

WHAT IS REDAKTIONSGESCHICHTE?

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*The Rise of Redaktionsgeschichte**

THE value of the form-critical method for the investigation of the gospels is recognized today by all (or almost all) scholars. Despite its great value, however, form criticism possesses certain limitations. One of these limitations was in reality a glaring oversight. Whereas the form critics dealt intimately with the individual pericopes and even blocks of material which make up the gospel tradition, they neglected to treat the gospels, themselves, as individual entities.¹ In its investigation of the individual trees making up the forest it lost sight of the forest itself. As a result the form critics forgot that the individual gospels are also units which demand consideration and must be investigated as individual entities. This error was due in part to the fact that the form critics looked upon the gospel writers as merely collectors or *Sammler*.²

* Pending the devising of an English translation for this parvenu to the welter of biblical jargon, the word "Redaktionsgeschichte" may be considered sufficiently Englished to dispense with italics and capitals, and even inverted commas about its adjective. — Editor.

¹ "Aber in diesem ersten Stadium hatte die Formgeschichte tatsächlich eine Schwäche, die sie ergänzungsbedürftig macht: sie drohte — indem sie den einzelnen Traditionsstücken nachging — das Evangelium als Ganzes aus den Augen zu verlieren . . . als eine neue Lösung für die synoptische Forschung ist diese Betrachtungsweise, die sich dem Evangelisten und seinem Werk als einem Ganzen zuwendet, erst in den 50er Jahren zur Geltung gekommen" — Ernst Haenchen, *Der Weg Jesus*, p. 23. See also: Gottfried Schille, "Bemerkungen zur Formgeschichte des Evangeliums. Rahmen und Aufbau des Markus-Evangeliums," *NTS*, 4 (1957), p. 1; Kurt Frör, *Biblische Hermeneutik*, p. 246; Klaus Koch, *Was Ist Formgeschichte?*, pp. 68–71. For an early protest of form criticism's neglect of the individual evangelists see Ernst von Dobschütz, "Zur Erzählerkunst des Markus," *ZNW*, 27 (1928), pp. 193 f. For an unsuccessful attempt to deny that form criticism neglected the gospels as complete entities see Günther Klein, *Die Zwölf Apostel*, p. 15; and Rudolf Bultmann, "The Study of the Synoptic Gospels," *Form Criticism: Two Essays on New Testament Research*, p. 4.

² Martin Dibelius (*From Tradition to Gospel*, p. 3,) states, "The composers are only to the smallest extent authors. They are principally collectors, vehicles of tradition, editors." Kurt Frör (*Wege zur Schriftauslegung*, p. 254) sums up the view of the form critics as follows, "Die Evangelisten wurden im wesentlichen als Sammler der überlieferten Stoffe gewertet." See also Gerhard Iber, "Zur Formgeschichte der Evangelien," *TR*, 24 (1957/58), p. 337; and Joachim Rohde, *Die redaktionsgeschichtliche Methode*, p. 20. For an unsuccessful attempt to deny the "individualism" of the evangelists and to return to the pre-redaktionsgeschichtlich view of them as Sammler see George Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, p. 10.

They were only "scissors and paste men" who assembled together the various pericopes. As a result the first three books of the NT were viewed not as "gospels" but as "pericope collections." Form critics therefore felt justified in treating each pericope as an individual gem. Each bit of tradition was treated as a separate pearl and carefully analyzed. But what of the setting into which these gems were placed? The form critics overlooked the fact that the setting provided by the evangelists gave a distinct appearance to these gems. They overlooked the fact that these pearls of tradition were strung together in a particular manner and revealed a particular design.

