepper's *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* in 1983, new literary approaches to John and other gospel traditions have broken new ground – not only in better understanding the meanings of texts, but also in opening new ways of understanding how texts work and how they may have come together. Indeed, the innovative set of contributions gathered by Fernando Segovia (“*What is John?*”) in 1996 and 1998 presented a new set of interdisciplinary approaches to the Johannine riddles, helping interpreters consider issues “in front of” the text as well as “behind” the text. While Gail O’Day’s development of John’s narrative mode and theological claim and Jeffrey Staley’s reader-response analysis of John opened new vistas for reading John, Mark Stibbe’s analysis of John’s artistry has effectively challenged the flawed modernistic juxtaposition of John’s poetic features against its historical character.³ Yes, John is poetic and artistic as a narrative, but that does not mean it is not historically grounded or concerned. Therefore, in analyzing the multiplicity of dialectical engagements between gospel traditions and their subject (Jesus), other traditions and renderings of Jesus’ ministry, their audiences, and the concerns of the narrators/editors, signs-systems and their enunciations must be taken into consideration. As Julia Kristeva puts it in her essay, “*Revolution in Poetic Language*”,⁴ intertextuality extends to ideas and images, not just the copying of words:

The term *intertextuality* denotes this transposition of one (or several) sign-system(s) into another; but since this term has often been understood in the banal sense of “study of sources”, we prefer the term *transposition* because it specifies that the passage from one signifying system to another demands a new articulation of the thetic — of enunciative and denotative positionality. If one grants that every signifying practice is a field of transpositions of various signifying systems (an intertextuality), one then understands that its “place” of enunciation and its denoted “object” are never single, complete and identical to themselves, but always plural, shattered, capable of being tabulated. In this way polysemy can also be seen as the result of a semiotic polyvalence — an adherence to different sign-systems.⁵

Thus, with more nuanced approaches to texts and their interconnectedness available to scholars in recent decades, not only is our understanding of John’s literary operations liberated from its objectivistic straightjackets, but so is an

³ O’Day, *Revelation*; Staley, *The Print’s First Kiss*. Mark Stibbe’s book, *John as Storyteller*, builds on his 1989 Nottingham thesis on John’s artistry; note also the treatment of Mark’s artistry in Best, “Mark’s Preservation”. See also Koester, *Symbolism*, for an analysis of John’s semeiology and symbolism; Ashton (ed.), *The Interpretation*, documents the advance of new literary studies in his second edition of leading Johannine essays.

⁴ See Id., *The Kristeva Reader*, 89-136.

⁵ Kristeva, *The Kristeva Reader*, 111.

understanding of historical narrative and its character. Indeed, some particular inferences regarding directionality and character contact of are possible, but each set of data must be considered on its own. While Kristevan and Bakhtinian theories of intertextuality and dialogism have offered greater flexibility in comparative gospel studies, however, I prefer to consider intertraditional analysis in terms of what I call “interfluence”.⁶ As early gospel traditions were likely oral in their origin and formation, and as performed texts created new waves of secondary and tertiary orality,⁷ a theory of Johannine-Synoptic interfluentiality poses the most suitable way forward in analyzing the relations between the Johannine and Markan traditions precisely because it can accommodate a larger set of variables, including texts, while not confined to textuality proper. Of course, neither Kristeva nor Bakhtin limited intertextuality or dialogism to texts themselves – texts simply bear witness to themes and images echoing from one literary generation to another. Also, theories of intertextuality at times get wrongly applied to inferences of sources and dependence, when their value lies precisely along the lines of analyzing connections without needing to infer derivation.⁸ Such being the case, “flow” or “fluency” might be a better way to describe the empirical phenomena than “text” or “textuality”.

Nonetheless, as I have applied Bakhtin’s theories of dialogism to the form and function of the Fourth Gospel’s dialogues with Jesus, and his overall theory to a polyphonic reading of John, within this field, Mikhail Bakhtin’s understanding of “answerability” provides an especially helpful set of ways forward when analyzing these two autonomous gospel traditions.⁹ For one thing, monodimen-

⁶ My coining of the terms “interfluence” and “interfluentiality” is indebted to the analyses of Raymond Brown from his earliest Johannine essays on, where he describes the likelihood of “mutual influence” or “cross-influence” between the Markan and Johannine traditions, likely in their oral stages. Says Brown, “The Problem”, 195: “Familiarity with the Synoptic tradition probably goes back beyond the written form of Jn to the oral stages of the Johannine tradition... there may have been a crisscross transference of details”. Extending this approach, Brown develops this theory further in *An Introduction* (102-104) by describing the likelihood of cross-influence between the Johannine and Markan traditions, likely in their early stages of development; I see it as a pre-Markan and early Johannine set of contacts.

⁷ Note here the important work of Walter Ong, *The Presence*, which shows how orality extends beyond first-order deliveries in its influence, as second-hand and third-hand echoes of a tradition continue to impact other traditions beyond their initial deliveries.

⁸ These two fallacies are named explicitly by Leon S. Roudiez in his introduction to Julia Kristeva’s *Desire in Language*, 15.

⁹ I have applied several aspects of Bakhtin’s philological and form-critical work elsewhere in my treatments of John’s Christology (Anderson, *The Christology*, 152, 194-197, 221-251), the history of the Johannine situation (Id., “*The Sitz im Leben*”; Id., “Bakhtin’s Dialogism”), and levels of dialogue regarding the Johannine text (Id., “From One Dialogue to Another”). Here I apply Bakhtin’s insights into the cognitive dialogue between life and art in the mind of the author intratraditionally, extending it also intertraditionally, as one artistic historiographer engages the work of another in bi-optic perspective.

sional literary theories of Gospel relations are most certainly going to be wrong, or at least inadequate, for explaining the multiplicity of variables involved. Contacts between the Second and Fourth Gospels likely included oral, written, and even editorial stages of both traditions, and theories of gospel interrelationships must explore multiple venues of contact, not just one. Applying Ockham's Razor to a full century of intra- and intertraditional dialogue cuts the shave too closely. These texts and their developments are far more multifaceted and polymorphic than a singular inference can accommodate; thus, considering multiple levels and venues of dialogic operation is essential to the task of gospel literary analysis.¹⁰

For another, we must find ways of thinking about gospel historiography as a literary and theological venture in ways that are not distorted by modernistic conceptions of rationalistic objectivism. Modern critical methodologies would have been foreign to 1st-century Jewish authors in a Hellenistic culture, and inferences from narrative analysis also apply to historical work these evangelists sought to undertake. After all, these traditions were not disembodied sets of ideas, floating docetically from one piece of writing to another. No. Gospel traditions were persons – conveying impressions rooted in understandings of events – but also rendering their narratives in settings wherein the past speaks to the present in timely ways.¹¹ These vehicles passed through integrative systems of human cognition, synthesizing perceptions with experience, and a compelling literary theory must address human components of how persons form, convey, and engage material, and how content affects persons and addresses their situations.

In particular, Bakhtin's discussion of answerability offers at least two significant ways forward for investigating narrative historiography, not just novelistic fiction. First, we shall consider the relationship between art and life, each impacting the other; second, we shall consider the relation of author to hero within each of these Gospels, replete with implications for interpretation. Therefore, within the cognitive processes of evangelists as artists engaging memories of a historical subject within emerging historical settings, art answers to life – past and present – wherein life and art also come to include other renderings of the Jesus story, not simply one's own.¹² In applying this dialogical set of under-

¹⁰ For an interfluent analysis of the passages with closest Johannine-Synoptic passages (John 6 and 18–20), see Anderson, *The Christology*, 90–251; and Id., “Aspects of Interfluentuality”. This overall theory is described in Anderson, “Interfluentuality”; and Id., *The Fourth Gospel*, 101–126.

¹¹ For a cognitive-critical analysis of the thinking-perceiving-experiencing human sources of the Johannine and Markan traditions, see Anderson, *The Christology*, 137–193, and Id., “The Cognitive Origins”.

¹² As Bakhtin's earliest published essay, “Art and Answerability” (1919), is presented before his “Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity” (ca. 1920–1923) in *Art and Answerability*, 1–3 and

standings to these particular texts, the interfluent relationships of John and Mark – *the Bi-Optic Gospels*, are clarified.

Before getting to Bakhtin, however, an assessment of leading approaches to the composition of John and John's relation to Mark seems an important way to proceed. This discussion will summarize the findings of works found elsewhere, but in each case, identifying the limitations and assets of a particular approach provides the basis for further inquiry. It may also be the case that intertextual analyses most likely to withstand the test of time will have benefited from the interdisciplinary work they follow, and for this reason historical and theological considerations will be discussed alongside literary ones. This analysis will thus assess approaches to the Johannine-Markan relationship, pose an extended theory of the interrelationships between these two traditions, and finally discuss aspects of answerability between Mark and John and their common subject: Jesus.¹³

I. Critical Appraisals of Recent Approaches to the Johannine-Markan Relationship

Recent approaches to the Johannine-Markan relationship have been many, but several leading ones merit special consideration. In each case, general strengths and weaknesses of the view will be assessed in the interest of inferring stronger aspects of each theory as worthy material upon which to construct one's hypothesis of relationship. Of course, a central value of interfluentiality as an approach is that similarities and differences between texts can be analyzed meaningfully regardless of the degree to which one's hypothesis of intertextual relations can be demonstrated. Nonetheless, what can be inferred from assessing evidence for the best of recent theories will help in pointing the way forward regarding the character and form of intertraditional relations between the Markan and Johannine traditions.

4-256. Concluding each essay, Bakhtin says, "Art and life are not one, but they must become united in myself—in the unity of my answerability" (p. 2); and, "Author and hero meet in life; they enter into cognitive-ethical, lived-life relations with each other, contend with each other (even if they meet in one human being)" (p. 231).

¹³ While the main focus of this essay is literary, implications are extensive for the historical quest for Jesus. As the first three quests have programmatically excluded John, a fourth quest (one that includes John) is sorely needed if all relevant ancient sources are to contribute to this important venture. Cf. Dodd, *Historical Tradition*; Manns, "Historicity"; Charlesworth, "The Historical Jesus"; see also Anderson "Aspects of Historicity"; Id., "Gradations"; Id., *The Fourth Gospel*; and also Anderson *et alii* (ed.), *John, Jesus, and History*, 2 vols.

1) *Not Three against One, but Parallel, Bi-Optic Traditions*

One of the leading fallacies regarding traditions underlying the four Gospels is to assume that because we have three Synoptic Gospels that are quite different from John, John's distinctive features are idiosyncratic and problematic as a minority report. If indeed Matthew and Luke were constructed upon the material in Mark, the Synoptic Gospels represent a largely singular perspective with a Markan foundation. It is also not clear that the Fourth Evangelist would have known more than one Gospel, Mark, by the time the earliest edition of the Johannine Gospel was completed. This being the case, John's differences with the other Gospels should be perceived first as differences with Mark, and given the fact that John's tradition speaks with its own voice, it should be regarded as an individuated perspective parallel to Mark's. If there is any merit to the most basic inference of the Synoptic Hypothesis, it is the combination of John's and Mark's perspectives that give us a bi-optic presentation of the ministry of Jesus.

A converse way of putting things has surfaced among several British and European scholars over the last several decades, which explains John's radical differences from the Synoptics as a factor of John's primitivity. While John A.T. Robinson's book, *The Priority of John*, sought to challenge directly the assumption of John's posteriority, the thesis has not caught on among critical scholars in Britain or America. On the Continent, however, several scholars¹⁴ have added their own contributions to this perspective, arguing that the reason John is so different from the three Synoptics is that they were not yet written at the time that John was first produced. Especially if John was produced in an isolated region, it may be easier to infer that three traditions might have overlooked John than to believe that John has overlooked all three of the Synoptic traditions. While much of John's tradition does indeed seem to be early, theories that postulate an early finalization of John find themselves challenged by any material that seems even slightly later. Whatever the case, regarding John and Mark as two parallel traditions representing autonomous and sustained perspectives on the ministry and teachings of Jesus calls for their being regarded as the Bi-Optic Gospels.¹⁵

¹⁴ See especially Peter Hofrichter's monograph, *Modell und Vorlage der Synoptiker*, although his approach infers Mark's dependence on John. In March 2000, an international Symposium was held at the University of Salzburg to discuss John's relation to the Synoptics (see Hofrichter [ed.], *Für und Wider*), and three areas of convergence emerged: a willingness to consider John's tradition (and perhaps even finalization) as early (at least three of the eleven papers placed it before Mark), a movement to see Luke as having used Johannine tradition as one of his sources (three other papers developed this view), and an interest in exploring John's particular relation to each of the other traditions (my own approach).

¹⁵ See my essay on the topic: Anderson, "John and Mark".

