

Dating Mark and Matthew as Ancient Literature

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1. Dating Ancient Literature – Methodology and Heuristics

“We need to remind ourselves how very difficult the dating of the Gospels is and how necessarily speculative our conclusions are.”¹ By this statement Donald A. Hagner refers to various methodological and hermeneutical problems of dating the Gospel literature, i. e., he points to the fact that Mark and Matthew refuse a precise dating. At the same time, dating Mark and Matthew has important implications for interpreting and understanding the Gospel literature.

We should, however, also remind ourselves that the issue of dating is a *general* problem of dealing with ancient texts: Ancient literary texts do not mention the date of their composition² even if they go back to orthonymous authors whose living dates are known to us. The absence of references to the date of composition can be observed in nearly all ancient genres (e. g., epic literature; tragedies; philosophical dialogues; poetry; prose-texts: e. g., historiography, biography, and letters). And it applies to nearly all ancient authors: To a certain extent Cicero might be an exception.³

But how are studies in philology and classical literature as well as in history dealing with the fact that ancient literary texts mostly refuse a precise dating? Do they give up trying to find a dating? What could we learn from their approaches to dating ancient texts?

The particular importance and significance of dating ancient literature depend on various heuristic aims which lead the investigation. By reflecting on

¹ D. A. Hagner, *Matthew 1–13* (Dallas: Nelson, 1993), lxxv.

² The reference to the date of origin in the beginnings of Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War* (1:1) to 431 B. C. E., e. g., seems to be fictitious.

³ In some of his letters we can at least find instances and references, e. g., to a certain day when the letter is written, in the letter-ending (e. g., *Quint. frat.* 2.2). In other letters Cicero refers, e. g., to an earlier writing in connection to a specific date (e. g., *Att.* 14.18). The possibility of relating the Cicero-letters not only to history but also to a concise chronology has above all something to do with the fact that Cicero's secretary, Tiro, had collected and edited parts of the letter-corpus soon after Cicero's death. Parts of Cicero's speeches have been commented on early by Asconius Pedianus (ca. 3–88 C. E.) who also had access to specific Ciceronic sources; cf. P. K. Marshall, “Asconius Pedianus, Quintus,” in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (ed. S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth; 3rd rev. ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 188–9. Cf., concerning Cicero's letters in general, M. von Albrecht, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur von Andronicus bis Boëthius: mit Berücksichtigung ihrer Bedeutung für die Neuzeit* (2 vols.; 2nd ed.; München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1997), 1:416 ff.

those aims we can better understand what our expectations should be regarding the dating of Gospel-literature. *Historical studies* consider literary texts primarily as *historical sources*.⁴ The interpretation of historical sources by the historian is mainly a *reconstructive* task. It serves for insight into history ('Geschichtskennntnis').⁵ Thus, dating literature first of all means to reconstruct a 'history of events.'

Studies in classical philology or literature, however, consider literary texts to be *human artworks* first of all. The value and meaning of such artworks do not primarily become evident by reconstructing their dating. But nevertheless, comparative studies in familiar types of texts tell something about possible 'Vorlagen', the literary style of the text, the cultural coinage of the author, and – finally – also about the text in its historical context. Even if the meaning and function of literary texts as *historical sources* is limited in *philology* or *literary criticism*⁶ because of their particular focus on individual texts and their literary style, questions of dating and historical contextualization cannot be avoided. We need to take this into account when we look at a general tendency in Gospel exegesis according to which the *genre* as a literary category is considered to be "the key to interpretation." Richard A. Burridge recently claims that "the biographical genre of the gospels has implications for their social function, setting, and delivery."⁷ I will not take up the discussion here, whether the Gospel writings are biographical or – as it seems to me – much more historiographical in nature.⁸ I will simply state a more recent tendency of ignoring or downplaying questions of

⁴ Cf. G. Theuerkauf, *Einführung in die Interpretation historischer Quellen: Schwerpunkt Mittelalter* (2nd ed.; Paderborn: Schöningh, 1997), 62 ff.; A. von Brandt, *Werkzeug des Historikers: Eine Einführung in die Historischen Hilfswissenschaften* (Stuttgart: W. Kolhammer, 1989), 48 ff.; K. Arnold, "Der wissenschaftliche Umgang mit den Quellen," in *Geschichte: Ein Grundkurs* (ed. H.-J. Goertz; 2nd ed.; Hamburg: Cornelson Verlag, 2001), 42–58. Cf., in general, E.-M. Becker, "Die synoptischen Evangelien und ihre Quellen. Überlegungen zur Terminologie und Methodologie der Evangelien-Exegese," in "Quelle: Zwischen Ursprung und Konstrukt: Ein Leitbegriff in der Diskussion" (ed. T. Rathmann and N. Wegmann; Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 2004), 129–49.

⁵ Cf. Theuerkauf, *Interpretation*, 31 ff.

⁶ "Das literarische Werk ist ... nicht einfach nur Zeugnis für eine längst entschwundene Vorzeit, sondern auch für viele sehr viel jüngere Vergangenheiten ... Der Zeugniswert eines Werkes ist ... ein höchst komplexes Phänomen. Ein Werk besitzt nicht nur in seiner 'ursprünglichen' Gestalt Zeugniswert, sondern in jedem Modus, in dem es in weiterem Verlauf der Geschichte zum Tragen kommt, zunächst auf Grund der späteren Texteingriffe, durch Ergänzungen, Streichungen, oder auch durch Umstellungen, dann aber auch durch jede neue Rezeption, jeden Eintritt in einen neuen Kommunikationszusammenhang, sei es nun in Form von Interpretation, Kommentaren, Zitaten oder durch Erzählungen, die sich dem 'alten' Werk anlagern," W. C. Schneider, "Literarische Werke als historische Quellen," in *Aufriß der Historischen Wissenschaften: Bd. 4 Quellen* (ed. M. Maurer; Stuttgart: Reclam, 2002), 102–25, 107.

⁷ R. A. Burridge, "Gospels," in *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Studies* (ed. J. W. Rogerson and J. M. Lieu; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 432–44, 440.

⁸ Cf. E.-M. Becker, *Das Markus-Evangelium im Rahmen antiker Historiographie* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006); eadem, "The Gospel of Mark in the Context of Ancient Historiography," in *The Function of Ancient Historiography in Biblical and Cognate Studies* (ed. P. Kirkpatrick and T. Goltz; New York: T & T Clark, 2008), 124–34.

dating the Gospel literature for the benefit of literary studies.⁹ Instead of this it seems to be clear that neither from a historical nor from a literary point of view can the question of dating Mark and Matthew be neglected.¹⁰ Literary studies and historical studies rather more interact with each other.

More particularly, the reason for continuing the debate about dating and locating Mark and Matthew is threefold: *First*, New Testament studies seek to write a history of early Christianity – in that sense, the Gospel literature acts as an important historical source¹¹ as well as a narrative reflex of the history of events during the last third of the first century C. E. *Secondly*, addressing the Synoptic Problem and, as we do now, relating Mark and Matthew to each other, specifically, raises questions of literary dependencies, composition history, and a relative chronology in which Mark and Matthew are to be pre- or post-dated in relation to each other. Thus, the pure statement that Die “Entstehung des Markusevangeliums” is *terminus post quem* for dating Matthew¹² seems to be insufficient. We would rather more like to know *how* to contextualize the shape of either Mark or Matthew precisely.

Thirdly, there is a *hermeneutical* need for continuing questions of dating the Gospel writings as well as ancient texts.¹³ *Thus, the question of dating Mark and Matthew, i. e., the reconstruction of an ‘absolute’ date (= terminus post quem and terminus ad quem) as well as a ‘relative’ chronology, remains an important task of Gospel exegesis.* This is, of course, especially the case if we look at Gospel literature as historiographical literature: Then we are even more forced to relate the ‘narrated time’ in the Gospel writing to its ‘date of narration,’ i. e., the date of its origin.

⁹ There are, of course, also other examples; cf., e. g.: A. Mittelstaedt, *Lukas als Historiker: Zur Datierung des lukanischen Doppelwerks* (Tübingen: Francke, 2006).

¹⁰ Concerning a critical review of the implications of the historical-critical paradigm cf. J. Barton, “Historical-critical Approaches,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation* (ed. J. Barton; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 9–20; cf. also J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Interpretation of Scripture: In Defense of the Historical-Critical Method* (New York: Paulist Press, 2008). Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore, eds., *Mark & Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies* (2nd ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), however, put together various approaches to Markan exegesis that basically leave the paradigms of historical criticism.