It is now generally recognized that the evangelists were not merely "scissors and paste men." On the contrary the "scissors" were manipulated by a theological hand, and the "paste" was impregnated with a particular theology. In contrast to the anti-individualistic view of the form critics, today the evangelists are recognized as individual theologians. It is true that they collected the gospel traditions and were limited by them, but each had a theological purpose in writing his gospel.³ The first major work that aroused interest in viewing the writers of the gospels as individual theologians was Hans Conzelmann's *Die Mitte der Zeit*, which appeared in 1954.⁴ In this well-received work Conzelmann investigated Luke's unique understanding and use of his sources.⁵ Shortly thereafter Willi Marxsen published his *Der Evangelist Markus*. What Conzelmann sought to do with Luke, Marxsen sought to do with Mark. It is interesting to note that these two works were written independently of each other.⁶ Even as form-critical thinking was in the air at the end of the second decade of our century, so in the mid-fifties redaktionsgeschichtlich thinking was in the air. With the publication of these two works redaktionsgeschichte became increasingly the major concern of synoptic investigation, and the host of works which have since appeared indicates that redaktionsgeschichte has today become the most important area of gospel studies.⁷

³ Cf. Frör, (*op. cit.*, p. 254): "Inzwischen wurde aber deutlicher gesehen, dass die Arbeit der Evangelisten sich nicht in ihrer Sammlertätigkeit erschöpft, sondern als selbständige theologische Leistung zu werten ist." See also Karl Hermann Schelke, *Das Neue Testament*, p. 33; Manfred Kartzki, "Die Galiläische Redaktion im Markus-evangelium," *ZNW*, 52 (1961), p. 238; and Walter Grundmann, *Die Geschichte Jesu Christi*, p. 15.

⁴ The English translation by Geoffrey Buswell appeared in 1960 under the title *The Theology of St. Luke*.

⁵ *The Theology of St. Luke*, pp. 9 and 95.

⁶ *Der Evangelist Markus*, p. 5.

⁷ Iber (*op. cit.*, p. 285) states that form criticism is no longer the most important area of gospel studies. "Sie ist heute kein Brennpunkt wissenschaftlicher Diskussion mehr. Mit Recht hat man von einer „Stagnation der formgeschichtlichen Arbeit“ gesprochen." To this can be added a statement by Kartzki (*op. cit.*, p. 238), "Sie

It should not be thought that other scholars had not realized that the gospel writers contributed their own thoughts to their works and sought to investigate this. William Wrede in his *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien* did just this and antedated the work of Conzelmann and Marxsen by over fifty years.⁸ Johannes Weiss also realized the importance of the investigation of the particular views of the evangelists.⁹ Some other writers who investigated the redactional work and theology of the evangelists are: Ernst Lohmeyer,¹⁰ Karl Kundsinn,¹¹ A. Schlatter,¹² Robert Henry Lightfoot,¹³ and James M. Robinson.¹⁴ As can be seen redaktionsgeschichtlich investigation did not begin with Conzelmann and Marxsen. The question can therefore be raised as to what is new about redaktionsgeschichte. In reply to this question it can be said first of all that the work of Conzelmann and Marxsen must be understood in the light of the then present view of the evangelists as pictured by the form critics. The sociological orientation of the form critics had resulted in an anti-individualistic attitude toward the evangelists. Conzelmann and Marxsen were prophetic voices protesting against this view and claiming that the evangelists were not merely *Sammler* but individual theologians. Secondly, redaktionsgeschichte builds much of its investigation upon the work of form criticism. Through form criticism's successful isolation of the gospel pericopes, redaktionsgeschichte has been better able to ascertain the editorial work of the evangelists. As a result, it was not until form criticism separated the pericopes from the redaction that redaktionsgeschichte was really pos-

ist heute die Zeit der redaktionsgeschichtlichen Untersuchungen." For a similar view see Alfred Suhl, *Die Funktion der alttestamentlichen Zitate und Anspielungen im Markus-evangelium*, p. 9.

⁸ Wrede's work was published in 1901. It is clear that Wrede saw the importance of investigating the unique theology of the evangelists. See Wrede, pp. 2-3, 71, 129, 131, 145. Because of Wrede's interest in the individual evangelists Johannes Schreiber (*Theologische Erkenntnis und unterrichtlicher Vollzug*, p. 9) maintains that he is the true father of redaktionsgeschichte.