2) Not Dependence and Monodirectional Influence, but Engagement and Interfluence

A second fallacy is to assume that there was ever a singular, unitive perception of Jesus' provocative works and words – even within the apostolic band. In all four Gospels, narrators comment upon the fact that the disciples misunderstood Jesus' actions and sayings initially, only to understand them more fully at a later time, and they also portray the disciples as disagreeing with each other over what these things meant. Dissonance is portrayed as being even greater among those who did not become followers of Jesus, but it is highly likely that differences existed between first impressions, not just later developments. This being the case, similarities between John and Mark should not be construed as factors of John's dependence upon Mark or Mark's influence upon John, despite John's having been finalized after Mark.¹⁶ Influence could have moved from the Johannine tradition toward the Markan, so an analysis of the history of Johannine-Markan engagement and traditional "interfluentiality" is a more fitting way to proceed.

This procedure is also bolstered by the textual facts. When John 6 is taken as a case study for demonstrating John's dependence upon Mark,¹⁷ none of the contacts are identical. While as many as 24 similarities may be identified between John 6 and Mark 6, and while 21 may be identified between John 6 and Mark 8, none of them are identical similarities, making a theory of literary dependence untenable. Such facts, however, do not disconfirm the possibility of contact, or even tradition familiarity, but given the reality that all the similarities between John and Mark betray also at least some significant differences, theories of John's derivation from, or dependence upon, Mark must be abandoned. Then again, two other possibilities remain: first, some similarities could reflect traditional memories of actual events. This is not as much of a moral impossibility as some scholars assert. Second, it is highly likely that there was at least some contact between the early Johannine and Markan traditions, and many of the contacts between them show traces of orality. Graphic details, memorable exclamations, features of settings and other non-symbolic features seem to have been the sort of illustrative material especially characteristic of oral tradition.¹⁸ By definition, these distinctive contacts between John and Mark also represent

¹⁶ A notable fallacy of Johannine-Synoptic-dependence theories is that they assume that because John was finalized late its tradition was late-and-only-late. The Leuven School at times errs on this inference, as does Brodie, *The Quest*. With Goodenough and others, John includes early tradition as well as later developments: see Goodenough, "John".

¹⁷ Other than the Passion narrative, John 6 is the place where the most contacts between John and Mark are found. See Tables 7 and 8 in Anderson, *The Christology*, 98-101.

¹⁸ See Tables 10-15 in Anderson, *The Christology*, 187-190.

the types of material omitted by Matthew and Luke in their redactions of Mark. Further, if two oral traditions were to have run into contact with each other, the influence would likely have moved in both directions, heightening the likelihood of an interfluent history of engagement.

3) *Not a Diachronicity of Sources, but a Diachronicity of Tradition*

The leading critical theory of John's composition during the 20th century is the inference that John was constructed on the basis of alien sources. The attraction of such theories is that they seek to account for several issues: where the Johannine material may have come from (if not from Mark, the signs material may have come from a signs source similar to Mark), theological tensions between the evangelist's material and his narratorial contributions (the signs appear to be employed dialectically, and the I-AM sayings seem to be in tension with the evangelist's incarnational Christology), and they may account for some of the literary perplexities and rough transitions in John. While Bultmann's theory of at least three major underlying sources (a *sēmeia* source, a revelation-sayings source, and a Passion narrative), the work of the evangelist, a major disordering of the material, and the reordering and addition of alien material by the redactor has been the most enduring of hypothetical reconstructions, only two aspects of his theory have endured – the inference of a signs source and additions by a redactor.¹⁹

When all three types of evidence for Bultmann's inferences of sources are analyzed using John 6 as a test case, the evidence not only shows itself to be non-compelling; it is largely non-indicative.²⁰ This is significant because Bultmann and his advocates put forward their views on the basis that they were corroborated by three major types of evidence: stylistic, contextual, and theological. Stylistically, Bultmann argued that the style of the signs-source material was "Semitising Greek", while the style of the revelation-sayings-source material was "Hellenised Aramaic". Such a set of features might be indicative of disparate origins, but when all the stylistic features used in detecting such sources are applied across John 6, the distribution is entirely random. There are more verbs in the action narrative and more

¹⁹ The best analysis of Bultmann's *A Commentary on John* is performed by Moody Smith's *The Composition*, especially laying out the characteristics of each of Bultmann's hypothetical sources. Robert Fortna's *The Gospel of Signs* combines the Johannine signs with the Johannine Passion narrative, but the de-Johannification and re-Markanization of a Johannine text does not a signs source make. The final editor appears to have been different from the evangelist, but his work appears conservative rather than intrusive. Significantly, note Robert Kysar's diametric reversal regarding the existence of alien sources underlying John, in the six-part review of *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel*, in *RBL* 1 (1999) 38-42. That Johannine scholarship has largely abandoned source-critical approaches to John's content is evident in my added epilogue to *The Christology*, 330-358.

²⁰ See Anderson, *The Christology*, 48-136.

abstract nouns in the discourse material, but this does not imply that some material was from Jewish and Greek origins, respectively. All of John is a Jewish form of Greek, and stylistically, the Fourth Gospel comes from a largely unitive cloth.

Contextually, John does have a variety of rough transitions, including: a difference in form between the poetic Prologue and the following narrative, odd geographical transitions between John 4, 5, 6, and 7 (Galilee, Jerusalem, Galilee, Jerusalem), the gap between John 14:31 and 18:1 (where Jesus invites his disciples to depart but does not arrive at the garden until three chapters later), and the following of John 20:31 (an apparent first ending) with chapter 21. A few other aporias exist, but these major perplexities call for some sort of composition theory to account for them.²¹ A source hypothesis, however, is not the best way to address these perplexities. A far more plausible approach is to infer a first edition to which supplementary material has been added by an editor.

Theologically, John does have a variety of tensions, but these are best explained on some other basis than inferring a literary dialogue between the evangelist and unconfirmed alien sources. First, John's agency Christology, rooted in the Prophet-like-Moses *shaliach* motif (Deut 18:15-22)²² accounts for most of the tension within the Father-Son relationship. Second, the evangelist is clearly a dialectical thinker, and he works with issues conjunctively rather than disjunctively.²³ This being the case, rather than inferring that the evangelist must have been engaging an alien signs source, he could just as well have been engaging his own tradition dialectically. It is also plausible that he was interested in countering and affirming perceptions within his environment in the way he presents his material dialectically. Third, the Johannine situation was itself in a state of flux, and developing issues within the evangelist's audience and setting would have affected the theological inclinations of the Fourth Gospel. For instance, crises with local Jewish communities evoked emphases upon Jesus being the Jewish Messiah and Son of the Father, whereas slightly later tensions with Gentile Christians over whether Jesus suffered evoked incarnational emphases.²⁴ Fourth, a variety of literary features used to draw the reader into the Johannine Gospel's material may also have created theological and contextual tension.²⁵ Such features as irony and the misunderstanding dialogue, for instance, would have created some of the tensions in John.²⁶

²¹ A total of thirty-six Johannine riddles (theological, historical, literary) are laid out in Anderson, *The Riddles*, 25-91.

²² With Borgen, "God's Agent"; cf. Anderson "The Having-Sent-Me Father".

²³ With Barrett, "The Dialectical Theology"; cf. Anderson "The Cognitive Origins".

²⁴ With Brown, *The Community*; cf. Anderson, "Bakhtin's Dialogism".

²⁵ With Culpepper, *Anatomy*; cf. Anderson, "The *Sitz im Leben*". Here Bakhtin's work, *The Dialogic Imagination*, is most helpful in analyzing the dialogues with Jesus in the Gospel of John.

²⁶ On the origins of John's theological tensions, cf. Anderson, *The Christology*, 104-107,

Independently, John Ashton and I came to the same conclusion that the best way to explain John's perplexities with a minimal amount of speculation builds on a modification of Barnabas Lindars' composition theory.²⁷ A first edition of John appears to have been gathered around 80-85 CE, about a decade after the finalization of Mark. It apparently began with the ministry of John the Baptist (as did Mark) and closed with John 20:31, declaring why the Gospel had been written. John 5 originally flowed into John 7, as the healing of the paralytic on the Sabbath is still being discussed, suggesting the likelihood that John 6 was inserted during a later edition of the Gospel. Likewise, John 15-17 appears to have been inserted in between John 14:31 and 18:1, and this material especially shows signs of being later material gathered around the question of how Christ continues to lead the church through the Holy Spirit. Chapter 21 then appears to have been added by the editor, along with Beloved Disciple motifs and some eyewitness-appeal material.

Interestingly, the first-edition material contains virtually all the controversy material between Jesus and Jewish leaders (suggesting Jewish-Christian debates within the Johannine situation), and the supplementary material contains most of the incarnational material in John (suggesting debates with Gentile, Docetizing Christians within the Johannine situation). For these and other reasons, John's tradition should be considered not as diachronic with relation to the sources of its material; but, it indeed appears diachronic intratraditionally, in that an earlier edition seems to be followed by a later and final edition, with the Johannine Epistles produced during the interim. John was likely finalized around 100 CE after the death of the Beloved Disciple, and the editor (plausibly the author of the Johannine Epistles) apparently prepared this work as a manifesto of Jesus' original intentionality for the church. Rather than inferring a dialectical relationship between the Johannine evangelist and a Mark-like source (whose features had presumably been "de-Markified" and subsequently "re-Johannified"), the more likely inference is that the Johannine tradition itself was engaged in an intertextual dialogue with other Gospel traditions, and in particular, Mark. This dialogue between Johannine and Markan traditions can be plausibly inferred during the oral stages of John's tradition, and likewise within John's first edition and supplementary material. Conversely, engagements with

137-166, 194-251; on understanding their place when interpreting John's riddles, cf. Anderson, *The Riddles*, 157-173.

²⁷ Among the various composition theories posed, that of Barnabas Lindars (*John*, 50-51) is the least speculative; I had already come to this conclusion when I submitted my Glasgow thesis in December 1988, and Ashton concluded the same in his first edition of *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* in 1991, 82-101. The part of Lindars' theory I find least compelling, however, is his inference that the Lazarus narrative displaced the Temple-cleansing, causing it to be moved earlier; the rest of Lindars' theory is robust in its plausibility.

John's tradition may be inferred within the pre-Markan material, and likewise within the Gospel of Mark and its second ending.

4) *Not an Isolated Independence, but an Engaged Autonomy*

Just as simplistic views of John's dependence upon Mark or any other source fail to account for the robust and autonomous way John tells its own story of Jesus, regarding John's autonomy as isolated and removed likewise overstates the evidence. True, Gardner-Smith shows multiple cases in which John is pervasively different from Mark and the other Gospels, but differences "at almost every turn" must be matched with multiple similarities, as reflected in the work of Mackay.²⁸ Therefore, John's convergences-with-and-departures-from Mark might not imply either a simplistic dependence or independence between the two traditions, but a more dialectical engagement between them, allowing for John's overall following of Mark's project, while setting the record straight here and there correctively and also augmenting Mark in a non-duplicative way. Therefore, if a dialectical history of engagement indeed existed between the Markan and Johannine traditions – including corrective moves as well as complementary ones – John's pervasive autonomy should not be taken for isolated independence.

Another view that has come under recent criticism is the relegating of Gospels to particular communities thought to be isolated from each other. While Gospel traditions indeed betray features of the particular settings in which they emerged, including community issues and crises, this is not to say that they were necessarily isolated from other traditions. This being the case, if Mark were finalized first and were read in various meetings for worship, it is hard to imagine that it would have been long confined to a singular community. It may also be the case that written Gospel traditions were engaged more often as public oral deliveries rather than being read privately as written documents. While Matthean contacts with Mark offer the strongest evidence of a text-dependent relationship between the Gospels, with Luke's Markan contacts being next in line, this is not to say that Johannine-Markan contacts emerged in the same way. Indeed, the first edition of John would have been the second Gospel produced in written form (assuming Luke and Matthew were written in the 80's and 90's), and it

²⁸ Ian D. Mackay, *John's Relationship*, shows a large number of structural similarities between John and Mark, bolstering the likelihood that the Johannine evangelist had at least heard Mark read in some setting, such as a worship meeting, explaining similarities as factors of familiarity. I see here an influence of project and pattern, as the first edition of John contributes a second and distinctive rendering of the Jesus story with Mark in view, but there is no evidence that John's witness depends on Mark for its content and thrust. In that sense, it remains autonomous, though engaged dialectically with the Markan rendering of Jesus' ministry.

may even have had readers of Mark in mind.²⁹ Both in the Markan-Johannine similarities as well as the Markan-Johannine differences, aspects of interfluentiality and intertextuality may to some degree be inferred. While the autonomous voice of a particular gospel tradition merits its full weight, assuming either a basic or eventual isolationist appraisal of gospel traditions is fallacious.