¹¹ Concerning the reconstruction of Israelite history, cf. K. W. Whitelam, “Introduction: General Problems of Studying the Text of the Bible in Order to Reconstruct History and Social Background,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Studies*, 255–67.

¹² U. Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus: 1. Teilband Mt 1–7* (Düsseldorf: Benziger, 2002), 103.

¹³ “Das historische hermeneutische Dreieck von: Verfasser – Situation – Adressat erschließt den Zugang zu den Texten der Vergangenheit. Damit wird deutlich, daß Texte, die in der Vergangenheit verfaßt wurden, unter den Bedingungen dieser Vergangenheit entstanden und zunächst auch unter diesen Bedingungen gelesen werden wollen”, O. Wischmeyer, *Hermeneutik des Neuen Testaments: Ein Lehrbuch* (Tübingen: Francke, 2004), 53.

2. Dating Ancient Literary Texts – Criteriological Remarks

How can we proceed from here and discuss questions of dating Mark and Matthew in the framework of dating ancient literature?¹⁴ The aim of this contribution is to offer a comprehensive survey of criteria and methods of dating the Gospel literature as ancient texts. First of all we need to distinguish between an ‘absolute’ and a ‘relative’ dating.

2.1. Finding an ‘absolute’ dating

(= terminus post quem and terminus ad quem)

The ‘absolute’ dating of an ancient narrative prose-text applies to the text itself and its relation to historical events and data.¹⁵ In order to define such an absolute dating, methodological distinctions of the various narrative levels and the elements of composition in the text are to be formulated.¹⁶ We need to raise the following questions:

- a. What kind of historical events are mentioned in the text and what is the latest historical event, the text narrates (= *level of narration*)? To what kinds of historical data as a historical context does the text refer (= *synchronistic elements*)? What kind of historical material (e. g., documents, literary sources) is mentioned explicitly or at least presupposed narratively (= *level of composition*)?

An example for this: In the beginning of his *Histories* (I:1 ff.) Polybius defines his rationale for writing a history of the rise of the Romans in the course of 53 years (220–168 B. C. E.). This might refer to his writing plans around ca. 160 B. C. E. In books XXX–XL, however, Polybius adds the history of 168 until 145 B. C. E., by telling us about the consolidation of the Romans. So this must be a part of a later passage. Most convincingly the *Histories* have been composed in a multi-stage-process.¹⁷

- b. To what kind of historical events that are not part of the narration itself does the author refer (= *level of reference*)? What kind of references to the author’s life-time are implied in the text (= *the narrator’s perspective*)?

An example for this: In his biographical writing, *Agricola*, Tacitus gives two indications for a *post quem*-dating which go beyond the narration of Agrico-

¹⁴ Concerning general methodological questions of dating Gospel literature, cf. also *Die Datierung der Evangelien* (ed. R. Wegner; 2nd ed; Paderborn: Deutsches Institut für Bildung und Wissen, 1983).

¹⁵ Concerning the term ‘event’ (= Ereignis), cf. M. Saur et al., “Ereignis,” in *Lexikon der Bibelhermeneutik: Begriffe – Methoden – Theorien – Konzepte* (ed. O. Wischmeyer; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 141–6.

¹⁶ Cf. also, e. g., Becker, *Markus-Evangelium*, 89.

¹⁷ Cf. K. Meister, *Die griechische Geschichtsschreibung: Von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des Hellenismus* (Stuttgart: W. Kolhammer, 1990), 155–7.

la's life. Tacitus refers to the death of the protagonist Agricola (1:4) and to the beginning of the emperorship of Trajan (44:5).¹⁸ These references, however, differ in respect to their literary function: In 1:4 Tacitus mentions a historical date that is not part of the narration itself. By doing so, he legitimates his interest in writing about Agricola. The note in 44:5 tells something about the narrator's perspective on his writing. Here Tacitus refers to the current living-conditions in Trajanic time.¹⁹

These distinctions of various narrative levels and elements of composition aim in fact at a *post quem*-dating. Complications in finding a secure *post quem*-date occur in the case of prophetic or apocalyptic literature (e. g., Mark 13par.; Revelation): Here the distinction between past tense-experiences that must lie behind the text (*vaticinium ex eventu*) and future scenarios is hard to make: There is a certain discrepancy between the 'level of narration' and the 'level of reference'²⁰ which can, e. g., be observed in Virgil's *Aeneis*.²¹

Indications for the *ad quem*-dating can basically be deduced from the text only *e silentio*.²² The *terminus ad quem* might be the earliest historical date the text does *not* tell us about. Such an *e silentio*-conclusion, however, must remain tentative: In the case of Sallust's work, *Bellum Iugurthinum*, the author does not talk about Iugurtha's death even if it is evident that he knows about it: *Not* to mention this event is obviously a significant part of Sallust's *intentio auctoris*.²³ Thus, the lack of a reference to a historical date cannot simply be used for dating the text. Indications for the *terminus ad quem* are mostly to be deduced from the text history²⁴ or from extra-textual testimonies and writings – that is, from the early reception-history.

¹⁸ Cf. also J.-W. Beck, 'Germania' – 'Agricola': Zwei kleine Kapitel zu Tacitus' zwei kleinen Schriften: *Untersuchungen zu ihrer Intention und Datierung sowie zur Entwicklung ihres Verfassers* (Hildesheim: G. Olms Verlag, 1998).

¹⁹ "in hanc beatissimi saeculi lucem ac principem Traianum videre."

²⁰ Concerning the interpretation of Mark 13par., see below.

²¹ So Werner Suerbaum has tried to make a distinction in the *Aeneis* as an epic-text between Virgil's narration as a *propheta retroversus* and 'real prophecy' (9.446–449): Cf. W. Suerbaum, *Vergil's 'Aeneis': Epos zwischen Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1999), esp. 317 f. Cf. also M. von Albrecht, *Virgil, Bucolica, Georgica, Aeneis: Eine Einführung* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2006), esp. 171–3.

²² Concerning Mark 9:1, see below.

²³ Cf. G. M. Paul, *Historical Commentary on Sallust's Bellum Jugurthinum* (Liverpool: F. Cairns, 1984), 258 f. Cf. also, E.-M. Becker, *Markus-Evangelium*, 221.

²⁴ In the case of dating the Gospel of Mark the text history does not really help because the oldest manuscript which contains parts of Mark is P⁴⁵ (third century C. E.), but cf. Irenaeus, *Haer* 3.10.6, who quotes, e. g., parts of Mark 1 as well as Mark 16:9. In the case of dating the Gospel of Matthew, however, C. P. Thiede, "Papyrus Magdalen Greek 17 (Gregory-Aland P⁴⁶): A Reappraisal," *ZPE* 105 (1995): 13–20, esp. 17, has tried to date P⁶⁴ already in the first century C. E. and – by doing so – to point to an earlier dating of Matthew. Nestle-Aland²⁷, 687, however, date the Papyrus to the second century C. E. See a response to Thiede in K. Wachtel, "P^{64/67}: Fragmente des Matthäusevangeliums aus dem 1. Jahrhundert?" *ZPE* 107 (1995): 73–80: "Thiedes Argumentation für eine Datierung des P^{64/67} ins 1. Jahrhundert ist ... als methodisch

Therefore we finally need to ask:

- c. What manuscripts do we have (= *text history*)? Which authors or writings give the earliest indication of knowledge (= testimonies) or usage (= delivery, reception) of the text (= *reception history*)?

2.2. Finding a 'relative' chronology

The 'relative' dating is basically an issue of *chronological* dating. Hereby, the 'temporal structure' of the past tense is of particular interest rather than the reconstruction of precise historical data.²⁵ Depending on whether we are dating the writings of one author or writings of different authors chronologically, the cognitive interests vary:

- d. In the case of dating *writings of the same author*, the assumed chronology paints a certain picture of the author's literary development.²⁶ *Vice versa* a certain assumption of the author's literary development leads to a specific chronology of his writings.
- e. In case of dating *writings of various – known, but mainly unknown – authors*, the assumed chronology says something about possible literary influences, or even more about literary dependencies (sources, 'Vorlagen'). *Vice versa* certain observations on literary influences or dependencies lead to a specific chronologization of these writings. A prominent example for this in the field of New Testament studies is the relative dating of the so-called Johannine writings (letters 1–3 John and the Gospel of John) which leads to a variety of chronological models.²⁷

unzulänglich und sachlich falsch zurückzuweisen. Die herkömmliche Datierung in die Zeit um 200 hingegen hat sich als gut begründet erwiesen" (80); P. M. Head, "The Date of the Magdalen Papyrus of Matthew (*P. Magd. Gr. 17* = P64): A Response to C. P. Thiede," *TynBul* 46 (1995): 251–85. Cf. also Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.9.1 ff. on the Gospel of Matthew.