⁹ In his *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, I, p. 62, Weiss stated, "Die Aufgabe des Erklärers der Evangelien ist eine vielseitige: Es gilt erstens, den Schriftsteller zu verstehen, zu erkennen, was er seinen Lesern sagen will, und wie er diese Worte und Geschichte auffasst. Zweitens gilt es dann, die von ihm benutzte Überlieferung selber in ihrer ursprünglichen Eigenart auf sich wirken zu lassen, die volkstümlichen Erzählungen aus der Seele der alten Gemeinden heraus mit zu empfinden. Schliesslich werden wir versuchen, die Stoffe nutzbar zu machen für das Verständnis der Geschichte und der Person Jesu."

¹⁰ *Galiläa und Jerusalem*.

¹¹ *Topologische Überlieferungstoffe im Johannes-Evangelium*.

¹² *Der Evangelist Matthäus*.

¹³ *Locality and Doctrine in the Gospels*.

¹⁴ *The Problem of History in Mark*. One work that has gone unnoticed up to now is Firmin Nicolardot, *Les procédés de rédaction des trois premiers évangélistes*.

sible. This is especially true with regard to the redaktionsgeschichtlich investigation of Mark. Thirdly, redaktionsgeschichte can be said to have started with Conzelmann and Marxsen because it was through their works that the importance of this area of study became clear. As a result history will credit these two men with the "discovery" of redaktionsgeschichte even though they had their forerunners, just as Columbus is credited with the discovery of America even though he, too, had his forerunners.

*A Definition of Redaktionsgeschichte*¹⁵

Although Conzelmann's *Die Mitte der Zeit* was the first major work on redaktionsgeschichte to appear in the mid-fifties, he neither used the term redaktionsgeschichte nor systematically defined what the investigation of the unique theology of Luke involves or is. Redaktionsgeschichte for Conzelmann is simply the attempt to ascertain that which "distinguishes him [the evangelist]"¹⁶ from his sources. Marxsen on the other hand began his work by defining what redaktionsgeschichte is, and all the subsequent discussion has centered around his definition. Marxsen speaks of three "*Sitze im Leben*." Three separate *Sitze im Leben* must be distinguished in the investigation of the gospels. The first refers to the "einmaligen Situation der Wirksamkeit Jesu,"¹⁷ i. e., the relationship of our gospels to the historical or earthly Jesus. The second *Sitz im Leben* refers to "die Situation der Urkirche,"¹⁸ i. e., form criticism and its attempt to ascertain the theology of the early church by the investigation of the units handed down by the tradition. Up to this point Marxsen has said nothing new or unique. This is exactly what the form critics have said all along. Marxsen, however, continues and speaks of a third *Sitz im Leben* which he calls redaktionsgeschichte and which he defines as the attempt to ascertain the unique view of the gospel writers.¹⁹ Whereas form criticism is primarily concerned with the shaping of and formation of the oral traditions, redaktionsgeschichte

¹⁵ Although this term was used before Marxsen (cf. Marxsen, p. 11, n. 1), it has become a *terminus technicus* through his use of it.

¹⁶ *The Theology of St. Luke*, p. 13. See also pp. 9, 12-14, and 95.

¹⁷ *Der Evangelist Markus*, p. 12.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Ernest Best in his *The Temptation and the Passion*, p. xii, is in close agreement with Marxsen when he says, "Any full study of a Gospel involves an examination of three factors: the evangelist's theology, the early Church's modification of the tradition, and the original event." Koch (*op. cit.*, p. 63), Walter Grundmann (*Das Evangelium nach Markus*, p. 23), and Anton Vögtle ("Die historische und theologische Tragweite der heutigen Evangelienforschung," *ZKT*, 86 [1964], p. 393) also agree with the view of Marxsen.

is primarily concerned with what the individual writers of the gospels did with the materials (both oral and written) available to them.²⁰ It therefore looks at the evangelists as writers and not as mere *Sammler* as form criticism was prone to do.²¹