Despite its pervasive autonomy, the Johannine tradition was also engaged with each of the other Gospel traditions, but each of these contacts had its own history and character. Upon overly vague theories of John's "relation to the Synoptics" in general have many hypotheses foundered. While all the evidence for the following assertions cannot be listed here, a summary of inferences from the evidence is as follows.

a) The relation of John's tradition to Mark's was *interfluentia*, *augmentive*, and *corrective*. During the oral stages of the pre-Markan and the early Johannine traditions, traditional stories were heard by the tellers of these traditions, and Mark and John show signs of contact during the oral stages of these traditions. This would account for many of the textual similarities between John and Mark, which characteristically represent details of places and events common to oral narration and illustration. 200 and 300 denarii (John 6:7; 12:5; Mark 6:37; 14:5), the much/green grass at the feeding (John 6:10; Mark 6:39), the name of the place of the crucifixion (*Golgotha* – John 19:17; Mark 15:22), and other details are common to Mark and John. For whatever reason, these details were omitted from Matthew's and Luke's redactions of Mark, and if they had access to Mark as a written text, we may infer these are the sorts of details omitted from the use of a written text.³⁰ Conversely, they resemble features characteristic of orality, and they may even represent the sorts of nonsymbolic, illustrative detail employed within oral renderings of events in the ministry of Jesus. Given the fact that gospel traditions in their oral stages of formation would have received and imparted influence, the relationship is best considered an interfluentia one.

When the first edition of John is considered alongside Mark, another set of insights emerges. As this edition has only five signs in it (excluding John 6 and 21 as later additions), strikingly, none of these are found in Mark! If some familiarity with Mark can be inferred, this fact suggests an augmentive function, which may even have motivated the organizing and selection of material in the first edition of John. If the Johannine evangelist sought to augment Mark's narrative, many of the problematic aspects of John's differences and similarities

²⁹ Richard Bauckham in his essay, "John", argues this case convincingly; my expansions of this thesis follow below.

³⁰ The fact that Matthew and Luke omit names of people and places and other details in Mark, shortening Mark's narrative while adding other units of tradition, challenges diametrically mimetic-theory attempts to account for John's and Mark's illustrative details. Cf. Anderson, *The Christology*, 187-192; Id., "Gradations"; Id., "Aspects of Interfluentiality".

with Mark cease to be as troubling as they might have otherwise seemed. Whereas Matthew and Luke eventually built *upon* Mark, John appears to have built *around* Mark. Thus, the numeration of the first two signs performed in Cana of Galilee (John 2:11; 4:54) serves to fill out the earlier ministry of Jesus, augmenting the events narrated in Mark 1.³¹ Likewise, the other three signs in John's first edition are Judean, and along with Jesus' many trips to Jerusalem, these narratives complement the limitedly Galilean provenance of Jesus' Markan ministry.³² In a somewhat different way, the Johannine rendering of the Passion narrative reaffirms the Markan presentation, while at the same time adding distinctive details, incidents, and theological insights along the way. The fact of John's uneven overlapping of Mark's Gospel narrative may even be inferred in the first part of John's original conclusion. As a proleptic assault upon a familiar criticism, this sentence may be rendered as a marker of intertextuality: "(Yes, I know that) Jesus did many other signs that are not written in *this* book (right; I know Mark's out there; stop bugging me for sidestepping its material), but these are written that you might believe..." (John 20:30-31). In building around Mark, the first edition of John augments and reinforces it; John's first edition as the "second gospel" is different from Mark *on purpose*.

A third aspect of this relationship, however, must also be considered, in that John presents some events and themes in a radically different light than does Mark, and this suggests either a corrective to, or an alternative rendering of, some aspects of Mark. Most striking is the presentation of the Temple cleansing at the beginning of Jesus' ministry rather than at the end. While many scholars infer a theological reason for the Fourth Evangelist's having done so, such a view is problematic. The reference to Galileans having witnessed Jesus' works in Jerusalem before the healing of the official's son reflects the view that the Temple cleansing was indeed an earlier event, not just a theological construction (John 4:45); and, the fact that the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem are already willing to put Jesus to death after the otherwise innocent healing of the paralytic suggests that the Fourth Evangelist indeed had chronology in mind in locating the event early (John 5:18). Conversely, Mark's arrangement of the early, middle, and later Jesus material into a progressive narrative need not have been ordered by chronological knowledge or interests. Mark presents Jesus as attending Jerusalem only once during his ministry – at the end, and he apparently ministers for less than a year in Mark.³³ Problematically, it is hard to believe Jesus' min-

³¹ Matthew appears to corroborate this judgment in locating the Capernaum healing from afar *before* the healing of Simon Peter's mother-in-law in Matt 8.

³² Again, Matthew corroborates the Johannine signs in John 5 and 9 by noting that Jesus performed healings on the blind and the lame, who came to Jesus in the Temple area (Matt 21:14).

³³ Yet springtime is apparent in the reference to green grass in Mark 6:39, possibly implying a ministry spanning at least two Passovers in Mark, though Mark only mentions one.

istry spanned only a year or so, and even if it did, it is unlikely that an observant Jew would not have traveled to Jerusalem more than once. Further, if Jesus had not visited Jerusalem before his final visit, why do Jewish leaders from Jerusalem travel to Galilee to observe his ministry in Mark 3:22 and 7:1? And, in all four Gospels, despite Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, with crowds laying down palm branches and shouting "Hosanna", the soldiers do not arrest Jesus immediately. Implication: they had seen him before (as rendered in John), and they knew he was not a political threat.³⁴ Therefore, it is the Markan narrative that is ordered for conjectural and rhetorical reasons, not necessarily the Johannine, and this may be one of the things the Johannine rendering seeks to amend.

Given such features of the Markan narrative and its being followed by Matthew and Luke, their triple testimony on these matters must be understood as results of redaction rather than corroborations of historicity against John. Further, if John's first edition may even have been the first written response to Mark, posing a corrective appears to have been an interest as well as an augmentation. Such an inference is also corroborated by Papias' citation of John the Elder, who opined that Mark got down Peter's testimony adequately and faithfully, but *in the wrong order*.³⁵ Also, Mark did not err in his inclusion of duplicate material; he simply sought to leave nothing out that was available traditional material. Given that the opinion cited by Papias was that of the Johannine Elder (likely the Johannine redactor), his view appears to have been that the Beloved Disciple (whose witness is true!) has set the record straight. Thus, John poses a knowing corrective to Mark, and this inclination extends also to several aspects of theological interpretation to be developed below.

b) John's relation to Luke is *formative*, "*orderly*", and *theological*. While many scholars have approached the particular Johannine-Lukan connections by inferring a common source between Luke and John, no such source exists, and neither are there any traits between the Third and Fourth Gospels suggesting particular evidence of a common source between them. Likewise weak is the view that because John is held to have been finalized latest among the canonical Gospels, contacts between John and Luke must imply John's dependence upon Luke. The lengthy sections of distinctively Lukan material (Luke 1–2 and 10–18) have very few contacts with John, and the most characteristic features of Luke (the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, the birth narrative) are missing

³⁴ Paula Fredriksen makes this argument forcefully in her case study, "The Historical Jesus".

³⁵ Critical scholars have failed to note three things about this famous Papias fragment: first, it is explicitly connected with a Johannine figure (the Elder) perhaps illuminating the Johannine-Markan relationship in Johannine perspective; second, the content matches some of John's differences – the order of the Temple incident and visits to Jerusalem, single feeding and sea-crossing narratives instead of duplicates, fewer healings, etc.; third, Mark's "getting it wrong" is not the sort of thing that would have been concocted – its traditional origin is more than plausible.

from John. Thus, such theories are implausibly weak in terms of evidence. Given that Luke departs from Mark and sides with John in multiple instances, a much stronger thesis is that Luke had access to the Johannine tradition, probably in its oral form, and in that sense, John's tradition can be said to have had a formative impact on Luke's.³⁶

Several sorts of evidence corroborate such a view: first, at least six dozen times Luke departs with Mark and sides with John. Many of these agreements reflect familiarity with the sorts of detail characteristic of the Johannine rendering of events: the "right" ear of the servant is severed, at the Transfiguration of Jesus they "beheld his glory", at the last supper Satan entered Judas, etc. Another sort of contact suggests Luke's preference for the Johannine ordering of things: one feeding is mentioned instead of two, only once is the sea crossed, Luke moves the confession of Peter to follow the other feeding (as it is in John 6, but not in Mark or Matthew), and all of these moves betray a preference for John's rendering over Mark's. At times Luke appears to add Johannine units of material, including the sisters Mary and Martha, a Lazarus figure with an after-death experience, a great catch of fish, and several other impressive similarities. One of the most striking Johannine features followed by Luke involves Luke's departure from Mark's presentation of the anointing of Jesus' head, moving the action to the anointing of his feet. Such is an unlikely move without traditional justification, and the best explanation is to infer that Luke likely had access to John's rendering of these events. Even his adding of the much-forgiven-and-indebted woman, followed by a reference to Mary Magdalene (Luke 7:37–8:3) may even betray a mistaken association resultant from the contact being an aural one. Luke may have mistaken one Mary for another, a possible indicator of oral/aural access to the Johannine rendering.³⁷ Because of the number of times Luke departs from Mark and sides with Johannine renderings of events, a specific source of Luke's "orderly account" constructed upon reports

³⁶ A striking 1st-century clue to Johannine authorship is first presented in Anderson, *The Christology*, 274–277, and this overlooked detail moves the association of Johannine themes with the disciple John a full century earlier than Irenaeus in 180 CE. This early connection between the Apostle John and a standard Johannine cliché (as the closest parallel in the New Testament to Acts 4:20 is 1 John 1:3) approximates a fact and deserves critical consideration. Charles Hill, *The Johannine Corpus*, also challenges robustly the view that John was embraced by heretics and spurned by the orthodox in the 2nd century; the opposite is closer to reality.

³⁷ In other words, having heard the name, "Mary", in John (11:2 and 12:3), Luke may have associated the sister of Lazarus with another Mary, introduced in the following paragraph; cf. the discussion in Hofrichter (ed.), *Für und Wider*, 282. Mark Matson (*In Dialogue*) follows Cribbs ("A Study"), inferring Luke had access to the written Johannine tradition; I see John's influence upon Luke as taking place during a less developed stage – likely during its oral stages of development, as the orderings of the catch of fish and the Temple incident in John are not followed by Luke.

of “eyewitnesses and servants of the Logos” (Luke 1:2) may be suggestive of his use of the Johannine tradition as a conscious source.

Finally, the heightening of theological themes in Luke/Acts having particularly Johannine inclinations is worthy of mention. The prominent place given to women, Samaritans, and the work of the Holy Spirit may have had a traditional derivation for Luke, and given Luke’s apparent dependence upon the Johannine tradition in other ways, the same is a likely source of at least some of Luke’s prominent theological distinctives. The fact that some of these and other Johannine features carry over into Acts suggests a broader access to Johannine material than a text-specific relationship might have implied. Another feature demanding critical engagement is the fact that Luke cites a typically Johannine theme in direct association with John the Apostle (see Acts 4:19-20; 1 John 1:3). While this striking contact cannot be developed fully in this essay, it moves the association a full century before Irenaeus, and it has been completely overlooked in the secondary literature. Indeed, Luke may have been misguided or even wrong, but the connecting of a Johannine motif with an apostolic source in the late 1st century here approximates a fact.³⁸ The point is that such an association, combined with multiple preferences for Johannine renderings over Mark’s, confirms Luke’s dependence upon the Johannine tradition for his “orderly” account.

c) Some of the contacts between John and the Q tradition also suggest Q’s *dependence* upon the Johannine tradition. Of course, the contacts could have gone the other way also, but some of the particular contacts are more characteristically Johannine. In particular, the “bolt out of the Johannine blue” (Matt 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 3:31-36; 5:20-21; 10:14-15, 38; 12:50; 13:3; 15:15; 17:1-2, 25) seems to bear particularly Johannine features of agency within the Father-Son relationship.³⁹ This contact is especially significant if Q were indeed an early tradition. It corroborates the view that John’s tradition was early and engaged with other traditions within the first few decades of the Christian movement. Another option, of course, is the possibility that this theme in Q came from an alternative Jesus tradition, and if so, that would confirm the historical authenticity of John’s tradition, thereby bolstering its primitivity. The least conjectural

³⁸ While the origin and development of John must be analyzed regardless of whom the author might or might not have been, reasons for excluding John the Apostle as a traditional source of its material are less than compelling critically (Anderson, *The Riddles*, 95-155). While he differs in his view of John’s authorship, Richard Bauckham has built a vigorous case for recovering the category of eyewitness testimony in our analyses of gospel traditions in his *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*.

³⁹ These and other contacts are developed more fully in Anderson, “Interfluentia”. See also Id., “John and Mark”, where the emphases in John 13:16; 15:20 on the servant not being greater than his master (Matt 10:24; Luke 6:40) and the receiving of the sender when one receives the agent (John 13:20) are also found also in Q (Matt 10:40; Luke 10:16).

inference, however, is that at least the Q tradition has incorporated particularly Johannine motifs, suggesting contact within the oral stages of their respectively early traditions.

d) Contacts between the Johannine and Matthean traditions suggest a variety of engagements that were *dialectical*, *reinforcing*, and *corrective* between the two traditions. In particular, the sorts of material added by Matthew to Mark show features of being organized for discipleship formation, convincing Jewish family and friends that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, and bolstering the formation of the emerging church. On these themes the Johannine tradition also shows similarities and differences with the Matthean tradition, and some of these intramural dialogues may have been reinforcing, while others may have been corrective. In particular, emphases upon Jesus' being the Jewish Messiah, who was authentically sent from the Father is a common rhetorical interest of these two Jewish Christian traditions. Emphasis upon Jesus' authentic agency from God brings to bear the Prophet-like-Moses motif rooted in Deut 18:15-22, and such a motif was likely a topic of debate within Jewish-Christian discussions during the Jamnia period.⁴⁰ Matthew and John also make use of common Scripture passages to explain the disappointing reception of Jesus as predicted by Scripture. In these ways, they reinforce Christian witnesses to Jesus as the Jewish Messiah.