²⁵ Cf. A. Brendecke, "Chronologie," in *Lexikon Geschichtswissenschaft: Hundert Grundbegriffe* (ed. S. Jordan; Stuttgart: Reclam, 2002), 52–4. Cf. a similar basic idea that goes back to Eusebius' church history (book II–VII) and chronicles, in A. von Harnack, *Die Chronologie der Litteratur bis Irenaeus: Nebst einleitenden Untersuchungen, Erster Band (Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius)*; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1897), esp. 233 ff. on the New Testament time; idem, *Die Chronologie der Litteratur von Irenaeus bis Eusebius, Zweiter Band (Die Chronologie)*, 1904).

²⁶ Cf., e. g., the debate on the chronology of Philo's writings: Only in the cases of the *Legat.* and *Flacc.* can scholars work with a *post quem*-dating; cf., e. g., P. W. van der Horst, *Philo's Flaccus: The First Pogrom: Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 1–6. Generally, the literary categorization of Philo's writings seems to be more important; cf., e. g., S. Sandmel, "Philo Judaeus: An Introduction to the Man, His Writings, and His Significance," in *ANRW* 2.21.1 (1984): 3–46, 6–13.

²⁷ Cf., concerning the chronology of the Johannine letters and their relation to the Gospel of John, e. g., J. C. Thomas, "The Order of the Composition of the Johannine Epistles," *NovT* 37 (1995): 68–75; F. Vouga, "Johannesbriefe," in *RGK* (ed. H. D. Betz et al.; 8 vols.; 4th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998–2007), 4:549–52.

2.3. Results: Finding an absolute dating and a 'relative' chronology

The above mentioned observations lead to the following distinctions for dating ancient texts:²⁸

Dating type	Text-level indication (content/composition)	Text-level indication (reference)	Extra-textual evidence
<i>Absolute dating</i>	a.) <i>Post quem</i> : ²⁹ – level of narration and synchronistic elements – level of composition	b.) <i>Post quem</i> : ³⁰ – level of reference – the narrator's perspective	c.) <i>Ad quem</i> : Reception history – text history (see note 24) – testimonies – literary reception
<i>Relative chronology</i>	d.) Writings of one author: (> literary develop- ment)	e.) Writings of diverse authors: (> literary influences, dependencies; sources; 'Vorlagen')	

3. Dating Mark and Matthew comparatively

Coming to the dating of the Markan and Matthean Gospel narratives, I will concentrate on two aspects: First, and in more detail, I will discuss the *post quem* dating of Mark and Matthew, because this is the main focus of scholarly discussion today.³¹ Secondly, and more briefly, I will take the question of a relative chronology as a methodological quest for the so-called Synoptic Problem.

3.1. Finding an absolute dating – The question of the terminus post quem

Martin Hengel and Camille Focant have – like other scholars – argued for taking Mark 13par. as the main textual basis for dating the Synoptic Gospels.³² This is because Mark 13par. Matt 24 can be best used for an absolute dating: Here we can possibly find references to the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem near

²⁸ Marks in the tablet refer to what will be looked at in part 3.

²⁹ *Terminus ad quem* only *e silentio*.

³⁰ *Terminus ad quem* only *e silentio*.

³¹ Concerning the observations and arguments for the *ad quem*-dating, cf. U. Luz, *Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 103 ff. who – on basis of the two-source-theory and in regard to *Rezeptions- und Wirkungsgeschichte* – pays more attention to the *ad quem*-dating of Matthew.

³² Cf. M. Hengel, "Entstehungszeit und Situation des Markusevangeliums," in *Markus-Philologie: Historische, literargeschichtliche und stilistische Untersuchungen zum zweiten Evangelium* (ed. H. Cancik; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1984), 1–45, 20; C. Focant, "La chute de Jérusalem et la datation des Évangiles," in *Marc, Un Évangile Étonnant* (ed. C. Focant; Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 1–20; E.-M. Becker, *Markus-Evangelium*, 80 ff. Cf. lately also A. Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 11; J. Marcus, *Mark 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 37–9.

the conclusion of the first Jewish-Roman war (66–70 C. E.).³³ I agree with this. But while Hengel and Focant suggest an *ante eventum* 70–dating of Mark and Joel Marcus leaves the issue of *ante* or *post* 70 C. E.-dating open,³⁴ I will ask a slightly different question: Do Mark and Matthew really give any varying hints about the year 70 that would legitimate an *ante eventum* 70 date for Mark and a *post eventum* 70 date for Matthew? By dealing with this question I will rather argue that both Gospels agree in their view on the year 70 C. E. In other words: If we date Matthew *post eventum* 70, we need to do the same with Mark. In what follows, I will also discuss to what extent the year 70 C. E. serves as a sufficient reference point for dating Mark and Matthew and to what extent we can find further historical data.

3.1.1. 'Level of narration' and 'level of composition'

'Level of narration' in and beyond Mark 13par. Matt 24

The apocalyptic speech (or 'discourse'³⁵) in Mark 13par. Matt 24 is embedded in a narrative that starts with John the Baptist's mission (Mark 1:4) or with the pregnancy of Mary (Matt 1:18). The overall narration finishes with the empty tomb scene on Easter Sunday (Mark 16:1–8) or Jesus' commissioning in Galilee (Matt 28:16–20), which should take place some days after the Easter Sunday.³⁶ So Mark and Matthew only differ slightly concerning a *post quem*-dating on the 'level of narration': In any case, the Easter-events mark the latest point in the narration of the Gospel's 'Ereignisgeschichte'.³⁷ Already in Mark as well as in Matthew various examples of *synchronistic elements* are found, by which the author relates his narration to certain historical data (e. g., Matt 2:1; 3:1; Mark 1:4), even if this – as a literary strategy – is employed more frequently in the Lukan Gospel narrative (e. g., Luke 2:1; 3:2).

On the 'level of narration' the apocalyptic speech takes place shortly before the passion events (Mark 14:1; Matt 26:1). Thus, two observations can be formulated: (1) On the narrative level Mark 13par. Matt 24 do not give any other or further indications for a *post quem*-dating of Mark and Matthew in addition to

³³ Cf., in general, E.-M. Becker, "Der jüdisch-römische Krieg (66–70 n.Chr.) und das Markus-Evangelium: Zu den 'Anfängen' frühchristlicher Historiographie," in *Die antike Historiographie und die Anfänge der christlichen Geschichtsschreibung* (ed. E.-M. Becker; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), 213–36.

³⁴ Cf. Hengel, "Entstehungszeit," 34; Focant, "La chute," esp. 20; Becker, *Markus-Evangelium*, esp. 99–100; Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 39.

³⁵ Yarbrow Collins, *Mark*, 594.

³⁶ The disciples need to travel to Galilee first: cf. Matt 28:16.

³⁷ It is, however, interesting to see that Matthew slightly extends the eschatological period. While the last event in connection with the parousia according to Mark 13:27 is that the Son of Man will send messengers to assemble the elect ones, Matt 25:31 ff. – which contains parallel material to Mark 13, Jesus' final pre-passion words – mentions what will happen *after* the parousia: The Son of Man will hold his judgment of the nations. Here we find that Matthew, more than Mark, has worked out the history of future events. This, however, does not tell us anything about a *post quem*-dating.

what is supplied through the overall Markan and Matthean narrative (Mark 1–16; Matt 1–28): Mark 13par. Matt 24 is a prophetic or apocalyptic speech soon before the passion events start. The question whether and to what extent the Jesus-figure here acts as a *propheta retroversus* or a *propheta verus* cannot be discussed on that narrative level. (2) Mark 13 and Matt 24 generally agree in how this narrative level is arranged, although one can observe semantic and structural variations (see below). Thus, in terms of evidence for dating, Matthew does not really go beyond Mark on the narrative level of the text.