Some scholars have maintained that Marxsen's definition is misleading because there cannot be three *Sitze im Leben* but only two — the earthly Jesus and the early church. The second *Sitz im Leben*, however, is seen as twofold. It consists of (1) the transmission of the oral traditions by the early church and (2) the editorial redaction of the evangelists.²² Seen in this light the second *Sitz im Leben* is not as misleading as the form critics have often portrayed it. Yet we must not lose sight of the fact that the writing of the gospels was a unique event. This is especially true in the case of Mark. The writing of the gospels proved a major step in the transmission of the gospel materials. It gave a definite pattern to the materials, so that from the time of Mark the gospel materials had received a definite framework. The writing of the first gospel therefore marked the twilight of the oral period. Another problem in including both form criticism and redaktionsgeschichte in the same *Sitz im Leben* is that the form critics have tended to speak of the oral period as an anonymous one. Usually it is the "religious community" that is thought of as shaping the material. With the writing of the gospels, however, we leave the stage of "anonymity." We are here dealing with individual authors not with the "community." This is certainly the case with regard to the Gospel of Luke. This gospel is clearly the product of the reflection and thinking of Luke. It is perhaps somewhat less so with regard to Mark, and it is quite possible that in the case of Matthew we are dealing with a school.²³ It cannot be denied that a gospel such as Mark represents the views of Mark's church, for no man writes in a vacuum, and it would certainly be false to assume that Mark wrote an apologetic against the views of his church. If Mark were written, at least in part, for catechetical purposes, then we would expect that Mark closely reflects the views of his church. Yet it is best to think of the Gospel of Mark as portraying the views of the evangelist rather than those of the evangelist's church. This would avoid the danger of transferring the particular theology of Mark, which we can ascertain, to

²⁰ Marxsen, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

²¹ Koch (*op. cit.*, p. 62) points out that the evangelists can neither be viewed as "Verfasser," because they were limited by their material, nor "Sammler," because they were more than mere editors. He also dislikes the term "Redaktor." Perhaps the least misleading term in German is "Schriftsteller."

²² This is the view of Wolfgang Trilling (*Das Wahre Israel*, p. 13).

²³ For the opposing view that the Gospel of Matthew is not the product of a school but of an individual see Reginald H. Fuller, *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 114.

Mark's church, which we cannot directly know. An example of this danger is the "messianic secret" found in Mark. We know that the secrecy motif in our first gospel is a Markan emphasis, but it would be an unwarranted step to conclude that this was also an emphasis of Mark's church. It seems best therefore to consider the Gospel of Mark as reflecting the views and the attitudes of the evangelist even though it is probably true that it reflects closely the views of his church.²⁴ It should also be noted that the creation of the gospel form by Mark was a unique event. The creation of such a form is the work of an individual rather than of a church. With the writing of the gospels we have passed from a sociological *Sitz im Leben* (the community) to an individualistic *Sitz im Leben* (the evangelists). We have reached a new stage in the transmission of the gospel materials. It seems best, therefore, to view the work of the evangelists as a third *Sitz im Leben* rather than as part of the second, for not only will this indicate that we have come to a third major stage in the transmission of the materials, for the creation of the gospel form is a major step in the transmission of the gospel materials, but this will also help in a practical way to overcome the misconception created by the form critics that the evangelists were merely "scissors and paste men."

Some scholars have sought not only to place redaktionsgeschichte in the second *Sitz im Leben* but also to place it under form criticism. Bultmann attempts to do so,²⁵ as do Strecker,²⁶ Schille,²⁷ Koch,²⁸ Dinkler,²⁹ Guthrie,³⁰ and Haenchen.³¹ Haenchen speaks of a first and second "Stadium" of form criticism. In the first "Stadium" he placed the work of K. L. Schmidt, Dibelius, and Bultmann. In the second he places the work of Conzelmann, Marxsen, and the other redaktionsgeschichtlich scholars.³² But is there sufficient continuity between form criticism and

²⁴ The failure to distinguish between the evangelist and his church is a major weakness in the works of Lohmeyer and Robinson.

²⁵ "The Study . . .," p. 4.

²⁶ Strecker, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

²⁷ "Der Mangel eines kritischen Geschichtsbildes in der neutestamentlichen Formgeschichte," *TLZ*, 88 (1963), p. 492.

²⁸ Koch, *op. cit.*, p. 62, n. 1.

²⁹ "Form Criticism of the New Testament," *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*, p. 683.