Another way in which these traditions appear to engage each other is in regards to the setting up of the church. Matthew's Jesus sets up structures for positional leadership and for accountability (Matt 16:17-19; 18:15-20), while John's Jesus appears to engage these institutionalizing moves dialectically, and even correctively.⁴¹ For instance, when parallels with the above passages are considered in John, an impressive set of alternative presentations emerge. a) Rather than presenting Peter as the only one making a christological confession, John presents Nathanael and Martha as making striking confessions, while neither is one of the twelve, and Martha is a woman. b) Blessedness in John is not a factor of having made the correct confession, but it results from heeding responsively the word of Jesus and being willing to believe, even without having seen. These Johannine macarisms are connected with active discipleship rather than the correctness of a confession. c) Peter is portrayed as "returning the keys of the Kingdom" to Jesus in John 6, where he emphasizes that Jesus

⁴⁰ Of course, tensions between the Galilean prophet and the *Ioudaioi* as religious leaders in Judea would have been acute during the ministry of Jesus and in the decades following, but the Johannine sending motif is primarily Jewish rather than Hellenistic. No fewer than twenty-four points of contact can be found between the Prophet-like-Moses of Deut 18:15-22 and the Johannine presentation of the Father-Son relationship; cf. Anderson, "The Having-Sent-Me Father". See also Borgen's treatment of John's Jewish Agency motif: "God's Agent".

⁴¹ See Anderson, *The Christology*, 221-251; Id., "You Have the Words".

alone has the words of eternal life. d) Likewise, the Beloved Disciple becomes a model for authentic discipleship, and he is entrusted not with instrumental keys, but custody of the mother of Jesus, as a marker of ecclesial authority that is familial and egalitarian rather than instrumental and hierarchical. e) Apostolicity in John is regarded as normative for all disciples, not just a narrow few, and in John 20:21-23 Jesus imparts the Holy Spirit to a plurality of his followers, commissions them with the authority with which he has been sent from the Father, and gives them also the responsibility to be forgivers of sins. f) Finally, the risen Christ continues to lead the church through the Holy Spirit, available to all believers seeking to abide in Christ.

In these ways, the Johannine and Matthean traditions appear to have been engaged in a dialectical set of discussions, but it would be incorrect to assume that John's corrective thrust was aimed at the text of Matthew in particular.⁴² Indeed, Matthew's tradition shows signs of being familial and egalitarian, as well as structural and hierarchical, and it shows sensitivity to community relationships in ways that would not merit a Johannine critique in itself. However, the emergence of structural leadership in the wake of Peter's charismatic authority may have been yoked to church-organizing developments in ways that were experienced adversely by Johannine Christians. Apparently, Diotrophes who "loves to be first" (a claim to primacy rather than a factor of selfishness) has not only rejected Johannine Christians but has also expelled from his own church those who would take them in (3 John 1:9-10).⁴³ All it takes is one bad experience to evoke an ideological response, and while the first edition of John shows affinities with Matthew's Jewish-Christian concerns, the supplementary material in John addresses issues parallel to Matthew's organizational and ecclesial concerns. In these ways, the Johannine-Matthean engagements appear to have been carried on within the oral stages of their respective traditions and over a couple of decades or so.

These sorts of contacts imply levels of interactivity between the Johannine and Matthean traditions, perhaps even extending to Ignatian expressions of church organization and Johannine engagements of these developments as well. Again, Matthean tradition could have accommodated to Johannine critique at several places: for instance, note the way Matthew 18:15-18 is followed by verses 19-20, which emphasize the presence of Christ where two or three are gathered in his name. This passage is then followed by the parable of the unmerciful servant, where Peter himself (and leaders following in his wake) is

⁴² See my "Response" to Graham Stanton's good point in the *RBL* 1 (1999) 67-69.

⁴³ For a two-level reading of John 6, illuminating four crises in the Johannine situation (not just one, versus Martyn's single-crisis approach, *History and Theology*), cf. Anderson, "The *Sitz im Leben*".

required to forgive seven times seventy (Matt 18:21-35). Whether or not these counterbalancings to structuralizing leadership forms were included as “dog bones tossed to the Johannine critique”, or whether they emerge more centrally within the Matthean tradition, is impossible to ascertain. At the very least, we see here that early Christian communities probably shared a fair amount of interchange, and the similar-but-non-identical contacts between the Johannine and Matthean traditions appear to display at least some level of interactivity, and in that sense, interfluentiality.

5) Not a Historicized Drama, but a Dramatized History

The most significant development in Johannine studies over the last three decades has been the sustained attention given to literary aspects of John’s dramatic artistry. Indeed, taking special note of John’s plot, dramatic presentation of characters, rhetorical features, and literary devices has moved Johannine studies forward in significant ways. Especially valuable is the heightening of John’s ironic presentations of events and characters and reader-response analyses lending valuable insights into how John communicates what it does. An overly common flaw, however, is the tendency to misconstrue the historical character of the Johannine witness. While John’s literary attributes are well suited to fictive narrative analysis, more explicitly than any of the other Gospel traditions, canonical and otherwise, John claims to be rooted in events and history. Granted, John is highly theological and spiritualized, but to regard John foundationally as a work of fiction or theological construction is to misjudge its apparent genre.⁴⁴ One may even argue that John is flawed in its presentation of Gospel material, but one cannot say that the editor claims his material is anything less than a first-order witness to the ministry of Jesus. If the primary reason for critical scholars’ rejecting Matthew as an apostolic tradition is its pervasive proximity to Mark, John’s pervasive independence should support the clear opinion of the redactor regarding its apostolic authorship.

Assuming that John’s tradition cannot have been rooted in first-hand memory, however, scholars have sought to explain away its preponderance of non-symbolic, illustrative detail as a factor of mimesis. Supposedly, John is a historicized drama, added by the evangelist to make the narrative more believable. The opinion of Bultmann and many other scholars is that the evangelist added names, details, and places as an attempt to make the material seem more lively and gripping for an audience more distant and removed from the events themselves. Fair enough; the assumption is also that this is what similar narra-

⁴⁴ Cf. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels?*

tors did back then in contemporary, parallel situations. The closest parallels, however, are the three Synoptic Gospels, and an analysis of Matthew's and Luke's treatments of Mark shows the exact opposite. First, Mark tends to have far more graphic, non-symbolic detail than Matthew and Luke do, and in this respect, John is more like Mark than the other two Gospels. Second, this is the sort of material that Matthew and Luke tend to omit in their redactions of Mark. Third, if it is held that the Fourth Evangelist added detail to an existing source, or simply has added detail for effect, this goes against the two closest examples where a later tradition is re-crafting an earlier tradition (Mark) for later audiences (Matthew and Luke). Matthew and Luke indeed add units of material, but by and large, they omit names and details, appearing to condense and summarize material, when incorporating a Markan unit. Therefore, if John indeed worked in ways similar to its closest literary parallels, the inference of Bultmann and others is dead wrong. John's graphic and illustrative features imply a narrative that is not a historicized drama, but a dramatized history.⁴⁵ In that sense, Mark and John are most similar, and the likely inference is that they betray proximity to oral stages of Gospel material narration rather than distance.

As the above analyses suggest, John's relation to other gospel traditions is an important topic to address well, and yet our discussions have been poorly served by misappropriations of Ockham's razor. The disjunctive forcing of a choice between one theory or another may be applicable with relation to a philosophical matter, but the Fourth Gospel was probably 70 years in the making, and its relation to at least four other traditions, developing in their own ways and forms over the same period, was dynamic and interactive rather than static. Given the vast set of variables, even those suggested by the data contained in the Gospel texts themselves, a monofaceted theory of "John's relation to the Synoptics" is doomed to failure because of the larger complexity of traditional developments.⁴⁶ Rather, John's relation to each of the Gospel traditions was probably interactive and variously engaged between oral and written forms of various traditions, operating distinctively with varying literary developments of these texts.⁴⁷ This being the case, an interfluent approach poses the most helpful way forward, because it most adequately accounts for the literary facts from a his-

⁴⁵ Cf. Anderson, "Aspects of Historicity".

⁴⁶ Nonetheless, see the following important analyses: Barrett, "John"; Brown, "John"; Coakley, "The Anointing"; Fagal, "John"; Lee, "St. Mark"; Gardner-Smith, *Saint John*; Siegman, "St. John's Use"; Smith, *John*.

⁴⁷ The diagram on the next page outlines a two-edition theory of John's composition and an overly terse sketching of various forms of engagement between the developing Johannine tradition and each of the other gospel traditions, assuming Markan priority and a basic four-source approach to the Synoptic problem.

torical-critical perspective. As John and Mark deserve consideration as the Bi-Optic Gospels, an analysis of their distinctive renderings of their common subject, Jesus, follows directly.

A Charting of Johannine-Synoptic Interfluent Relations

Paul N. Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel and the Quest for Jesus* (London: T&T Clark, 2006, p. 126)

II. Mark and John – A History of Multi-Dimensional Interfluentual Engagement

When considering the history of engagement between the Markan and Johannine traditions, their plausible contacts at different stages of their developments deserve consideration. As mentioned above, this relationship appears to be characterized by at least three sorts of engagement: interfluentuality, augmentation, and correction. And, this history of engagement appears to have occurred not simply on one level of composition history, but on all three levels of both Gospels' oral-tradition development, early editions, and supplementary material added later. This being the case, the history of John's and Mark's intertextual engagement was multi-dimensional, and it may be inferred on at least six literary levels.

1) Bi-Optic Developments of Pre-Markan and Early Johannine Traditions

A ubiquitous flaw in many traditions-geschichtlich approaches is the notion that there was ever a time that the Jesus movement possessed a singular and unified view about important aspects of Jesus' teachings and ministry; nonsense. Upon such a shaky foundation many Gospel-relations constructs proceeded essentially by eliminating the Johannine tradition from the mix, but if John represents an autonomous Jesus tradition, this approach is doomed to failure.⁴⁸ While Gospel perspectives indeed evolved and developed in the course of early Christian history, significantly different perceptions and interpretations can be inferred between the Markan and Johannine traditions from day one, and these parallel trajectories deserve at least a cursory overview. Indeed, outright differences abound, but what is most interesting is the number of similar-yet-different presentations of Jesus in Mark and John; these suggest alternative memories of Jesus, and even distinctive ministries of the tradents, not disproving their connections with Jesus' ministry, but arguably suggesting them. While a thorough analysis is beyond the scope of the present essay, consider at least the following bi-optic parallels:

- *Basileiology* – the Kingdom goes forward by the healing of the sick, binding the “strong man” and proclaiming the Good news (Mark); the Kingdom advances by virtue of the truth, and its origin is “from above” (John).

⁴⁸ Cf. Dunn, “Let John Be John”; whoever the human sources of the pre-Markan and early Johannine traditions were (and there may have been several), parallel-yet-distinctive understandings of central issues regarding the interpretation of Jesus' ministry and Christian discipleship can be discerned as individuated trajectories from personalities to prototypes – likely reflecting distinctive ministries of Jesus' followers, setting templates that continued long after their deaths: Anderson, *The Christology*, 155 n. 22.

- *Semeiology* – Jesus’ miracles command power over forces of nature and they are demonstrations of the power of God (Mark); Jesus’ works function as signs and vehicles of revelation (John).
- *Didactics* – Jesus’ teachings show the hiddenness and way of the Kingdom with parables disclosing the truth and exposing insiders and outsiders (Mark); Jesus’ teachings are developed around the agency of Jesus as the King as an affront to the way of the world (John).
- *Discipleship* – the way of the cross and servanthood are emphasized, and the calling of the Twelve is heightened (Mark); the way of the cross and servanthood are emphasized, and the role of the Beloved Disciple is heightened (John).
- *Ecclesiology* – Jesus inaugurates a new movement and imbues it with emerging structures and forms (Mark); Jesus inaugurates a new movement and calls for unity around the appeal to love one another (John).
- *Eschatology* – Jesus’ post-resurrection ministry will continue as the Son of Man returning to redeem the faithful (Mark); Jesus’ post-resurrection will continue by means of sending the *Paraklētos* (John).
- *Parallel presentations of particular sayings and events* – similar renderings of the following events are found in John and Mark: the presentation of John the Baptist; the Passion of Jesus and resurrection accounts; the Temple-cleansing; the feeding, sea-crossing, discussion of the loaves, and confession-of-Peter events; various sayings similarities; various miracles similarities; controversies with religious authorities; and uses of Scripture.