'Level of composition'

Neither the Markan nor the Matthean Gospel contain historical material (like the *titulus crucis*: Mark 15:26; Matt 27:37)³⁸ that could post-date the *terminus post quem* of Mark and Matthew narratively beyond what is defined by chapters 16 and 28. So the question whether the 'level of composition' gives further indications for the *post quem*-dating needs to be discussed on the basis of *source criticism*.³⁹

Two remarks are to be formulated here: (1) It is disputed whether Mark 13, e. g., goes back to a literary source, possibly a Jewish apocalyptic flyer ('Flugblatt'), as Gerd Theißen has argued,⁴⁰ and might respond to the so-called *Caligula-crisis* (40 C. E.).⁴¹ Therefore the meaning of the assumed source-material behind Mark 13 for the *post quem*-dating of Mark remains vague. One cannot work with two hypotheses at the same time here, namely, (a) the reconstruction of such a hypothetical source, and (b) the dating of the source as well as the implications for the dating of the final text.

(2) The inclusion of the genealogy and the birth-story in Matt 1–2 as legendary material (cf. par. Luke 1–2)⁴² certainly points to a more developed concept of Gospel-literature than can be observed in Mark. These narrative elements even put the Gospel-literature closer to biography than those of the Markan Gospel. But neither the birth-story itself, which is possibly derived from M, nor its inclusion in the final Matthean Gospel narrative can give us either a clear hint for dating Mark and Matthew comparatively or in regard to the precise year 70 C. E.

³⁸ Cf. Becker, *Markus-Evangelium*, 154 ff.

³⁹ See below 3.3. Cf. an overview on the current discussion in Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 594 ff.

⁴⁰ Cf. G. Theißen, *Lokalkolorit und Zeitgeschichte in den Evangelien: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*, (2nd ed.; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1992), 137; G. Theißen, *Das Neue Testament* (München: C. H. Beck, 2002), 30. Cf. also: Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 596; E.-M. Becker, "Markus 13 Re-visited," in *Apokalyptik als Herausforderung neutestamentlicher Theologie* (ed. M. Becker and M. Öhler; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 95–124.

⁴¹ Cf. Theißen, *Lokalkolorit*, 171 f.

⁴² Cf. M. Dibelius, *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* (6th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1971), 125–8; R. Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1931), 320 ff.; E.-M. Becker, "Legende: I. Neutestamentlich," in *Lexikon der Bibeldhermeneutik*, 351.

3.1.2. 'Level of reference' and 'the narrator's perspective'

'Level of reference'

The 'level of reference' leads us to those elements of the Gospel narratives that might refer to historical events that are not part of the narration itself. We should expect such elements primarily in those texts that use prophetic, apocalyptic, or allegoric language. What examples can be found within and beyond Mark 13par. Matt 24? We mainly have to think of Mark 10:39par.; 12:9par.; 13:2par.; 13:14par.; Matt 22:7; 23:37–39.⁴³ Before we look at the Markan and the Matthean version of these texts comparatively (see below), I will summarize the state of scholarly discussion so far:

- Mark 10:39par. Matt 20:23 could – as a *vaticinium ex eventu* – be a reference to the martyrdom of James the son of Zebedee (Acts 12:2; ca. 41–44 C. E.). This is mainly undisputed,⁴⁴ even if the question remains why we do not have any hint of his brother's, namely, John's, martyrdom.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, we might conclude that at least 44 C. E. serves as a *terminus post quem* for dating Mark and Matthew.
- The parable of the vineyard and the tenants could contain a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem in Mark 12:9par. Matt 21:41. This is – in regard to the Markan text – insinuated by, e. g., Dieter Lührmann,⁴⁶ but questioned by, e. g., Adela Yarbro Collins.⁴⁷ I will come back to this.

⁴³ Cf., in general, already A. Jülicher and E. Fascher, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (7th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1931), 303–5. Cf. also H. Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (London: SCM Press, 1990), 289 ff., who interprets Mark 14:22 ff. in relation to 70 C. E.; concerning Mark 15:38, cf.: P. Vielhauer, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur: Einleitung in das Neue Testament, die Apokryphen und die Apostolischen Väter* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1975), 347; H. N. Roskam, *The Purpose of the Gospel of Mark in its Historical and Social Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 81 ff.; eadem, "The Gospel of Mark as Polemic: The Persecution of the Markan Christian Community and the Purpose of Mark's Gospel," in *Religious Polemics in Context: Papers Presented to the Second International Conference of the Leiden Institute for the Study of Religions (LISOR) Held at Leiden 27–28 April 2000* (ed. T. L. Hettema and A. van der Kooij; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2004), 294–302. Matt 27:25 is not discussed here, since we are obviously dealing with a Jewish curse-formula (cf. Matt 23:35; Acts 5:28; 18:6; 2 Sam 1:16; Jer 51:35).

⁴⁴ Cf. Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 497 f. This is questioned by G. Zuntz, "Wann wurde das Evangelium Marci geschrieben?" in *Markus-Philologie: Historische, literargeschichtliche und stilistische Untersuchungen zum zweiten Evangelium* (ed. H. Cancik; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1984), 47–71, 50 ff.

⁴⁵ According to Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* 2.25.3; 3.3.4) John even reached an old age; cf. also J. Marcus, *Mark 8–16. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven: Yale University Press 2009), 754.

⁴⁶ Cf. D. Lührmann, *Das Markusevangelium* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987), 199: "Hier endet die Geschichte in der Gegenwart der Leser und reicht damit weit über die erzählte Zeit hinaus: die Römer haben das Land übernommen."

⁴⁷ Cf. Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 547: "Here the focus is not on the destruction of Jerusalem, let alone the rejection of Israel as a whole. Rather it is on the removal from power of the leaders who oppose Jesus Giving the vineyard to others implies that a new leadership will emerge among those who accept Jesus as the messiah."

- Because of its *multiple attestation* the so-called temple-logion in Mark 13:2par. Matt 24:2 (cf. also Mark 14:58; 15:29; John 2:19; Acts 6:14) could go back to the teaching of the historical Jesus.⁴⁸ Thus, it cannot give an indication for the *post quem* 70 C. E.-dating of Mark and Matthew. Could the adverb ὥδε in Mark 13:2 (par. Matt 24:2) even be read as an *ex eventu* 70 C. E. specification, in that it reflects the fact that the temple's base walls have not been destroyed?⁴⁹ Beside this, it could be stated, however, that the frequency of references to the temple and its destruction or substitution in Mark 13–15 is not accidental at all (14:48; 15:29, 38): Mark obviously relates Jesus' fate very much to the fortune of the temple,⁵⁰ and Matthew follows Mark in this. The apocalyptic speech in Mark 13:3ff.par. Matt 24:3ff., especially Mark 13:14ff.par. Matt 24:15ff., could refer to the siege of Jerusalem and the desecration of the temple. The interpretation of the 'level of reference' mainly depends on the phrase in Mark 13:14 τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως ἐστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ: What is meant by the *Danielic* syntagm βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως⁵¹ and how could the participle perfect masculine (ἐστηκότα) be understood as a personal expression?⁵² There are mainly four suggestions for interpretation:
- (a) The syntagm refers to the erection of an emperor-statue in the *Caligula*-crisis (e. g., G. Theißen; G. Zuntz);⁵³ (b) it refers to the expectation of the antichrist (e. g., M. Hengel);⁵⁴ (c) it refers to a Roman emperor and his victory celebration on the temple-areal (cf. Josephus, *B. J.* 6:316; e. g., D. Lührmann; E.-M. Becker);⁵⁵ (d) it has to be understood as a common apocalyptic *topos* that provokes the reader to de-code it (e. g., A. Yarbro Collins).⁵⁶ In accordance with the variety of interpretations, so the conclusions vary with regard to the *post quem*-dating of Mark.
- Unlike Jesus' lament over Jerusalem in Matt 23:37–39, which goes back to Q,⁵⁷ Matt 22:7 could as a redactional element refer to the final catastrophe of

⁴⁸ Cf., e. g., Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 601.

⁴⁹ Cf. Theißen, *Lokalkolorit*, 271; cf. differently Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 11: "It seems rather that the 'here' is added for dramatic effect." Nestle-Aland²⁵ omitted the adverb according to A K Γ and 1241, 2542 etc.

⁵⁰ Cf. Becker, *Markus-Evangelium*, e. g., 92.

⁵¹ Cf. Dan 9:27; 12:11LXX/Θ; 11:31LXX. Cf. also 1 Macc 1:54.

⁵² Cf. F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and F. Rehkopf, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch* (18th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001), § 134.

⁵³ Cf. Theißen, *Lokalkolorit*, 133 ff.; Zuntz, "Evangelium," 47 ff.

⁵⁴ Cf. Hengel, "Entstehungszeit," 43.

⁵⁵ Cf. Lührmann, *Markusevangelium*, 222; Becker, *Markus-Evangelium*, 88.