³⁰ *New Testament Introduction: The Gospels and Acts*, p. 188.

³¹ Haenchen, *op. cit.*, pp. 20 f.

³² It would be a mistake to think that Haenchen minimizes the importance of redaktionsgeschichte by placing it under form criticism. On the contrary, he urges that a new name be given to this second "Stadium" in that redaktionsgeschichte does not stress sufficiently enough that the evangelists were not "scissors and paste men." By using a new term — *Kompositionsgeschichte* — he thinks that the unique contribution of the evangelists will be seen more clearly.

redaktionsgeschichte to permit this? Bultmann,³³ Strecker,³⁴ Klein,³⁵ and Conzelmann³⁶ claim that there is. Marxsen, however, disagrees. The oral stage tended toward the breaking up and scattering of material, not towards its synthesis.³⁷ The evangelists opposed this tendency toward scattering which existed in the oral period. There is not, therefore, a continuity of syntheticism but a decisive movement by the evangelists against this destructive dispersion of the oral period.³⁸ The implications of what Marxsen is saying are of great consequence. He is in effect denying that the redaction of Mark by Luke and Matthew provides a pattern by which we can judge how the oral transmission of the gospel traditions were formed and shaped. Grant³⁹ and Koch⁴⁰ agree with Marxsen in this regard.

It seems to the present writer that both Marxsen and his form-critical opponents have erred. In the oral stage there already existed a synthesizing tendency. The pre-Markan passion narrative, the parable collections, and the sayings collections prove this, and even Marxsen acknowledges that there were pre-Markan blocks of material.⁴¹ Furthermore Marxsen's thesis would require that originally the gospel materials must have stood together. Then in the course of the oral period this material was scattered. In the writing of the gospels, however, it was once again brought together. But to argue for an original "togetherness" of the material would require some hypothesis such as Riesefeld⁴² and Gerhardsson⁴³ propose; and this Marxsen rejects.⁴⁴ On the other hand, there exists a large "Spannung" between the collection of certain materials such as parables, sayings, the passion narrative, etc. and the writing of a gospel. The form critics who seek a continuity between form criticism and redaktionsgeschichte do not appreciate how great a step the evangelists took when they composed their gospels.⁴⁵

³³ *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, p. 321; cf. also Harvey K. McArthur, "Basic Issues," *Interp.*, 18 (1964), pp. 48-49.

³⁴ Strecker, *op. cit.*, p. 9. See also his review of Marxsen's *Der Evangelist Markus* in *ZKG*, 72 (1961), pp. 143-44.

³⁵ Klein, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.

³⁶ Conzelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

³⁷ Marxsen, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9. See also his *Einleitung in Das Neue Testament*, p. 113.

³⁸ *Der Evangelist Markus*, p. 9.

³⁹ R. M. Grant, *A Historical Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 80.

⁴⁰ Koch, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

⁴¹ *Einleitung in das . . .*, pp. 115-17.

⁴² *The Gospel Tradition and its Beginnings*.

⁴³ *Memory and Manuscript: Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity*.

⁴⁴ See *Der Evangelist Markus*, p. 8. It must be acknowledged that Marxsen is quite unclear as to exactly what he means by "scattering" and "synthesis."

⁴⁵ Eduard Schweizer in his *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, p. 222, sees clearly how big this step was for Mark: "Dass Markus in dieser Lage als erster ein Evangelium