Interfluentia Implications: Indeed, other parallel-yet-distinctive emphases could be outlined between the Markan and Johannine traditions, but these are some of the major categories of individuated perspectives suggesting two autonomous traditions.⁴⁹ The fact that differences accompany similar themes and accounts bolsters, at least potentially, the authenticity of these traditions, although development within each of them is also likely. Some aspects of these individuated perspectives may even have originated in differences of first impressions, and even among Jesus’ followers, his provocative words and deeds were likely perceived variously from the start. A strong likelihood also exists that the formation of traditional teaching about Jesus was patterned after the distinctive ministries of particular preachers, and material would have been crafted to address the needs of evolving audiences and their contexts. While the pre-Markan material may have developed in form-specific

⁴⁹ Note the many similarities and differences between John and the Synoptics (Anderson, *The Riddles*, 50-60), including 31 elements of fourfold attestation between the Gospels, 44 memorable sayings common to John and Mark, and 13 possible contact between the John and Q traditions (Anderson, *The Fourth Gospel*, 129-135). See also Freyne, “Locality and Doctrine”.

ways (collections of sayings and actions, etc.), the Johannine tradition appears to have developed with signs and sayings more thoroughly integrated.⁵⁰ Some exceptions can be found, but this difference may account for some of the distinctive presentations of the Markan and Johannine narratives. Regarding interfluentiality, the relation of authors (in this case, preachers) to the hero (Jesus) is a dialogical one. Not only are they telling stories of Jesus, but they are furthering their own ministries and seeking to encourage later audiences by means of their accounts.

2) Interfluentual Engagement between the Oral Stages of the Pre-Markan and Early Johannine Traditions

During the oral developments of these two traditions, there indeed may have been some contact between them. C.K. Barrett and other scholars have noticed the contacts between John and Mark on the level of many linguistic similarities, and yet none of them is entirely identical. The most feasible conjecture from these facts is to infer contact during the oral stages of their respective traditions; this being the case, influence could have traveled in both directions – hence, “interfluence” as a critical consideration. At the very least, we probably have two preachers who are familiar with how the other tells stories of Jesus’ ministry. Buzz words, memorable phrases, and graphic details characterize these contacts, and these are precisely the sorts of features that Matthew and Luke leave out of their redactions of Mark. Of course, these contacts may simply reflect parallel renderings of recollected events and details in the ministry of Jesus, but some of them reflect later impressions or reflections. For instance, citations of Isa 40:3 and 6:9-10⁵¹ serve explanatory functions regarding the uneven reception of Jesus and his message, but sometimes they allude to later events in the life of the church, such as Jesus’ baptizing with the Holy Spirit. Another possibility is the fact that details may have been passed on from, and received by, a multiplicity of oral sources, but these possibilities would still locate the contacts within the developing oral pre-Markan and early Johannine traditions. This being the case, several examples of likely interfluentual contacts are as follows:

- *Scripture references* – Isa 40:3 associates the ministry of John the Baptist with the voice of one crying in the wilderness (Mark 1:2-3; John 1:23); Isa

⁵⁰ Form-analyses of Synoptic content and its pre-Markan developments are largely serviceable (Bultmann, *The History*; Aune, “Oral Tradition”; Kelber, “Apostolic Tradition”); John’s tradition appears to have had its own character and history of development: Dunn, “John”. In the Johannine tradition, signs and discourses appear to have been connected early rather than late: Anderson, *The Christology*, 97-109, 137-251.

⁵¹ Cf. Evans, “The Function”.

6:9-10 explains the disappointing reception of Jesus (Mark 8:17-18; John 12:39-40).

- *John the Baptist and his relation to Jesus* – he is not worthy to untie the sandals of Jesus (Mark 1:7; John 1:27); the Spirit descended (as a dove – Mark 1:10; John 1:32); John baptized with water, but Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:8; John 1:33); Jesus is described as the Son of God (a voice from heaven, Mark 1:11; by John the Baptist, John 1:34); the bridegroom deserves special attention (Mark 2:19-20; John 3:29).
- *Graphic, illustrative detail* – 200 denarii is the value of the bread (Mark 6:37; John 6:7); five loaves and two fishes (Mark 6:38; John 6:9); the grass is described at the feeding (green, Mark 6:39; much, John 6:10); the loaves are blessed, distributed, and gathered up in twelve baskets (Mark 6:41-43; John 11-13); there were 5,000 men present (Mark 6:44; John 6:10); spittle was placed upon a blind man's eyes (Mark 8:23; John 9:6); "beyond the Jordan" locates an event (Mark 3:18; 10:1; John 1:28; 10:40); Bethany is the place of the anointing (Mark 14:3; John 12:1); Jesus and his disciples go "up to" Jerusalem (Mark 10:32-33; John 2:13; 5:1; 11:55); money changers and pigeons are driven from the Temple (Mark 11:15; John 2:14-16); the cost of the expensive ointment is 300 denarii (Mark 14:5; John 11:5); Peter warms himself by a fire (Mark 14:54; John 18:18); Jesus is dressed with a crown of thorns and a purple robe (Mark 15:17; John 19:2, 5); Jesus is crucified with two others (Mark 15:27; John 19:18); the place of the crucifixion is *Golgotha* – the place of the skull (Mark 15:22; John 19:17); lots are cast for Jesus' garments (Mark 15:24; John 19:24); a sponge of vinegar is offered to Jesus (Mark 15:36; John 19:29); Joseph of Arimathea asks Pilate for the body of Jesus (Mark 15:43; John 19:38); early on the first day of the week Mary (and others) find that the stone had been moved away (Mark 16:1-4; John 20:1); post-resurrection female witnesses report to Peter and the disciples (Mark 16:7; John 20:2, 18).
- *Memorable sayings* – (some of the following are slightly paraphrased) rise, take up your pallet (Mark 2:9-11; John 5:8-12); a prophet is not without honor except in his home town (Mark 6:4; John 4:44); Jesus is called "the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24; John 6:69); Jesus declares *egō eimi* (Mark 6:50; 12:26; 14:62; John 6:20; 8:58);⁵² Jesus invites disciples to "follow me" (Mark 1:17; 2:14; 10:21; John 1:43; 21:19, 22); Jesus refers to a dead person as being asleep (Mark 5:39; John 11:11); to receive Jesus is to receive the one who sent him (Mark 9:37; John 13:20); "Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" is declared by the crowd upon Jesus' entry

⁵² For a comparison-contrast of the I-Am sayings of Jesus in the Synoptics and John, cf. Anderson, "The Origin".

to Jerusalem (Mark 11:9; John 12:13); the destroyed “temple” Jesus will restore in three days (Mark 14:58; 15:29; John 2:19); the poor you have with you always, but not so Jesus (Mark 14:7; John 12:8); the threefold denial of Jesus is predicted before the crowing of the cock (Mark 14:18, 30; John 13:21, 38); the one with whom Jesus dips in the dish is the betrayer (Mark 14:20; John 13:26); Jesus says, “Rise, let us depart” (Mark 14:42; John 14:31); Jesus declares at his trial that he has taught openly in the Temple and elsewhere (Mark 14:49; John 18:20); he is asked by Pilate if he is the “king of the Jews” (Mark 15:2; John 18:33); and after his ambiguous response (Mark 15:2; John 18:37) Pilate posts a sign on the cross declaring as much (Mark 15:26; John 19:19).

Interfluentual Implications: Obviously, it is impossible to ascertain the particular origins of this similar-yet-different material in John and Mark, but at least some degree of contact between these traditions is likely, plausibly during their formative stages, and given that direction in a single direction is impossible to ascertain, yet alone unlikely, interfluentuality is the most reasonable inference, critically. Especially significant is the shared mundane details, which are often omitted in Matthew’s and Luke’s redactions of Mark. Given the fact that John and Mark also translate Aramaic names and phrases into Greek and explain Jewish customs to non-Jewish audiences, they betray not only traces of orality, but contacts with Palestine-based renderings of the ministry of Jesus that are translated and explained for later, Greek-speaking audiences. Of course, contact may have emerged indirectly between traditions, and hearsay impressions would be engaged as readily as more direct contacts between preachers, yet here, aspects of answerability come into play. Life speaks to art and art speaks to life, and they have their integration within the lives and cognitive processes of perceiving-remembering-experiencing-reflecting-delivering persons as tradents. Even if a preacher or writer has his or her own story to tell, being confronted with other renderings of similar events evokes a questioning dialectical process that is cognitively internal as well as literarily external: how does one incorporate or reject alternative renderings within one’s own conceptions of reality? While the particulars cannot be confirmed or disconfirmed, the presentation of two tradents (Peter and John) traveling in ministry together through Samaria in Acts 8 matches the phenomenology of differing similarities between the Second and Fourth Gospels, suggesting at least one venue within which such oral-tradition interfluence plausibly occurred.⁵³ In the above examples at least

⁵³ Of course, it need not have been the particular individuals, Peter and John, at the root of these bi-optic traditions, but at least something like this presentation in Acts fits the literary phenomena, and Brown’s inference of this overall possibility still stands critically, in my judgment.

some contact is likely, and Johannine-Markan interfluence of narrations may be inferred to have accompanied the polyphonic renderings of Jesus material at work within these early gospel traditions.

3) *The Compiling and Circulation of Mark: The Preservation of Apostolic Ministry*

The prevalent opinion among scholars that Mark was finalized around 70 CE is a solid basis on which to proceed, and what can be inferred about this first completed Gospel is the innovative way in which it integrates stories about Jesus with his words and deeds, culminating in the Passion events and Jesus' death and resurrection. In that sense, Mark has been organized in a way that has a clear beginning, middle, and end; but what sort of project was the gathering of this first Gospel? Hellenistic and Jewish biographies offer some parallels, but Mary Ann Tolbert's view that Mark is written to exhort those undergoing persecution and hardship, and to evangelize prospective believers, makes a good deal of sense, in that it points to the central rhetorical concern of the narrative.⁵⁴ The Second Evangelist also deserves to be seen as a collector of Jesus traditions, crafting them into a narrative whole, probably designed to be read publicly in meetings for worship.⁵⁵ While the question of Mark's sources cannot be addressed adequately within the present essay, a point deserves to be made: the

While critics have challenged vigorously traditional claim that Mark preserved Peter's oral tradition in written form (cf. reviews of discussions in Black, *Mark*; and Bryan, *A Preface to Mark*), the fact that 2nd-century opinion is pervasive and robust makes it difficult to deny the possibility that at least some of Peter's preaching may have underlain Mark's narrative. In his *Ecclesiastical History*, Eusebius cites Papias (*HE* II.15; III.39), Origen (*HE* VI.25), and Clement (*HE* II.15; VI.14) as identifying Peter's ministry as a source for Mark; Irenaeus (*Adversus haereses* III.1.1), Justin Martyr (*Dialogus* 106.3), Tertullian (*Adversus Marcionem* IV.5), and the Muratorian Fragment also make the same connection. To question a 1st- or 2nd-century view is not to demonstrate its impossibility.

⁵⁴ Also helpful is Tolbert's inference of four main themes in Mark: Jesus as the sower of the word, good earth and the rocky ground, Jesus as heir of the vineyard, and the death of the heir (*Sowing the Gospel*, 127-288). One wonders, however, if the role of sower is exclusively reserved for Jesus or whether the varied receptions of the Good News are designed to encourage faithfulness, given the prospect of apparent failure of evangelistic work.

⁵⁵ Indeed, Eusebius (*HE* II.16) proposes that Mark finalized his Gospel in order to perform it as a publicly read document during his ministry tour to Egypt. Beyond this opinion, Mark bears features similar to the presentation of Peter's sermons in Acts (especially Acts 10:34-43, which relates to 1 Pet 2:21-25; see also the use of Ps 118:22 in Mark 12:10-11; Acts 4:11; and 1 Pet 2:4, 7). Also of interest is the fact that the ministry of Peter in Acts looks a lot like the ministry of Jesus in Mark. Even the truncated character of the Markan narrative, placing multiple self-contained units in a progressive sequence, bolsters the view that a narrator gathered disparate preaching material together – plausibly from several sources – and placed it in a narrative-rhetorical sequence as a Markan inferential construction. Therefore, Mark's is a general chronology with a culminative climax, not an exacting one.

oft-contested view of Papias, that Mark contains at least some of Peter's preaching – preserved in accurate-yet-disordered form – is not at all contrary to the phenomenology of the textual facts themselves. Mark appears to have included material critical of Peter and the twelve in addition to favorable presentations, but this fact does not discount the possibility of all Petrine influence on Mark's narrative. Put conversely, arguing that Mark contains no Petrine preaching or tradition is beyond demonstrability, nor is it likely that an inclusive collection such as Mark's is totally devoid of Petrine influence. Further, there are good historical-critical reasons for inferring a Petrine tradition behind the Markan project, and the considered judgments of such scholars as Martin Hengel and others on the matter give one critical pause regarding critical negativism.⁵⁶ On the other hand, even if someone like Peter did play a role in forming the pre-Markan material, Mark undoubtedly gathered material from additional sources, so we are left, finally, with a text to be engaged, whatever its origins or destinations might have been.