⁵⁶ Cf. Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 596: The "aside is a literary device to indicate that the preceding allusion to the 'desolating sacrilege' or 'abomination of desolation' is a cryptic saying that requires interpretation;" cf. also Rev 13:18.

⁵⁷ Matt 23:37–39par. Luke 13:34 ff. = Q (13:34 ff.). If these verses – at least in part – go back to the historical Jesus, they cannot be related to the destruction of Jerusalem *directly*, as Luz, *Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 91, indicates. We would rather have the same quality of reference as in Mark 13:1 f.par. (see above).

Jerusalem, i. e., the burning of the temple and the city (cf., e. g., Josephus, *B. J.* 6:249 ff.). This is stated by, e. g., Ulrich Luz and Camille Focant,⁵⁸ but questioned by, e. g., Donald A. Hagner.⁵⁹ I will come back to this.

So we can resume: Beside Mark 10:39par. Matt 20:23 there hardly seems to be scholarly agreement about the evidence of these texts for an absolute dating of Mark and Matthew. So far, there is no agreement on whether Mark and Matthew should be dated as contemporaries or in the relationship of ‘predecessor and follower.’⁶⁰ Such a question very much interferes with the debate about the origin and the purpose of the Markan Gospel.

By looking at the various texts mentioned above, I will therefore rather concentrate on a *comparative perspective* and ask if and how Mark and Matthew vary in presenting their ‘level of reference.’⁶¹

Mark	Matt
10:39: τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω πίεσθε καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθήσεσθε	20:23: τὸ μὲν ποτήριόν μου πίεσθε
12:9: (V. 1) ἐλεύσεται καὶ ἀπολέσει τοὺς γεωργοὺς καὶ δώσει τὸν ἀμπελώνα ἄλλοις Cf. <i>Luke</i> 20:16	21:41: λέγουσιν αὐτῶ· κακοὺς κακῶς ἀπολέσει αὐτοὺς καὶ τὸν ἀμπε- λῶνα ἐκδώσεται ἄλλοις γεωργοῖς, οἵτινες ἀπο- δώσουσιν αὐτῶ τοὺς καρποὺς ἐν τοῖς καιροῖς αὐτῶν
13:2: οὐ μὴ ἀφεθῆ ὧδε λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον ὅς οὐ μὴ καταλυθῆ Cf. <i>Luke</i> 21:6; 19:44	24:2: ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν οὐ μὴ ἀφεθῆ ὧδε λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον ὅς οὐ καταλυθήσεται
13:14–23	24:15–28 22:7: ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ὠργίσθη καὶ πέμψας τὰ στρατεύματα αὐτοῦ ἀπώλεσεν τοὺς φονεῖς ἐκεί- νους καὶ τὴν πόλιν αὐτῶν ἐνέπρησεν. Cf. <i>Luke</i> 14:16–24/ <i>Q</i> 14:16ff.; <i>GosThom</i> 64

Ad Mark 10:39par. Matt 20:23: Matthew only differs by not presenting the second part of the parallel structure (καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθήσεσθε), which in the Markan text is best understood metaphorically.⁶²

⁵⁸ Cf. Luz, *Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 103: “Terminus post quem ist ... die Zerstörung Jerusalems.” U. Luz, *Matthew 21–28: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 54: “In my judgment the strange v.7 makes sense only if it was prompted by the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C. E.,” Focant, “La chute,” 20.

⁵⁹ Cf. Hagner, *Matthew*, lxxiv: “far too much weight has been put on this text in the confident post to-dating of Matthew.” Hagner even thinks that Matt 5:23–4; 17:24–7 and 23:16–22 are to be understood as “pre-70 temple allusions” (lxxiv).

⁶⁰ Cf. also 3.3.

⁶¹ Cf., similarly, Jülicher and Fascher, *Einleitung*, 304 ff., who state in respect to their *post eventum* 70 C. E.-dating: “die Grenze [einer Datierung des Markus-Evangeliums, E-MB] nach uns zu kann erst durch Vergleichung mit Mt und Lk gefunden werden: die Lebenszeit des Mk würde auch für spätere Datierung ausreichen.”

⁶² Cf. Yarbrow Collins, *Mark*, 497.

Thus, both Gospels basically agree in how they are referring to James' martyrdom as a *vaticinium ex eventu*.⁶³

Ad Mark 12:9par. Matt 21:41: Here the Matthean version differs from the Markan and the Lukan (20:16) version in two aspects: (a) The king's reaction is formulated by the audience (cf. Matt 21:23: οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ ὁ πρεσβύτεροι τοῦ λαοῦ), not by Jesus himself. (b) The king's reaction is more direct (κακοῦς κακῶς ἀπολέσει αὐτοῦς) than is the case in Mark and Luke (ἀπολέσει τοὺς γεωργοὺς). According to the Matthean version Jesus is less aggressive towards the Jewish authorities here than he is in Mark 12:9. This observation, however, hardly marks a difference in terms of a *post quem*-dating of Mark and Matthew respectively.

Ad Mark 13:2par. Matt 24:2: There are no significant differences in how Mark and Matthew embed the Jesuanic temple-logion in their Gospel narratives: Both authors place it right before the apocalyptic speech. And both authors agree in repeating the temple-logion twice (Mark 14:58par. Matt 26:61; Mark 15:29par. Matt 27:40) and mentioning the prodigy of the split curtain in the context of the crucifixion-scene (Mark 15:38par. Matt 27:51). Because Mark and Matthew do not differ in how they frame and interpret the temple-logion, the temple-logion itself does not give evidence for a differing *post quem* 70 C. E.-dating of Mark and Matthew either.

Ad Mark 13:14–23par. Matt 24:15–28: Mark 13:14 (compare to Matt 24:15) marks a break within the apocalyptic speech. This becomes evident on the basis of semantic and grammatical observations: (a) In Mark 13:14 ἴδητε occurs the first time as a description of the audience's cognition.⁶⁴ This is similar to Matt 24:15.⁶⁵ (b) The 'reading instruction' also lays certain weight on Mark 13:14par. (c) Mark 13:3 is characterized by an ὅταν⁶⁶-sentence that might be a redactional element of structuring the order of apocalyptic events (13:4, 7, 11, 14): It is not until Mark 13:14 that τότε⁶⁷ occurs complementary to ὅταν.⁶⁸ In Matt 24:4 ff. we find a τότε-structure from v. 9 on, but – comparable to Mark 13:14 – only a ὅταν- τότε-structure in 24:15. Thus, in Mark 13:14par. the time of the author's

⁶³ It is interesting to see that the pronouncement of the martyrdom of the Zebedees does not occur in Luke. Is this because Luke refers to James' death in Acts 12:2?

⁶⁴ Cf. also Yarbrow Collins, *Mark*, 607.

⁶⁵ The meaning of ὁπάτε in Matt 24:6 is unspecific.

⁶⁶ ὅταν occurs in Mark 2:20; 3:11; 4:15, 16, 29, 31, 32; 8:38; 9:9; 11:19, 25; 12:23, 25; 13:4, 7, 11, 14, 28, 29; 14:7, 25. It might be a redactional element.

⁶⁷ τότε occurs in Mark 2:20; 3:27; 13:14, 21, 26, 27.

⁶⁸ Cf. the only other reference in Mark, 2:20. Cf. also Becker, *Markus-Evangelium*, 87 ff.: "Hier begegnet erstmals und komplementär zu ὅταν das Zeitadverb τότε, das im nicht-klassischen Griechisch der Verknüpfung zeitlich nachfolgender Ereignisse dient."

recent experiences seems to be reached. In what follows until Mark 13:23par. Matt 24:25, Mark and Matthew sum up these experiences.

By comparing the Markan and the Matthean version we can in fact observe some differences: (a) The micro-context of Mark 13:14–23par. Matt 24:15–28 varies: Matthew leaves out Mark 13:9–12, viz., he places it differently (cf. Matt 10:17–22), and he adds 24:10–12. (b) Beside this, there are some semantic and grammatical variations, e. g., the inclusion of ἡ φυγή ὑμῶν in Matt 24:20 or the change from singular to plural in 24:22 (αἱ ἡμέραι). Do these differences hence imply that the Matthean version points on the ‘level of reference’ to a different date in time than the Markan text? I cannot see any textual evidence for this assumption.