It would be an error to make redaktionsgeschichte part of form criticism. Frör has correctly pointed out that they are primarily concerned with two different things. Form criticism is primarily concerned with the investigation of the individual pericopes and the oral period. Redaktionsgeschichte is concerned with the theological conception of each gospel as an individual entity.⁴⁶ Furthermore, whereas there are times when the investigations of redaktionsgeschichte will be intimately related to the same interests of form criticism, there will be other times when they will be quite independent. When we seek a Markan redaktionsgeschichte we are of necessity involved with form-critical investigation, for we must first isolate the Markan redaction from the tradition. This can only be done by the form-critical method. We are likewise involved in form-critical investigation when we seek a Matthean redaktionsgeschichte in the M material and a Lukan redaktionsgeschichte in the L material. To a lesser extent we are also involved in form-critical study when we investigate the Q material. When we seek, however, to ascertain a Matthean or a Lukan redaktionsgeschichte in the material which they have in common with Mark, we are not so much concerned with form-critical investigation as with literary analysis. In this area where we can most clearly ascertain the redaktionsgeschichtlich work of the evangelist we are quite independent of form-critical research, because in Mark we already possess the source. It seems clear, therefore, that to place redaktionsgeschichte as a subdivision of form criticism would be quite erroneous in that at times they are almost entirely independent. Furthermore we shall later see that these two disciplines have only the first step of form criticism in common.⁴⁷ It is best then to view form criticism and redaktionsgeschichte as two independent areas of study even though at times they may be interrelated. We should limit by definition form criticism to the investigation of the oral forms of the

schrrieb und damit eine ganz neue literarische Gattung schuf, war eine theologische Leistung ersten Ranges." For a similar appreciation of the great step taken by Mark see S. Schulz, "Die Bedeutung des Markus für die Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums," *TU: Studia Evangelica*, II, p. 145.

⁴⁶ Frör, *op. cit.*, p. 254: "Die formgeschichtliche Untersuchung interessierte sich zunächst vor allem für die kleinsten Einheiten, ihre Struktur, ihren Sitz und ihre Überlieferungsgeschichte . . . Die redaktionsgeschichtliche Arbeit versteht jedes Evangelium als einen ganzheitlichen Entwurf, der eine bestimmte theologische Konzeption vertritt. Sie fragt darum gerade nach dem Gesamtzeugnis des einzelnen Evangeliums und nach seiner spezifischen kerygmatischen Intention. Daraus ergibt sich ein profiliertes Bild seiner Eigenart." See also Georg Strecker, "Die Leidens- und Auferstehungsvorausagen im Markusevangelium," *ZTK*, 64 (1967), p. 16.

⁴⁷ See below p. 55. Marxsen (*Der Evangelist Markus*, p. 12) says, concerning the first step of form criticism (the isolation of the evangelist's redaction from the tradition), "An diesem Punkt zeigt sich die grosse Nähe der Redaktionsgeschichte zur Formgeschichte."

tradition and not include in form criticism the investigation of the particular use and interpretation of these traditions by the evangelist.

It is apparent then that Marxsen is essentially correct. Redaktionsgeschichte is the attempt to arrive at the third *Sitz im Leben*, i. e., it is the attempt to ascertain the unique theological purpose or purposes, views, and emphases which the evangelists have imposed upon the materials available to them. It would be an error to define redaktionsgeschichte as simply the attempt to arrive at the theology of the evangelists. Markan, Matthean, and Lukan theology differ from Pauline theology in that the latter involves all that the apostle believed. Redaktionsgeschichte seeks not the total theology of the evangelists but primarily their uniqueness in relation to their sources.⁴⁸ We are not concerned in the case of Matthew and Luke primarily with what they believe in common with Mark. Our interest lies primarily in how they differ. Pauline theology, on the other hand, is not concerned primarily with the investigation of the sources used, changed, omitted, uniquely stressed, etc. by the apostle.⁴⁹ It is concerned with the totality of what Paul believed. Here our task is simpler.⁵⁰ We can simply study the Pauline epistles as they are without searching for his sources. For the totality of what the evangelists believed we would only have to study the totality of their work. Redaktionsgeschichte would be useful in helping us to ascertain "part" of what the evangelists believed. This "part" could, of course, involve the purpose of the evangelist in writing his gospel, but it would still be only a "part." In redaktionsgeschichtlich studies, however, this "part"⁵¹ has become the focal point of attention. We are not primarily concerned with all that the evangelists believed. Rather we are concerned with ascertaining the unique contribution to and understanding of the sources by the evangelists. This will be found in their seams, interpretative comments, summaries, modification of material, selection of material, omission of material, arrangement, introductions, conclusions, vocabulary, christological titles, etc.⁵² In the redaktionsgeschichtlich investigation of the gospels we do not seek pri-

⁴⁸ Best (*op. cit.*, p. x) is therefore imprecise when he says with regard to the investigation of a Markan redaktionsgeschichte, "We may state our problem somewhat differently by saying that we are seeking to determine the Markan kerugma."