A fact often overlooked on this matter, however, is that the testimony of Papias is presented as the opinion of John the Elder about the composition of Mark. He may have been misguided, or even wrong, but in the light of our intertextual interest, this connection to an even putative Johannine opinion merits investigation. Consider, for instance, the following explanation of Mark's origin and development as representing a Johannine opinion on the matter:

This, too, the presbyter [John] used to say: "Mark, who had been Peter's interpreter, wrote down carefully, but not in order, all that he remembered of the Lord's sayings and doings. For he had not heard the Lord or been one of His followers, but later, as I said, one of Peter's. Peter used to adapt his teachings to the occasion, without making a systematic arrangement of the Lord's sayings, so that Mark was quite justified in writing down some things just as he remembered them. For he had one purpose only – to leave out nothing that he had heard, and to make no misstatement about it".⁵⁷

While critical engagements of this and other fragments of Papias have bandied about questions of apostolic authorship, the literary clues to the Johannine-Markan relationship have largely been overlooked. Regardless of who might or might not have written what, this 2nd-century Johannine opinion as to the compilation of Mark is replete with interfluent implications:

⁵⁶ See especially Hengel's treatment of the Papias material in his *Studies*, 47-63. Other creative approaches to Mark include Farrer, *A Study in St. Mark*; Kelber, *Mark's Story*; and Telford (ed.), *Interpretation of Mark*.

⁵⁷ Eusebius, *HE* III.39.

- This opinion is reportedly ascribed to “the presbyter” (a reference to the Johannine Elder – in my view, the author of the Johannine Epistles and the final editor of the Fourth Gospel), who preserved the witness of the Beloved Disciple in written form – apparently accounting for differences of memory and content between the Markan and Johannine narratives.
- The arrangement itself, though, was Mark’s (not Peter’s), and from this Johannine perspective, at least some of Mark’s narrative was written in the wrong order – implying the need to set the record straight chronologically from a Johannine perspective.
- A follower of Paul (not a follower of Jesus), and later a follower and interpreter of Peter, Mark sought to preserve the memory of Jesus’ ministry by gathering preaching material into a narrative whole – plausibly evoking a parallel investment in contributing an alternative eyewitness rendering of Jesus’ ministry.
- Peter’s teachings were adapted to the needs of the church, rather than representing a full and systematic rendering of Jesus’ ministry or a strictly historical witness – implying the need to provide a fuller, alternative rendering.
- Mark’s work was “conservative” in that he sought to preserve the traditional material that came to him, not wanting to leave anything out but seeking to represent it faithfully – implying a concern regarding duplicate accounts, which the Johannine rendering sought to rectify.

While critical scholars have disparaged this Papias tradition because it is (in their view) traditional-and-therefore-suspect, they have failed to note the deconstructive aspects of the association. These embarrassing features make it unlikely to have been concocted: First, Mark is claimed not to have been a direct follower of Jesus (if Papias had wanted to bolster Mark’s authority, he could just as easily concocted a first-hand author as the source of the material). Second, the non-systematic and wrongly ordered sequence of Mark would not have been concocted by a writer seeking to bolster this Gospel’s authority. Third, that Papias poses serious (Johannine) critiques regarding the Markan project: the material is second-hand, not first-hand; neither Peter nor his interpreter posed a systematic account of Jesus’ ministry, but theirs is an occasion-evoked rendering; while Mark preserved the material faithfully, its sequence is out of order; Mark’s duplications are historically problematic, though editorially understandable. These early 2nd-century judgments should trouble conservative scholars seeking to build historically on Mark, as well.

Nonetheless, Johannine familiarity with the Markan project sets the pattern for John’s presentation of an alternative narrative, albeit in a non-duplicative way. This being the case, the following schema for Mark’s preservation of Jesus tradition, collected from the likes of Peter and others, shows the following overall structure:

- *The Beginning of the Gospel* (Mark 1:1-13) – The Prologue of Mark begins the Gospel with the baptism of Jesus by John, followed by the declaration of Jesus' heavenly sonship and his temptation in the wilderness.
- *The Ministry of Jesus* (Mark 1:14–10:52) – The main ministry of Jesus then begins after the imprisonment of John and continues up through Jesus' departure to Jerusalem. The ministry of Jesus is set primarily in Galilean regions, and his exorcisms and healings are accompanied by his sayings and parables as effectual means of the Kingdom's advance. Duplicative renderings are included (two feedings, two sea-crossings, several calling narratives, several parallel exorcisms and healings, many duplicate sayings, etc.) as evidence of Mark's interest in preserving what material was available to him. As a compiler, Mark appears to have constructed this section in thematic-progressive ways, ordering the material accordingly.
- *The Passion of the Messiah* (Mark 11:1–15:39) – Fittingly, the crucifixion is placed at the end of the story, and yet some of the material may have been located within the Jerusalem sequence for plot-progressive reasons rather than chronology-historical ones. For instance, while the triumphal entry is fittingly placed, parables of judgment and apocalyptic sayings in Mark 12–13 seem to have been located within this setting for narratorial reasons, as they bring the story to a dramatic conclusion. Likewise, the cleansing of the Temple (Mark 11:15-17) in Mark could have been placed there for conjectural reasons, ordered by the fact that Mark places all Jerusalem events at the end of Jesus' ministry. Conjecturally, this would have explained why the religious authorities wished to kill Jesus. The supper, garden scene, trials, denial by Peter, sentencing, crucifixion, and the attestation of Jesus as the Son of God by the centurion likewise make a fitting conclusion to the Passion of the Messiah in Mark.
- *The Appearances of the Lord* (Mark 15:40–16:8; vv. 9-20 were added later) – Here we have appearances of the risen Lord and an appendix that was added later by another hand. Peter is promised that the Lord would meet him in Galilee, and the appendix provides a fuller and more inspiring conclusion.

Interfluentual Implications: As the initial compilation of Jesus material, Mark tells the story of Jesus powerfully and graphically, seeking to preserve material that was rendered before him. Much of the ordering of material appears to have been rooted in Mark's own design for how the story of Jesus progressed toward the Christ events, and readers are invited to follow the way of the cross as it pertains to their emerging situations. Some of the most fascinating implications for interfluentuality in Mark pertain to aspects of discipleship, especially when the Johannine tradition is drawn in as a partner in dialogue. First, Jesus invites people: "Follow me" (Mark 1:17; 2:14; 10:21; John 1:43; interestingly, the same

invitation given to Peter by Jesus in John 21:19 and 22), and despite involving a cost, it is presented as the worthy choice to make. Second, disciples are challenged to serve one another – not seeking to lord it over others – and the sons of Zebedee are cited as targets of Jesus’ admonition to serve (Mark 10:35-45; Peter is called to serve others in John 13:6-17). Third, the sons of Zebedee are labeled with the projective appellation in Aramaic, *boanērges*, and their martyrdom is predicted (Mark 3:17; 19:38-39; in John, Peter’s name in Aramaic is given, *Kēphas*, and Peter’s martyrdom is predicted by Jesus in John 1:42; 21:18-19). Fourth, the role of “the Twelve” is heightened, with Peter serving as chief of the apostles, and he makes the primary confession and denials of Jesus (Mark 3:16; 8:29; 14:66-72; in John the calling of disciples is more informal and less organized, and others make confessions in addition to Peter: John 1:35-51; 11:27). Fifth, Mark presents apparent knowledge of details mentioned only in the Gospel of John, including references to Jesus’ declaration in John 2:19 regarding destroying and rebuilding the “temple” in three days (Mark 14:58; 15:29). Sixth (and perhaps insignificantly), the brother of John (James) is mentioned first, and the authority of Peter is bolstered by his association with the sons of Zebedee in Mark (Mark 1:19, 29; 3:17; 5:37; 9:2; 13:3; 14:33; in John, Andrew is mentioned before his brother, Peter, and the beloved/other disciple and Peter are juxtaposed: John 1:40; 13:23-24; 18:10-27; 20:1-10; 21:1-24). In these sorts of ways, not only are the situations of later Christians addressed, but Johannine-Markan echoes suggest some degree of interfluent exchange.

4) The First Edition of John: A Bi-Optic Alternative to Mark

Not only does the Johannine tradition reflect an autonomous perspective on the ministry of Jesus, but the preparation of the first edition of John (probably around 80-85 CE) appears to have been crafted – at least to some degree – with Mark in mind. That would make John’s first edition the second gospel, not the fourth – a fitting designation for the finalized Johannine Gospel. John’s being an alternative to Mark is not a new view, but its refinement as a literary hypothesis deserves attention in the light of the larger set of inter-traditional interests. Coming to his views independently from my own, Richard Bauckham recently wrote an essay on the Johannine-Markan relationship that is rife with implications.⁵⁸ In raising the question of John’s being rendered for readers of Mark, he thrust onto the platform for discussion the likelihood that inter-Gospel dialogism was built into the very fabric of John’s design and circulation. In that sense, it is argued that John was crafted as

⁵⁸ Bauckham, “John”.

public document rather than an intramural one. While other texts bear similar potential for exploration, Bauckham worked primarily with two parenthetical explanations suggestive of John's intentional complementarity to Mark. John 3:24 ("For John had not yet been thrown in to prison") is thought to correct Mark 1:14, where Jesus' ministry is presented as beginning only after John had been imprisoned; and John 11:2 (Mary is identified as the person who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair) makes the connection with the anointing of Jesus by an unnamed woman who did similar anointing in Mark 14:3-9. Certainly, this approach to an intertraditional complementarity fits the facts of the texts better than strict dependence or source-critical approaches. And yet, this relationship deserves to be developed further.

While the first Johannine edition concludes with a clear statement of purpose (that hearers and readers might believe in Jesus as the Christ, John 20:31),⁵⁹ verse 30 acknowledges other written accounts (Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in *this book*...), plausibly a reference to Mark. Assuming John's later material included John 1:1-18, chapters 6, 15-17, and 21, and Beloved Disciple and eyewitness references,⁶⁰ at least five features can be observed in the putative first edition of John when considered with Mark in mind: following several patterns in Mark, augmenting Mark's narrative with additional material, considered omissions, correctives in terms of order and sequence, and dialectical presentations in terms of theology and emphasis. Of course, every similarity and dissimilarity need not imply direct traditional contact, and given the earlier history of the Johannine tradition, the relationship could have moved from John to Mark at places. Nonetheless, the following outline seeks to make sense of the textual facts in the most plausible way imaginable. Building upon the intertraditional analysis developed above, the following similarities and differences suggest several ways that John builds around Mark.

A) *Following Markan Patterns* – respecting the larger features of Markan priority. While it cannot be assumed with certainty that John followed particulars of Mark's Gospel narrative, John does follow within the genre that Mark created.⁶¹ While considerable differences exist, the following similarities make one suspect that the first edition of John respects at least some Markan patterns, and that these may have provided something of a template for the Johannine Evangelist's narrative. Consider these similarities between Mark and John:

⁵⁹ Indeed, "these things" that are written include Jesus' witnesses, his signs, and the fulfilled word, among other features; cf. Anderson, *Navigating*.

⁶⁰ Cf. Anderson, *The Riddles*, 141-144.

⁶¹ Mackay develops these and other parallels more extensively: *John's Relationship*.

- Similar beginnings – “the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ” featuring John the Baptist and his ministry (Mark 1:1-14; John 1:1-17, 19-35).
- Similar endings and Passion narratives – many features of John’s Passion narrative are similar to Mark’s, including ending with post-resurrection appearances.
- Similar yoking of the authority of John the Baptist to preparing the way for Jesus (Mark 1:2-11; John 1:19-34).
- Similar callings of Peter and Andrew and two other disciples (Mark 1:16-20; John 1:35-42).
- Similar presentations of Jesus as a teacher and a healer within the Jewish prophetic traditions.
- Similar presentations of Jesus as Son of Man (his self-designated reference) and Son of God (an ascribed reference by others).
- Similar intensifications of conflict over Sabbath laws and Jewish concerns regarding blasphemy.
- The initial movement from Judah into Galilee and the final movement back to Jerusalem.
- The way of the cross is emphasized as normative for followers of Jesus.

B) *Augmentations of Mark* – John’s first edition apparently seeks to add to the Markan witness in ways that lead the reader to faith (John 20:30-31). When the first edition of John is considered on its own, it becomes apparent that the five miracles therein are all non-duplicative additions to Jesus’ miracles in Mark. Parallel to the five books of Moses, these five signs of Jesus confirm that Jesus is indeed the prophet Moses predicted in Deut 18:15-22. Likewise, the major I-AM sayings of John’s Jesus are notably missing from Mark (although all nine I-AM metaphors in John are also spoken by Jesus in Mark),⁶² and other material seems to have filled out the Markan presentation of the Gospel. Especially at John’s first two miracles do we see an explicit mention of the intentional inclusion of earlier material – ostensibly earlier than what was used to introduce Jesus’ ministry in Mark. Additionally, John fills out Judean aspects of Jesus’ ministry in ways that suggest an augmentive complementarity to Mark, geographically as well as chronologically:

- The first two signs done by Jesus in Cana of Galilee are mentioned so as to fill out the beginning of Jesus’ ministry (John 2:11; 4:54) – the events those reported in before Mark 1 (corroborated by Matt 8:5-13).
- Three Judean signs are added to the rest of the collection, emphasizing the broader ministry of Jesus, including a more realistic presentation of his going

⁶² See the extended analysis: Anderson, “The Origin”.