Ad Matt 22:7: Matthew obviously takes the parable of the great supper or feast from Q, but differs very much in presenting the king’s reaction to what Luke and – possibly Q – present: After hearing that the invited guests refuse to come, in Luke and Q the οἰκοδεσπότης invites all kinds of people from the streets (Luke 14:23; Q 14:23). In the Matthean version, however, the protagonist (βασιλεύς) gets angry and gives order to kill the murderers of his servants and to burn down the city. The interpretation of Matt 22:7 in particular deals with two questions: (a) Does the phrase καὶ τὴν πόλιν αὐτῶν ἐνέπρησεν support a secure *post eventum* 70 C. E.-dating? Luz thinks so.⁶⁹ But already Karl Heinrich Rengstorf has suggested that rather than constituting a definite reference to the fall of Jerusalem, the conceptuality behind ἐπίπρημι⁷⁰ is much more topical or general (cf., e. g., Josh 6:24; 1 Macc 5:28; Josephus *A. J.* 12:336; *B. J.* 6:353).⁷¹ (b) Why is the Matthean version so different from Luke and Q? Ivor H. Jones has correctly observed that the parable in Matt 22:7 should be read in conjunction with the vineyard-parable in 21:41: “In *The Tenants* the vineyard is kept intact (contrast Isa 5:5–6); in *The Feast* the city is burnt.”⁷² It could be that Matthew leaves out the judgement-motif in 21:41, which he knows from Mark,⁷³ and transfers it to the parable on the feast in 22:7. Thus, Matt 22:7 would be an example for the inclusion and redactional modification of Q-material on the basis of a Markan text. Although a heightening of violence can be detected from Q 14:23 to Matt

⁶⁹ See above.

⁷⁰ Cf. the general usage in the LXX, e. g.: Neh 1:3; 1 Kgs 18:10; 2 Macc 8:6.

⁷¹ Cf. K. H. Rengstorf, “Die Stadt der Mörder (Mt 22:7),” in *Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche: Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias* (ed. W. Eltester; Berlin: A. Töpelmann, 1960), 106–29, esp. 113 ff.: “Die aus den Schriften des Josephus gesammelten Belege beweisen nicht allein, daß der Matt 22 6f. verwendete Topos sehr alter vorderorientalischer Herkunft sich bis in die neutestamentliche Zeit auf jüdischem Boden erhalten hat, sondern daß er bei Josephus auch den ausgesprochenen Charakter einer Zusammenfassung ... trägt” (116).

⁷² I. H. Jones, *The Matthean Parables: A Literary and Historical Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 403.

⁷³ ἀπολλύειν in Mark 12:9 and Matt 21:41 varies in its meaning: ‘killing’ in Mark 12:9 and ‘destroy’ in Matt 21:41. The verb occurs in Matt 2:13; 10:28, 39, 42; 12:14; 21:41; 22:7; 27:20, and is only used in Matt 2:13; 12:14; 22:7; 27:20 explicitly in the sense of ‘killing.’

22:7,⁷⁴ such a redactional modification offers no more secure indication for dating Matthew *post eventum* 70 C. E. than what is already supplied in Mark's Gospel in 12:9. In other words, an increase of violence can be detected from Q to Matthew, but not from Mark to Matthew.

So far we have found that Mark and Matthew hardly vary in giving indications for the 'level of reference' when they present material that can be found in both Gospel narratives. And even in the case of using Q-material (Matt 22:7) Matthew adapts his text to how the 'level of reference' already occurs in Mark (cf. Matt 22:7 and 21:41par. Mark 12:9). Finally we should ask: Does Matthew include other traditional material (M) or redactional elements that might be relevant for analyzing the 'level of reference' in the Matthean Gospel? We have to think here primarily of those texts in Matthew that reflect the community's relation to the Jews.⁷⁵ On the basis of these texts scholars have discussed whether Matthew already looks back to a process of separation from the Jews and the synagogues⁷⁶ or if this process is expected in the near future.⁷⁷ We could add the question of how Mark and Matthew are to be compared in dealing with the issue of 'Jews' and 'synagogues' in their Gospel-stories.⁷⁸

There are, however, two basic problems in taking those indications as the 'level of reference' for dating Mark and Matthew: (a) The various texts would

⁷⁴ Cf. also J. S. Kloppenborg's contribution in this volume.

⁷⁵ Cf., e. g., the references mentioned in U. Schnelle, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (4th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 266 ff.: Matt 4:23; 9:35; 5:20; 6:2, 5; 10:17 f.; 12:9; 13:54; 23:1–36; esp. 23:6, 24, 34.

⁷⁶ Cf., e. g., Luz, *Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 96: Matthew "blickt ... auf den vor kurzem geschehenen Bruch zwischen seiner Gemeinde und den örtlichen Synagogen zurück;" G. N. Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1992), esp. 157 ff.: "The evangelist is not addressing scribes and Pharisees in direct confrontation or debate, but his denunciations are nonetheless polemical. They represent in part anger and frustration at the continued rejection of Christian claims and at the continued hostility of Jews towards the new community" (157).

⁷⁷ Cf., e. g., A. J. Saldarini, "The Gospel of Matthew and Jewish-Christian Conflict," in *Social History of the Matthean Community: Cross-disciplinary Approaches* (ed. D. L. Balch; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 38–61: 49 ff. and 60 ff.: "Matthew insists on his allegiance to Jesus by carving out a deviant Jewish identity for his sectarian Jewish community" (60); cf. also A. J. Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994); Saldarini defines the Matthean community as "Matthew's Groups of Jewish Believers-in-Jesus," 84 ff.; *ibid.* 198 ff.: "the Gospel of Matthew addresses a deviant group within the Jewish community in greater Syria, a reformist Jewish sect seeking influence and power ... within the Jewish community as a whole" (198); cf. also J. A. Overman, *Matthew's Gospel and Formative Judaism: A Study of the Social World of the Matthean Community* (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 1989), esp. 327 ff.: "The Gospel provides many indications that Matthew's community constituted the minority in a struggle with a parent group, which was in this case formative Judaism" (327); J. A. Overman, *Church and Community in Crisis: The Gospel according to Matthew* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1996), 413 ff.

⁷⁸ Concerning the Markan Gospel, cf. J. C. Crossley, *The Date of Mark's Gospel: Insight from the Law in Earliest Christianity* (London: T & T Clark, 2004), esp. 208, where Crossley suggests a dating of Mark in the 30s or 40s and a dating of Matthew after that. Cf. also J. Painter, review of Crossley, *Date of Mark*, *RBL* [<http://www.bookreviews.org>] (2006).

need to be analyzed in terms of ‘*Literarkritik*’ and source criticism to find out which texts really give insights into the redactor’s perspective and the date of writing.⁷⁹ (b) The process of separation (‘Partings of the Ways’) in general does not simply come to an end within the first century C. E.⁸⁰ Moreover, it was dependent on specific local situations around and beyond the Mediterranean: What Matthew has in mind by writing his Gospel narrative therefore depends very much on the place of writing. Thus, the Gospel writers’ relation to the synagogues and to the Jews is rather more a matter of locating than of dating Mark and Matthew.⁸¹ It rather seems to be more promising to take a text like Matt 28:16–20 and its semantics (triadic formula in v. 19; concept of baptism)⁸² as a possible indication for the historical stage of the Matthean community and, thus, for Matthew’s date of composition.

‘The narrator’s perspective’

The Gospel of Mark and Matthew differ in how the Gospel writer (‘narrator’) becomes visible: In the Markan Gospel we get in touch with the narrator three times: in 1:1, 7:19c, and 13:14.⁸³ The parallels in Matthew indicate that this author avoids presenting himself.⁸⁴

Mark	Matthew
1:1: ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [υἱοῦ θεοῦ]	[1:1]: βίβλος γενέσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ
7:19c: καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα	/
13:14: ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω	[24:15]: τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ Δανιὴλ τοῦ προφήτου ... ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω

⁷⁹ Some of the above mentioned texts go back to Q (e. g., Matt 10:17 ff.; 23:1–36*; 23:6*, 34*), to Mark (e. g., 4:23) or M (6:2, 5), but mainly to Matthean redaction (e. g., 5:20; 9:35; 12:9; 13:54; 23:24).

⁸⁰ Cf. D. Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 21: “Judaism and Christianity were not separate entities until very late in late antiquity.” Therefore Boyarin considers texts from the second and third century C. E. (Justin; Apostolic Succession in the Mishnah) rather to be engaged in “a process of creating a difference between Judaism and Christianity” (27); cf. also 37 ff. Cf. the overall discussion as well, e. g.: *Christianity in the Beginning* (vol. 1 of *When Judaism and Christianity Began: Essays in Memory of Anthony J. Saldarini* [ed. A. J. Avery-Peck, D. J. Harrington, and J. Neusner; Leiden: Brill, 2004]); J. M. Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁸¹ Luz, *Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 98 ff., finally refers to Johanan ben Zakai as a contemporary of Matthew.