⁴⁹ The reason for this different interest is due to the fact that, whereas the apostle's words can only be traced to sources in a few instances, the evangelists' words are derived primarily from their sources.

⁵⁰ The present writer does not mean to imply that Pauline theology is "simple."

⁵¹ Since this "part" involves the purpose of the evangelist, it is clear that redaktionsgeschichte is not concerned only with minutiae.

⁵² For a detailed discussion of the means for ascertaining a Markan redaktionsgeschichte see Robert H. Stein, "The Proper Methodology for Ascertaining a Marcan Redaktionsgeschichte," (unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1968).

marily the theology of the evangelist's sources, as form criticism does, but having ascertained the evangelist's redaction we seek to find: (1) *What unique theological views does the evangelist present which are foreign to his sources?* Redaktionsgeschichte is not primarily concerned with any unique literary style or arrangement that an evangelist may have used. It seeks rather the unique theological views of the evangelist. An example of this is the twofold division of Galilee-Jerusalem found in Mark. If this is due to literary and stylistic motives, redaktionsgeschichte is not involved, but, if this scheme is due to a theological motive, then redaktionsgeschichte is very much involved. (2) *What unusual theological emphasis or emphases does the evangelist place upon the sources he received?* An evangelist may give to his sources an emphasis which is not necessarily a *de novo* creation. The evangelist reveals his redaktionsgeschichte in this instance by the unusual stress he places upon a certain theme found in the tradition. An example of this is the "messianic secret" found in Mark.⁵³ (3) *What theological purpose or purposes does the evangelist have in writing his gospel?*⁵⁴ (4) *What is the Sitz im Leben out of which the evangelist writes his gospel?* It is hoped that the results of (1) and (2) can be systematized, so that the purpose and *Sitz im Leben* of the evangelist can be ascertained. This will not always be so. Some of the evangelists' redaktionsgeschichte will concern peripheral matters, for not every change or stress will involve a major problem, concern, or purpose of the evangelists. As a result some of the results of (1) and (2) may at times not be of great importance or relevance for (3) and (4).

We may conclude our definition of redaktionsgeschichte by saying that redaktionsgeschichte seeks to discover the qualitative and quantitative uniqueness that distinguishes the evangelists from their sources, and, having ascertained these, it then seeks to ascertain the *Sitz im Leben* out of which each evangelist wrote and the particular purposes for which he wrote his gospel.

⁵³ Wrede, himself, argued that the "messianic secret" was already contained in part in the sources Mark used. This has been further demonstrated. See T. A. Burkill, "The Hidden Son of Man in St. Mark's Gospel," *ZNW*, 52 (1961), pp. 189-213; Eduard Schweizer, "Zur Frage des Messiasgeheimnisses bei Markus," *ZNW*, 56 (1965), pp. 1-8; and Erik Sjöberg, *Der Verborgene Menschensohn in den Evangelien*. For an attempt to deny that the "messianic secret" was at least in part pre-Markan see G. Strecker, "Zur Messiasgeheimnistheorie im Markusevangelium," *TU: Studia Evangelica*, III, p. 96.

⁵⁴ If the writers were only "Sammler," although there could be a number of practical reasons for having written their gospels (to keep the traditions from becoming lost, a desire to collect the traditions into one corpus, etc.), there would be for the most part only one theological purpose for writing them. This would be to gather together the traditions because of the delay of the parousia.

The Proper Procedure to Follow in the Investigation of the Gospels

The important question must be raised here as to what the first task of the exegete is in the study of the gospels. In the debate over whether form criticism or redaktionsgeschichte is the first task of the exegete, scholars have lost sight of the fact that all "Traditionsgeschichte" overlaps. All redaktionsgeschichtlich and form-critical studies involve in one way or another literary criticism, and literary criticism involves similarly form-critical and redaktionsgeschichtlich investigation.⁵⁵ It is fallacious therefore to think that any of these areas of gospel research can exist independently of the others or deserves preëminence over the others. Each has its own right for existence, and each works together with the others in the investigation of the gospels.