- to and from Jerusalem (John 5, 7, 9, 12; corroborated by Matt 21:14), with a ministry that spanned more than one Passover (corroborated by Mark 6:39).
- Early material about John the Baptist is added to fill out that connection (Mark 1:14; John 3:24), especially emphasizing that John was not the Messiah.
 - I-AM sayings are added as means of clarifying Jesus', role as the Revealer, sent from the Father (John 4:26; 8:12, 24, 28, 58; 10:1-16; 11:25; 14:6; note the parallel in the parable of the vineyard and the tenants: Mark 12:1-9).
 - Debates with Jewish leaders, accompanied by Jesus', authorization as the agent of the divine sender (rooted in Deut 18:15-22), function to evoke belief in Jesus as the Messiah, especially for Jewish audiences.
 - Jesus' post-resurrection prediction that he will go ahead of his disciples to Galilee, where they will meet up with him in Mark 16:7 is fulfilled and narrated in John 21:1-25.

C) *Considered Omissions* – the sorts of things left out if one has one's own story to tell with a non-duplicative interest. Deducing anything from silence is always a risky business; however, the Johannine Evangelist clearly left out some important material if he knew Mark at all. Intratraditionally, he at times makes the point that something did not happen (despite reports to the contrary), as it is emphasized in John 4:2 that Jesus himself did not baptize (contra John 3:22; 4:1); only his followers did. Likewise, he clarifies that it is not Judas Iscariot he was speaking about, but the other Judas (John 14:22). An awareness of the likely critique that he has left out some of the material familiar to readers/hearers of Mark is suggested by the proleptic gloss in John 20:30: "Jesus did many other signs... which are not recorded in *this* book...". Put otherwise, "Yes, I know Mark wrote about those things in his Gospel, but my intention was not to duplicate Mark; rather, I have written these things that you might believe that Jesus is the Messiah/Christ...". While the Passion events are covered fully in the Johannine rendering, the Johannine evangelist apparently built around Mark in presenting the ministry of Jesus, omitting much of Mark's middle section, a likely factor of intentional, non-duplicative complementarity. Consider the following apparently intentional omissions:

- Kingdom parables and other teachings of Jesus are largely missing from John, although Kingdom teachings are found in John 3:1-8 and 18:36, and agrarian-nature aphorisms are used in John 4:35-38; 12:24; 16:21.
- The calling of the twelve and particular-disciple-oriented material is missing, including narratives highlighting the roles of Peter, James, and John (such as the Transfiguration and details from the Gethsemane scene, etc.); every scene where either of the sons of Zebedee are mentioned in the Synoptics is absent from John.

- The Markan Apocalypse (Mark 13) is totally missing from the Gospel of John, although the Johannine tradition has preserved an entire collection of apocalyptic preaching – Revelation.
- Exorcisms are completely missing from John (note that the particular disciple who objects to another person performing exorcisms in Mark 9:38 was *John*), although Jesus is accused of having a demon (John 7:20; 8:48-52; 10:20).
- The institution of the Eucharist is completely missing from the Johannine last-supper narrative (John 13), and likewise the narration of Jesus' baptism is not found in John; John is sacramentally primitive and undeveloped.
- Markan miracles are completely missing from this first edition of John, and the evangelist's proleptic warning in John 20:30 clarifies for those familiar with Mark what his intention was – and was *not*; his collection was selective and at least somewhat non-duplicative in its design.

D) *Corrected Orderings and Presentations of Events* – the Johannine evangelist seeks to restore proper order to Mark's compilation of Jesus material. Such an opinion is attributed to the Johannine Elder by Eusebius, and the following correctives may reflect what he had in mind. Indeed, the presentation of some of these features in John is more realistic than the Synoptic renderings, and such considerations should give us pause before ascribing John's distinctive presentation of Jesus to canons of "theology" and the Synoptics to "history" categorically. Mark and John are historical, theological, and literary compositions, and in the light of intertextual considerations, John's striking differences with Mark on matters of order and presentation deserve special attention:

- The ministry of Jesus develops alongside that of John the Baptist rather than being initiated only after his imprisonment, setting Mark's record straight (Mark 1:14; John 3:24).
- The first two miracles were neither an exorcism nor the healing of Simon Peter's mother-in-law, but a celebrative miracle at a wedding feast and the healing of an official's son from afar (Mark 1:21-31; John 2:1-11; 4:46-54 – corroborated by Matt 8:5-13).
- The Temple-cleansing was placed at the beginning of Jesus' ministry rather than at the end (Mark 11:11-19; John 2:13-22).
- The anointing of Jesus is presented as a foot anointing rather than a head anointing (Mark 14:1-9; John 12:1-8).
- Jesus is presented as traveling to and from Jerusalem several times in John, not just once, as he is in Mark (Mark 10:32; John 2:13; 5:1; 7:14; 10:22; 12:12).
- The date of the last supper is presented not as an instituted Passover meal of remembrance but as a fellowship meal in John – the day before the Passover

(Mark 14:16; John 13:1; Mark 15:42 also presents the crucifixion as happening on the day of Preparation before the Sabbath, agreeing with John).

E) *Dialectical Presentations of Content and Theology* – John poses an alternative view to some of Mark's theological points. Interpretations of Jesus' provocative words and deeds continued to progress dialectically from the moment of an event's occurrence to the times and settings of their deliveries. At times these dual presentations of theological perspective are rather insignificant and easy to overlook, but otherwise, some of them are far more striking. Consider these dialectical and contrastive presentations of Jesus' ministry in the light of Mark's rendering:

- The roles of Elijah and Moses are fulfilled by Jesus rather than John the Baptist (John denies being either, contrary to his presentation in Mark 6:15-16; 8:28; 9:4-13; 11:32; John 1:19-27; 4:19; 5:45-46; 6:14; 7:40; 9:17), and contrary to the appearance of these figures on the Mount of Transfiguration, their typologies are fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus.
- Illustrative parables of the Kingdom are replaced with two corrective teachings on what the Kingdom of God is and is not like (John 3:3-8; 18:36-37) as well as a focus on the King (John 1:49; 12:13, 15; 18:37; 19:14).
- The Messianic Secret in Mark is reversed in John, as Jesus' otherwise hidden identity is disclosed by a Jesus who reveals his identity openly (John 4:26; 8:24, 28, 58; 14:6).
- The miracles of Jesus are revelatory signs, not acts of thaumaturgic wonder; therefore, they lead people to belief, expose blindness, and avail humanity everlasting life. Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet believe (Mark 6:42; 8:8; John 6:26; 20:29).
- Apostolic ministry is broadened to include a plurality of leaders, including women, Samaritans, and those who are not members of the twelve (John 1:43-51; 4:4-42; 11:27; 12:1-8; 13:6-17; 20:21-23).

While any number of the above inferences may be debated, the overall effort to assess the particular character of Markan-Johannine contacts yields considerable results. Over and against simple source analyses and dependence theories, an interfluent analysis of a multiplicity of contacts between these two traditions offers a much fuller range of possibilities regarding their cross-traditional engagement. It also is not the case that John's engagement with Mark was itself monological: either corrective or imitative only. The Johannine response to the Markan written project was more polyvalent than that, reflecting both dialogue and ambivalence (to use Bakhtin's polarities); while wanting to further the good work Mark had done, the Johannine Evangelist sought also to contrib-

ute improvements on several scores. Some of the Johannine additions were intended to augment and bolster the Markan narrative – filling it out and including alternative material, while some of the Johannine contribution appears to have intended to rectify particular aspects of the Markan compilation – setting the record straight here and there. This is what Papias’ citation of the Johannine Elder’s opinion suggests, and it is borne out textually when comparing John’s first edition alongside Mark. Peter’s witness was preserved suitably by Mark, but the ordering and presentation is thought to have been somewhat flawed in Johannine perspective. Whereas Luke, Matthew, and the later Markan interpolator all felt the need to improve Mark by adding to it, John does so by building around it, thus offering a bi-optic alternative.

5) Continued Preaching of the Beloved Disciple and the Finalization of John

While the first edition of the Johannine Gospel was probably finalized a decade or so after the finalization of Mark, the preaching and teaching ministry of the Beloved Disciple did not conclude at 80-85 CE. Rather, he continued to minister, and like the primary source of Mark’s tradition, he also appears to have preached and taught in ways that addressed the needs of Christians in his regional setting. Whereas earlier Johannine material, plausibly in Palestine, had sought to address such issues as the north-south dialogues between Galileans and Judeans and the place of John the Baptist with reference to Jesus (phase I, 30-70 CE),⁶³ later issues, plausibly in Asia Minor or some other setting within the Gentile mission, include at least four additional crises.⁶⁴ Aided by the Johannine Epistles and the Letters of Ignatius, the following crises in the second and third phases of the Johannine situation (roughly 70-85 and 85-100 CE) were largely sequential but somewhat overlapping:

- *Crisis A: Tensions with local Jewish family and friends* (70-80’s CE). While it is unlikely that Johannine Christians were thoroughly expelled from local Synagogues, the *Birkat ha-Minim* likely reflects a codification of Jewish attempts to preserve monotheism and to discipline perceived ditheism among followers of “the Nazarene”. Apparently, some distanced Jesus adherents were recruited back into the Synagogue if they would diminish their belief

⁶³ For a general overview of history of the Johannine situation, see Anderson, “Bakhtin’s Dialogism”, and Id., *The Riddles*, 134-141.

⁶⁴ In contrast to Martyn’s inferring a single crisis in the Johannine situation on the basis of John 9 (*History and Theology*), when a two-level reading of John 6 is performed, no fewer than four or five crises (if we include the Johannine-Synoptic dialectic) are adumbrated; cf. Anderson, “*The Sitz im Leben*”.

in Jesus as the Christ, in adherence to the Father; hence, the split in 1 John 2:18-25, as some community members returned to the Synagogue.

- *Crisis B: Emerging pressures from the local Roman presence, especially during the reign of Domitian (81-96 CE).* While relations with the local Roman presence was never an easy thing for 1st-century Jews and Christians, a new set of pressures emerge resultant from two acute factors: being distanced from the Synagogue deprived Christians of a dispensation accommodating Jewish monotheism, and the rise of Emperor worship under Domitian resulted in considerable harassment and penalization for those who refused to engage in public Emperor laud; hence, the admonition to stay away from idols – the last word as the first word in 1 John 5:21.
- *Crisis C: Gentile Christians teaching a doctrine of assimilation.* Legitimated by a docetizing Christology, increased expectations of emperor worship produce an intramural set of dangers (85-100 CE). At least partially in response to Roman penalization of those refusing to engage in public Emperor laud, Gentile Christians developed a set of assimilative teachings emphasizing a non-suffering Jesus – the great appeal of the docetic “gospel”; hence the appeals to “love not the world” in 1 John 1:5-2:17 and the second antichristic threat in 1 John 4:1-3 and 2 John 1:7.
- *Crisis D: Institutionalizing Christianity co-opts the coin of apostolic authority.* With the emergence of a new generation of leadership, moves toward structural hierarchy and male leadership evoke a corrective response from the Johannine sector – in the name of Jesus’ original intentionality for his church (85-100 CE). In the light of Diotrefes and his kin (3 John 1:9-10) the Johannine emphasis upon the ministry of and accessibility to the work of the Holy Spirit bears within itself a corrective impetus, not against apostolic memory, but in the name of it; hence Peter’s affirming of Jesus’ sole authority in John 6:68-69 and the emphasis on accessibility of the Spirit among all of Jesus’ followers in John 15–17.

What can be observed in the material that appears to have been part of the earlier and later editions of John is that most of the intense Jewish-authority debates are found in chapters 5, 7-10, and 12 – the backbone of the first edition material. Indeed, the primary rhetorical thrust of the first edition of John was to convince Jewish family and friends that Jesus was the Messiah, the Prophet predicted by Moses (Deut 18:15-22), authenticated by his revelatory signs and fulfilled words.⁶⁵ The emergent crisis with Rome is in the background (the confession of Thomas defies Domitian’s requirement that he be referred to as *Do-*

⁶⁵ Cf. Anderson, “The Having-Sent-Me-Father”; Id., “Antichristic Errors”, and “Antichristic Crises”.

minus et Deus – “Lord and God”), but it also appears acute in the later material as well (John 15:18-19; 21:19).⁶⁶ Interestingly, however, the supplementary material included in the final edition of John has most of its incarnational motif (John 1:14; 6:51-66; 19:34-35), and this reflects a later anti-docetic thrust. The same sequence of a Jewish crisis followed by a docetizing one can be inferred in the Epistles of Ignatius and in 1 John (see 1 John 2:18-25 versus 1 John 4:1-3 and 2 John 1:7),⁶⁷ and this difference in rhetorical thrust can be inferred between the earlier and later editions of John. This being the case, the thrust of the earlier material invites the reader to believe in Jesus as the Jewish Messiah, while the later material exhorts the community member to remain with Jesus faithfully within the community of faith.