⁸² Cf. D. Hellhom et al. eds., *Ablution, Baptism, and Initiation in the Greco-Roman, Jewish, and Early Christian World* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011).

⁸³ We could also mention Mark 7:3–4 here: The parenthesis also functions as a ‘narrative comment.’ Cf. the diverse types of ‘Erzählerkommentare’: E.-M. Becker, “Text und Hermeneutik am Beispiel einer *textinternen* Hermeneutik,” in *Die Bibel als Text* (ed. O. Wischmeyer and S. Scholz; Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 2008), 193–215, 206–7: Mark 7:3–4 is a ‘sachliche Deutung’ while 7:19 acts as a ‘sachliche conclusio.’

⁸⁴ Luz, *Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 44 says: “Erzählerkommentare oder direkte Anreden an

Ad Mark 1:1par. Matt 1:1: While Matthew in 1:1 formulates in any case a ‘formal title’ – whether for his Gospel-book (βίβλος) as a whole or at least for the first chapters or parts in it⁸⁵ – Mark creates a polyvalent introduction that leaves it unclear if Mark 1:1 should be understood chronologically (*‘Beginn der Ereignisgeschichte’*), thematically (*‘Themenangabe’*), kerygmatically (cf. 1:2 f.; 1:14 f.) or formally (*‘Bucheröffnung’*).⁸⁶ I guess that the ambiguity of Mark 1:1 – as a redactional element – is part of the *intentio auctoris*. In this way Mark reveals himself not only as a literary or historiographical author, but also as a theologian and – possibly – even as a messenger of the εὐαγγέλιον. Matthew, however, does not develop this concept further: He rather interprets the Markan *incipit* and applies it to his narrative.

Ad Mark 7:19c: In Mark 7:19c Mark formulates as a result of Jesus’ dispute with the Pharisees and scribes (Mark 7:1) an ‘explanatory comment,’⁸⁷ viz., a *conclusio* out of Jesus’ arguments on cleanliness and uncleanness: According to Mark Jesus has in fact defined all food as clean. This statement might stand in close relation to what Paul argues for in 1 Cor 8:8,⁸⁸ which, of course, would help more for reconstructing the profile of the audience⁸⁹ than finding further evidence for a *post quem*-dating of Mark. In the Matthean text, however, instead of this narrative *conclusio*, it is Jesus himself who gives an ethical interpretation of being clean or unclean (Matt 15:18–20). Thus, Matthew hides himself behind the Jesus-figure (cf. also Matt 26:56) and the sources (Mark; Q; M), which deliver Jesus-traditions to him: He avoids any narrative comment and does not formulate a general interpretation of Jesus’ teaching about food laws.

Ad Mark 13:14par. Matt 24:15: As it stands now, the so-called ‘reading instruction’ in Mark 13:14 (*‘Leseappell’*) is hard to understand: Does it go back to the apocalyptic source already, possibly to the Jewish ‘flyer’?⁹⁰ Or does it go back to the redactor, Mark himself?⁹¹ It seems to me that the reading instruction can be

die Leser/innen gibt es selten (vgl. 24,15),” but mentions as such possible ‘Erzählerkommentare’ 26:56; 1:23c; 22:23b; 27:33b, 46c, s. n. 93. While Matt 1:23c is a prophetic fulfillment and Matt 26:56 is put in Jesus’ mouth, 22:23b; 27:33b, 46c already go back to the Markan parallels (Mark 12:18; 15:22, 34).

⁸⁵ Cf. discussion in U. Luz, *Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 117–9.

⁸⁶ Cf. Becker, *Markus-Evangelium*, 102–11; eadem, “Mark 1:1 and the Debate on a ‘Markan Prologue,’” *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 22 (2009), 91–106.

⁸⁷ Cf. Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 356.

⁸⁸ Cf. Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 356.

⁸⁹ Cf. the contribution of O. Wischmeyer in this volume.

⁹⁰ Cf. Theißen, *Lokalkolorit*, 137.

⁹¹ Cf. Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, 608: “The clause is better taken as an aside from the evangelist to the individual who read the Gospel aloud to a group of assembled followers of Jesus (directly) and to his audience (indirectly), a hypothesis supported by the concluding statement in v. 37, which makes clear that the speech is directed to a broader audience than the four disciples named in v. 3.”

best understood as an ‘*Aufmerksamkeits-/Weckruf*’ which occurs as a specific literary element inside (cf., e. g., Rev 2:7, 11; 13:9) and outside (e. g., Mark 4:9par.; 4:23) apocalyptic literature.⁹² In Mark 13:14 this ‘*Aufmerksamkeits-/Weckruf*’ is related to the apocalyptic speech (Mark 13:3ff.) itself. In Matt 24:15 its pragmatic function is similar, namely, to draw attention to the apocalyptic speech (νοεῖτω). There is, however, a visible difference in how Mark and Matthew make use of the reading instruction within the apocalyptic speech: While in Mark 13:14 the attention is obviously to be directed to the reading of Mark 13 (or the Markan Gospel as a whole), in Matt 24:14 it is clearly to be directed to the reading of the book of Daniel.⁹³

If this ‘*Weckruf*’ in Mark 13:14, as a reading instruction, can be taken as a Markan element, it leads us at least to a later stage of delivering Jesus-traditions, namely, to a stage of ‘Christian literacy:’ Mark already presupposes readers and the existence of ‘Christ-believing’-literature. Matthew 24:15, however, says probably more about the social (reading culture) and religious (LXX-culture) profile of the Matthean audience in distinction to the Markan community, and less about questions of date. Matthew 24:15 could also be understood as an interpretative improvement of Mark 13:14 as ‘*literarische Vorlage*’ in that Matthew makes explicit from where the motif of the βδέλυγμα is taken (Dan LXX).

But why is it that Mark – in distinction from Matthew – makes himself visible as the author of the Gospel narrative, viz., why is it that Matthew avoids presenting himself? We can only speculate here, especially in regard to matters of dating: (a) There might simply be various technical reasons for Matthew differing from Mark 1:1 (different material and literary style), Mark 7:19c (e. g., different traditions), and Mark 13:14 (interest of interpretation and improvement). (b) It could also be that Mark as a Gospel-writer has a different kind of authority and/or self-understanding, possibly a more genuine understanding of being an ‘evangelist,’ and Matthew does not feel himself legitimated to adopt Mark’s ‘author-concept.’⁹⁴ (c) Finally, it could be that Matthew is much more conservative in using his traditions and sources than Mark is. In any case, on the basis of these observations we learn more about the authors’ profile and strategy than about dating Mark and Matthew.

3.2. *Mark 9:1par. and Mark 13:30par. as evidence for an ad quem-dating?*

Finally we have to look at two texts that might also point to the ‘level of reference’ of the Gospel narratives, namely, Mark 9:1 and 13:30par. Because both

⁹² Cf. Becker, “Markus 13,” 119–21. Cf. also, K. Berger, *Formgeschichte des Neuen Testaments* (Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1984), esp. 118.

⁹³ Cf. Theißen, *Lokalkolorit*, 136 ff.

⁹⁴ This becomes evident by noticing that most of the Matthean narrative comments can already be found in the Markan text (Matt 22.23b; 27.33b, 46cpar.); see below n. 84.

texts expect Jesus-followers to live until the beginnings of the eschatological events, these followers cannot have died yet. So we need to ask here: Can both texts be an indication for an *ad quem*-dating of Mark and/or Matthew?⁹⁵ In order to discuss this question we have to look at the texts individually and then again comparatively.

Mark	Matthew
9:1: ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἰσὶν τινες ὧδε τῶν ἐσθηκώτων οἵτινες οὐ μὴ γεύσονται θανάτου ἕως ἂν ἴδωσιν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐληλυθυῖαν ἐν δυνάμει. Cf. Luke 9:27	16:28: ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἰσὶν τινες τῶν ὧδε ἐσθηκώτων οἵτινες οὐ μὴ γεύσονται θανάτου ἕως ἂν ἴδωσιν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ αὐτοῦ.
13:30: ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη μέχρις οὗ ταῦτα πάντα γένηται.	24:34: ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη ἕως ἂν πάντα ταῦτα γένηται.