The question of whether form-critical investigation is to precede "redaktionsgeschichtlich" investigation is much debated.⁵⁶ Does the exegete seek first to arrive at the oral stage or does he investigate the work of the final redactor first? How can one investigate the redaction of the evangelists unless he first of all ascertains the oral traditions which they used. On the other hand, did not Bultmann obtain his "laws" of the oral tradition by first of all investigating the Matthean and Lukan redaction of Mark? Can these two tasks really be separated? Conzelmann has argued that form-critical investigation must precede redaktionsgeschichtlich investigation. Therefore form criticism is the first task of the exegete.⁵⁷ Long ago Johannes Weiss argued that redaktionsgeschichte is the first task of the exegete.⁵⁸ The debate has been vigorous. Koch,⁵⁹ Rohde,⁶⁰ Ibers,⁶¹ Klein,⁶² and Schille⁶³ agree with Conzelmann, but Farrer,⁶⁴ and Johnson⁶⁵ agree with Weiss. On the other hand, Marxsen⁶⁶

⁵⁵ One of the reasons often given for a Markan priority is that the theology of Mark is more "primitive" than that of Matthew and Luke. When we argue in this manner, we are discussing the way the later evangelists "redacted" their source.

⁵⁶ Austin Farrer stated the problem clearly even before the work of Marxsen and Conzelmann. In his *A Study of St Mark*, p. 21, he stated, "Has the man who wishes to understand the unity of thought and plan in the Gospels to wait for the form-critics to do their work, and to go on from there, or is it they, on the contrary, who have to wait for him, and take the question up as he leaves it?"

⁵⁷ Conzelmann, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁵⁸ Weiss, *op. cit.*, p. 62. See above n. 9.

⁵⁹ Koch, *op. cit.*, p. 62 n. 1 and 71.

⁶⁰ Rohde, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

⁶¹ Ibers, *op. cit.*, p. 338.

⁶² Klein, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

⁶³ Schille, *op. cit.*, p. 492.

⁶⁴ Farrer, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

⁶⁵ Sherman E. Johnson, *The Theology of the Gospels*, p. 21.

⁶⁶ Marxsen, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

maintains that form-critical and redaktionsgeschichtlich investigation must be simultaneous. This diversity of opinion is due to each of these scholars having overlooked the fact that these scientific disciplines overlap. It should be remembered that form criticism involves the following steps: (1) isolation of the tradition from the editorial redaction; (2) classification of the material according to types; (3) determination of the *Sitz im Leben* out of which the material came; and (4) the historical critical evaluation of the individual pericopes. Once the synoptic problem has been resolved, one can proceed to the redaktionsgeschichtlich investigation of Mark immediately after the first step of form criticism — i. e., the separation of the oral units from the redaction of the evangelists — has been accomplished. In other words, the first step of redaktionsgeschichte is the same as the first step of form criticism in the investigation of Mark, M, and L. Both must first isolate the redaction of the evangelists.⁶⁷ After this is done each discipline concentrates upon its own interests. Form criticism “sets aside” the redaction and concentrates its investigation upon the tradition, whereas redaktionsgeschichte “sets aside” the tradition and concentrates its investigation upon the redaction. It is evident therefore that the relationship between form criticism and redaktionsgeschichte is not a simple first step—second step process. It is more like walking along a common path until one’s particular interests bring one to a fork in the path. When one comes to the fork one must then decide whether to take one path or the other. The common path both disciplines must walk involves the separation of the tradition from the redaction of the evangelist. What to do next brings us to the fork in the road. If we decide to investigate the tradition, we must pursue form-critical studies. If we decide to investigate the redaction, we shall then pursue redaktionsgeschichtlich studies.

⁶⁷ This is more true in certain areas of investigation such as the investigation of the seams, insertions, and summaries of the evangelists than in others such as the arrangement of the pericopes. Yet even in the latter instance, by our assumption that the pericopes existed for the most part as isolated units and that the arrangement is due to the evangelist, we have “isolated” the tradition from the editorial redaction.