Between these two editions of the Johannine Gospel, the Johannine Epistles were composed by the Johannine Elder (plausibly around 85, 90, and 95 CE), who then served as the compiler and editor of the final edition of the Gospel, as the witness of the Beloved Disciple (whose testimony is true, John 19:35; 21:24; 3 John 1:12), around 100 CE. It is assumed that the Beloved Disciple continued to teach (and perhaps to write), and some of this later material (especially John 6, 15-17, and 21; the Prologue echoes the community’s reception of the earlier gospel’s message, cf. parallels to 1 John 1:1-3) was added to the first edition along with eyewitness attestations and Beloved Disciple passages.⁶⁸ Upon the death of the Beloved Disciple, however, the editor apparently felt it important to bind up the rest of his testimony (at least important parts of it) and to finalize a fourth Gospel, complementing the other three.

During this same time period, Luke’s and Matthew’s expansions upon Mark were also taking place, and the Johannine leadership appears at least to have been familiar with some of the material within the Matthean tradition. John’s later material, however, does not appear to have been influenced by emerging Gospel narratives, and this is suggested by John 21:14 (the third post-resurrection appearance of Jesus), which implies Johannine independence from considering other appearance narratives elsewhere. However, not all the material selected for the final supplementation was late-and-only-late. Some of it may have been available earlier but might not have been included in the first edition because of its proximity to Mark (John 6, for instance). This being the case, while some of

⁶⁶ A number of other scholars have advanced the Johannine-Roman dialectic more recently, but the work of Richard Cassidy, *John’s Gospel*, along these lines is pivotal.

⁶⁷ Anderson, *The Christology*, 119-127; Id., “You Have the Words”.

⁶⁸ Just as the first ending of John (20:30-31) contextualized its contribution in awareness of at least Mark’s accessibility, the final ending of John (21:25) more pointedly defend John’s individuated contribution in the light of other narratives by stating that if *all* the things done by the Lord were recorded (in the Synoptics or elsewhere), the world could not contain the volumes – hence, Johannine non-duplicative selectivity.

John's later material reflects later intramural dialogues, some of it also reflects earlier dialogues involving the Johannine and Markan traditions. Consider, therefore, these corrective and dialogical features in John's supplementary material:

- *Semeiology* – the function of Jesus' signs was to reveal something about the agency of God; not to effect a wonder. In contrast to all five valuations of the Synoptic feeding narratives (they ate and were satisfied – Mark 6:42; 8:8; Matt 14:20; 15:37; Luke 9:17), not only is such a valuation missing from John, but it is declared by the Johannine Jesus to be the wrong valuation of Jesus' ministry: "You seek me not because you have seen the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were satisfied" (John 6:26). Rather than engaging a back-water *sēmeia* source, of which we have no internal or external evidence, the Johannine Jesus is here presented as engaging intertextually the prevalent Christian valuation of the feeding miracle – and does so by setting the record straight!⁶⁹
- *Eschatology* – Jesus never said that he would return again before the death of the apostles; rather, predictive interpretations associated with Mark 9:1 and 13:30 result from a misunderstanding of what Jesus originally said to Peter (John 21:18-23). As a response to the delay of the *Parousia*, the Johannine tradition spiritualized the advent of the risen Lord and clarified what Jesus did and did not say. In contrast to the Petrine tradition underlying Mark 9, the words and intended meanings of Jesus are clarified in John 21, yielding the following eschatological points: Jesus was not wrong, he was misunderstood and misrepresented. He did come and is here now by means of the *Paraklētos*; those who believe and live faithfully in Christ will be raised up on the last day.⁷⁰
- *Christocracy* – the effectual means by which the risen Christ seeks to lead the church is an egalitarian and spiritual modality rather than a hierarchical and structural one. Often misconstrued as a factor of ecclesiological preference, the Johannine juxtaposition of Peter and the Beloved Disciple and its associated material reflect an acute intramural debate within the late 1st-century church. Peter is portrayed as returning the keys of the Kingdom to Jesus in John 6:68-69; the Beloved Disciple is entrusted with the mother of Jesus in John 19:25-27 (denoting also a coin of ecclesial authority which is familial and egalitarian rather than structural and hierarchical); the Beloved Disciple serves as a priest (a bridge) between Peter and the Lord (John 13:22-27;

⁶⁹ John's dialectical engagement of signs faith versus mature faith was likely early as well as late, an intratraditional as well as intertraditional; cf. Anderson, *The Christology*, 137-220.

⁷⁰ Therefore, a variety of Petrine features in John (his confession in John 6:69; his purported misunderstanding of Jesus' words on the *parousia* in John 21:18-23) unwittingly corroborate the pervasive 2nd-century that Petrine content underlay the Markan narrative.

20:2-9; 21:7-9); apostolic ministry and authority are expanded beyond a singular delimitation of leadership to include a plurality of leaders (John 20:21-23); and the work of the *Paraklētos* is available to all (John 14–16).⁷¹

- *Eyewitness veracity* – whatever the modernistic scholar makes of the editor’s opinion, it is not an ambiguous one (John 21:24). The question for intertraditional studies should be directed more toward inquiring why such a feature was asserted rather than seeking to prove or disprove that it was so.⁷² This being the case, such an assertion would have not only defended a bi-optic perspective in the light of three Synoptic alternatives, but it also would have bolstered the ideological claims of the Johannine Jesus regarding the original intentionality of Jesus for his church. In that sense, it functions as much as a defense of Johannine theological content as it would have served to legitimate an autonomous rendering of the works and words of Jesus.

In the light of the material included in the finalized Gospel of John, the intertraditional concerns of the Johannine writers and editors continue to be engaged with the earlier and later renderings of the Markan project. While some of the supplementary material seems to have addressed later issues within Johannine Christianity, it also shows signs of having been engaged with the pre-Markan material – a dialogue spanning earlier and later periods. This is especially true of John 6, where earlier and later material appears integrated into a sustained narrative that may have been rendered over a long period of time. Still, like the rest of the Gospel, John 6 shows signs of an independent tradition that was also engaged with other traditions along the way. The sea-crossing narratives in John 6, Mark 6, and Mark 8 represent three independent traditions, not just later diverging developments, and such features bolster the view of John’s autonomy as put forward by the compiler. Whatever the case regarding their historical origins, the literary features of Markan-Johannine interfluentiality have continued to intrigue interpreters over the last two millennia, and the same is likely for the future. One more dialogic engagement, however, has yet to be noted.

6) Mark’s Second Ending and Interfluential Echoes of Johannine Material

The second ending of Mark (Mark 16:9-20), of course, is not found in earliest manuscripts, and it shows a distinctive style betraying another hand, probably

⁷¹ With Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus*, and others, cf. Anderson, *The Christology*, 221-250.

⁷² According to juridical studies, eyewitness testimonies of the elderly are not necessarily more reliable than impressions of the young; they tend to group suspects into positive or negative categories... a very “Johannine” operation; cf. Anderson, *The Christology*, 155-155 n. 21.

added in the 2nd century CE. Interesting for the present study, however, is that the second ending of Mark, as well as containing some Lukan and Matthean features, also contains several *Johannine* features, suggesting that the finalized edition of John has now impacted the interpolated version of Mark. Notice these familiar Johannine features that have been used now to augment Mark's first ending:

- The resurrected Lord appears first to Mary Magdalene, who becomes the apostle to the Apostles. This passage in Mark 16:9-10 clearly has Johannine features within it, and whether or not it represents a text-based familiarity with John 20, the impact of John's narrative has certainly made an impact within the interpolation later added to Mark.
- The twice-mentioned unbelief of the disciples in John is also passed on in Mark 16:11-13. After Mary tells the apostles that the Lord had risen, Thomas is presented as unbelieving twice (once explicitly, and once implicitly) in John 20:24-29. This too suggests the Markan interpolation's familiarity with the Johannine narrative and interfluent engagement with it.
- Jesus ate with his disciples and rebuked them for their lack of faith. Contacts with the Johannine tradition are not as clear here, but the meal at the seashore and Jesus' rebuking of those who required seeing before they would believe (John 21:11-14; 20:29) bear a close resemblance to Mark 16:14.
- The one believing will be saved, and the authenticity of Jesus' disciples' ministries is also confirmed by their accompanying signs, as was the ministry of Jesus (Mark 16:16-20; John 2:11, 13; 7:31; 10:38; 20:31).

Aspects of Markan-Johannine interfluentiality may accurately be inferred on at least six levels of their traditional contacts, and particular themes and concerns can be discerned on some levels more acutely than others. On the oral stages of their traditions an interfluent set of relationships suggests contacts evoked by preachers hearing ways that other preachers were telling the story of Jesus. Some of these details and phrases become utilized in other places and ways, but such "departures" suggest ways that oral-aural interfluentiality functions. An impression leads to an association, which then becomes added to narration. John's first edition, then, demonstrates a pervasive complement to Mark, and this set of engagements involved constructive and deconstructive intertraditional dialogues. Such moves appear to reflect a dual sense of apostolic traditional origin, and this feature motivates at least some of the engagement from the Johannine perspective. By the time final editings were added to John and Mark, interest in including interfluent material can also be inferred. Nonetheless, long-term dialogues on important issues are also included in the finalization of John, and some of those engagements with the Markan traditions surface a couple of decades after the first edition of John had appeared.

In these and other ways, the above construct attempts a far deeper and extensive history of engagement between the Markan and Johannine traditions than standard source and redaction treatments alone have yielded. In the above analysis, the transposition of ideas and semeiotic impressions can be seen as working back and forth between gospel traditions, and also building bridges between the needs of later audiences and their common subject: Jesus. Of course, many of the specific points will be variably convincing, but the evidence in each case is at least plausible, and in many cases compelling. Far more important than a workable Johannine-Markan theory of intertraditional dialogue, however, is what such a model might suggest. If we have two bi-optic memories of Jesus and his ministry, we also infer a history of answerability between art and reality – between narrative constructs and their subject: Jesus.

Such a likelihood, of course, could be a threat to both conservative and critical stances regarding gospel and Jesus studies. For conservative readers of the Gospels, the idea that John may be right and the Markan Gospels may be wrong may threaten narrow understandings of biblical and historical authority. For critical scholars, a Bi-Optic Hypothesis may jeopardize the one assured result of modern biblical scholarship, which is actually twofold: the de-historicization of John and the de-Johannification of Jesus. And yet, if John's tradition really does represent an autonomous memory of Jesus' ministry, despite its theological character, a restoration of the Fourth Gospel to the historical quest of Jesus could be one of the most significant critical reversals in the modern era. And, this is where Bakhtin's description of answerability comes into play.

III. Mark, John, and Answerability

In his earliest published essay (1919), "Art and Answerability", Mikhail Bakhtin describes the relation between art and life as a dialogical one, wherein each reaches to the other, finding its integration in the perception and experience of the human being. Indeed, if art is too lofty, too unattainable, it fails to grasp the stuff of life and is, in turn, rejected by life. Conversely, if life becomes all there is without being inspired by the aesthetic and the transcendent, it remains tethered to the mundane and fails to attain its rightful actualization. The integration of life and art comes together within the perceived and experienced realities of the person, but a mechanical union, says Bakhtin, will not do. Only in answerability, wherein art breathes into life, and life answers back to art is the integration authentic. And, this dialogical process is part of what we have explored in the interfluent history of engagement between the Second and Fourth Gospels.

As the Markan and Johannine evangelists were engaged with the hero of their narratives in aesthetic activity, as well as theological investment,⁷³ they had to integrate the artistry of Jesus traditions beyond their own with their own, and these domains had to be reconciled with lived experience, both prior and contemporary. From the very beginning, gospel traditions were polyvalent, and their developments were polymorphic. Thus, the development of the Bi-Optic Gospels evolved further into polyphonic renderings of the ministry and teachings of Jesus as forms of artistic renderings were tempered by life, and vice versa. These temperings, however, did not stop with the transmission from oral art forms to written ones, and this can be seen in the continuing development of the Markan and Johannine traditions toward the finalized narratives we have today.

And yet, a first word is never first, nor is a last word ever last; for life continues to challenge art, and art becomes yoked to expressing life, evoking answerability. After all, life involves not only the subject addressed in narrative – Jesus and his ministry, but it also involves the perceptions and experiences of tradents and their audiences, including encounters with other artistic renderings of their common subject – other gospel traditions. This being the case, the dialogic relationship between John and Mark, the Bi-Optic Gospels, continues to evoke a history of answerability as these two narrations invite engagement between them, and of their common subject: Jesus.

Such is the interest of our present dialogue, as we too become involved in the making of meaning from these ancient texts and their dialogic character. In that sense, it is not only the gospel tradents who negotiated the space between perception and experience, but their interpreters are also drawn into the same venture. As Bakhtin reminds us, “Art and life are not one, but they must become united in myself—in the unity of my answerability.”⁷⁴

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⁷³ This is the subject of the longest essay in Bakhtin’s *Art and Answerability*, 4-256.

⁷⁴ With this sentence Bakhtin concludes his first published essay (*Art and Answerability*, 2) and sets the agenda for his polyvalent theory of dialogism, which he filled out the rest of his life.

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