(a) The assignment of the origins of Mark 9:1 and 13:30: While Rudolf Bultmann thought that Mark 9:1 was an ‘apocalyptic prediction,’ which was formulated in the communities,⁹⁶ some scholars consider Mark 9:1 or Mark 13:30 to go back to the historical Jesus, so that either Mark 9:1⁹⁷ or Mark 13:30⁹⁸ served as a model for the formulation of the other saying later on. As long as *one* of both logia is considered to be pre-Markan – either Jesuanic or community inspired (cf. 1 Thess 4:13 ff.; 1 Cor 15:51 f.) – none of these logia might be relevant for the dating of the final Markan text. Only if *both* logia were redactional⁹⁹ could something be said about the *terminus ad quem* of dating Mark: Then the date of the death of the witness-generation (max. 70–80 C. E.) might not have been reached yet.

(b) The Matthean parallels: The Matthean versions of Mark 9:1 and 13:30 (cf. Matt 16:8; 24:34) do not differ from the Markan text significantly. Therefore they supply no evidence for assigning Matthew an absolute date that is different than Mark’s.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ This is insinuated by, e. g., Lührmann, *Markusevangelium*, 6.

⁹⁶ Cf. R. Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition: Mit einem Nachwort von G. Theissen* (10th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), 128: “Ein isolierter Spruch ... und zwar eine Gemeindebildung als Trostwort wegen des Ausbleibens der Parusie.” Similar to this: J. Gnlika, *Das Evangelium nach Markus (Markus 8,27–16,29)* (5th ed.; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1999), 26 ff.: “Das Logion ist auf dem Hintergrund des Problems der Parusieverzögerung zu sehen, das Teile der frühen Christenheit bewegte” (26).

⁹⁷ Cf. Yarbrow Collins, *Mark*, 412.

⁹⁸ Cf. N. Perrin, *What Is Redaction Criticism?* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 49–50.

⁹⁹ Cf. Lührmann, *Markusevangelium*, 153: “Das Logion reflektiert das Problem der Parusieverzögerung, ein aktuelles Problem in der Situation des Mk; hat er es nicht selbst gebildet, geht es auf eine vergleichbare Frage zurück (vgl. bei Paulus: 1 Thess 4,13–18 1Kor 15,51f).”

¹⁰⁰ The expression: ἕως ἂν ἴδωσιν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ αὐτοῦ in Matt 16:28 can be understood in analogy to the Markan expression: ἕως ἂν ἴδωσιν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐληλυθυῖαν ἐν δυνάμει because the coming of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ is equivalent to the coming of the Son of Man in Mark (cf. 8:38; 13:26; 14:62); cf. Lührmann, *Markusevangelium*, 153; Yarbrow Collins, *Mark*, 413.

3.3. Finding a relative chronology – Questions of ‘Literarkritik’ and source criticism

How can we date Mark and Matthew in relation to each other, i. e., in terms of a relative chronology (see point e. in the table above)? We need to start here on the basis of source critical theories and afterwards proceed with observations on the Gospels’ composition.

All in all there exist three kinds of source theories that are relevant for a relative chronology of Mark and Matthew: (a) According to, e. g., Johann Jakob Griesbach¹⁰¹ (but cf. already Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.1.1) and modern followers of his theory,¹⁰² Matthew is the oldest Gospel narrative and has been used by Mark. (b) The two-source-theory (H. J. Holtzmann; P. Wernle) has been developed as a consequence of assuming a Markan priority (esp. K. Lachmann). (c) If Mark and Matthew should have used Synoptic material independently – as, e. g., Delbert Burkett has recently suggested¹⁰³ – both Gospels would have been written approximately at the same time (ca. 80–100 C. E.).¹⁰⁴

A majority of scholars, however, still favour the two-source-theory.¹⁰⁵ Why is this and how can we apply this theory to the issue of dating Mark and Matthew? Three observations support the idea of *Markan priority* and Matthew’s usage of Mark: (a) There are several indications showing that Matthew uses Mark as a literary ‘*Vorlage*’: He takes over most of the Markan pericopes precisely (e. g., Mark 13 in Matt 24)¹⁰⁶ or even accepts narrative doublets that Luke rejects (Mark 6:17 ff. in Matt 14:13 ff.; Mark 8:1 ff. in Matt 15:32 ff.).¹⁰⁷ (b) By taking Mark as a literary ‘*Vorlage*’ Matthew corrects,¹⁰⁸ improves and interprets,¹⁰⁹ or enhances¹¹⁰ the Markan text several times. (c) By including another source (Q) and further material (M) Matthew presents more traditions, e. g., creates further doublets,¹¹¹ shapes a much longer and extended Gospel-version (e. g., Matt 1–2; speech-concept; 28:9 ff.), and finally embeds Mark 13 even in a longer context of

¹⁰¹ Cf. S. E. Johnson, *The Griesbach Hypothesis and Redaction Criticism* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991).

¹⁰² Among modern followers of Griesbach, cf., e. g., W. R. Farmer, *The Synoptic Problem: A Critical Analysis* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), 5 ff. and 199 ff. Cf. also C. M. Tuckett, *The Revival of the Griesbach Hypothesis: An Analysis and Appraisal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

¹⁰³ Cf. D. Burkett, *Rethinking the Gospel Sources: From Proto-Mark to Mark* (New York: T & T Clark, 2004). Burkett creates here a “new multi-source theory” (6), in which he assumes the “priority of a pre-Markan gospel” (5).

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Burkett, *Rethinking*, 163 ff.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. also U. Schnelle, “Synoptische Frage,” in RGG, 7:1978–84, 1980 ff.

¹⁰⁶ In general, I would share this view.

¹⁰⁷ Part of his ‘great omission’ (Mark 6:45–8:26), Luke leaves out Mark 8:1 ff.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Matt 8:28 and Mark 5:1; Matt 15:39 and Mark 8:10.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Matt 24:15 and Mark 13:14; see above. Cf. also Matt 28:8, 9 ff. in comparison to Mark 16:8.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Matt 8:28 ff. and Mark 5:1 ff.; Matt 20:29 ff. and Mark 10:46 ff.

¹¹¹ Cf. Matt 9:27 ff. (cf. Mark 10:46 ff. par. Matt 20:29 ff.).

eschatological discourses (Matt 23–25). Although extending Mark, Matthew seems to follow first of all the Markan *Vorlage*: The Gospel of Mark functions as his basic book while the other material is included and added in a supplementary way.

3.4. Conclusions

Even if it seems to be the case that, in terms of a relative chronology, Matthew follows Mark rather than *vice versa*, in terms of an absolute dating, Matthew provides no unique or even more precise indications for a *terminus post quem* in comparison to Mark. This observation can be interpreted twofold: First, in regard to the *post quem*-dating, Mark and Matthew need to be treated equally. And because we could not find a further¹¹² or later date than 70 C. E. in the history of the first century C. E. that could function as a *terminus post quem* for dating Mark and Matthew, we need to conclude that *both* Gospels were written either *before* or *after* 70 C. E. Secondly, what can be said for the literary intention of the Markan Gospel is also relevant for Matthew: Both Gospels obviously refuse a precise dating.¹¹³ This does not mean, however, that we are discharged from dating Mark and Matthew. To the contrary, a precise dating of Mark and Matthew could shed light on central issues of Markan and Matthean exegesis: for instance, we could precisely formulate the extent of the authors' agreement in creating the 'level of narration,' how much they reveal of the 'level of reference,' and the extent to which each narrator affects the Gospel narrative and makes himself visible. In terms of a relative chronology, Matthew might be the later Gospel. The manner in which Matthew succeeds Mark also indicates how Matthew values his writing in relation to the Markan '*Vorlage*,' namely, as a competitive completion of Mark rather than as a totally new-conceptualization.

¹¹² The only exception might be 44 C. E. (cf. Mark 10:35ff.par. Matt 20:20 ff.).

¹¹³ "Markus schreibt – im Unterschied zu den taciteischen Historien und zu Josephus' *Bel-lum* – nicht über die jüdische oder römische Geschichte bis zu einem bestimmten 'historischen' Zeitpunkt, sondern über eine *Ereignisgeschichte*, die mit dem Wirken des Täufers beginnt und mit der Darstellung des apokalyptischen Erlebnisses der Frauen am Ostermorgen endet. Die Erzählung der ἀρχή τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ist daher eine für die Zukunft hin offene Geschichtsdarstellung. Sie erfolgt aus einer *Erzählperspektive*, die historisch nicht näher definiert werden *will*," Becker, *Markus-Evangelium*, 338 (some italics added).