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ORDERING GOSPEL TEXTUALITY IN THE SECOND CENTURY[1]

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Abstract

This article interrogates how several second-century figures ordered a pluriform Gospel corpus. Focusing on approaches to Gospel plurality visible in the *Epistula apostolorum*, Tatian the Syrian, Irenaeus of Lyons, and Ammonius of Alexandria, we argue that a number of Christian readers—across the Roman Mediterranean, from Alexandria to Gaul and from Syria to Rome—employed similar approaches. Drawing on evidence for second-century reading practices, we demonstrate continuities in both textual practices and conceptual frameworks that illuminate Gospel reading and writing. These figures engaged Gospels in multiple dimensions—horizontal juxtaposition of parallel material and vertical coordination of narrative sequence—in order to map relationships between imperfectly parallel texts. These spatial textual practices enabled synthetic reading of an emergent pluriform Gospel corpus.

Introduction

Over the past century and more, scholars have devoted immense attention to the emergence of a fourfold Gospel canon. Scholars debate when and for whom four Gospels—four particular Gospels

[1] The idea for this article emerged from a conversation between the two authors. Jeremiah Coogan drafted the discussion of Ammonius, the introduction, and the conclusion. Jacob Rodriguez drafted the discussion of *EpAp* and Tatian. The authors jointly drafted the section on Irenaeus and revised the material together. The authors extend their sincere thanks to generous colleagues who improved the article by their feedback, especially Markus Bockmuehl, Peter Head, Jan Heilmann, Ian Mills, Candida Moss, and Paul Wheatley, as well as to the anonymous reviewers for the *Journal*. This project has received funding from the European Commission's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No. 891569, 'Expanding the Gospel according to Matthew: Continuity and Change in Early Gospel Literature'.

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attributed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—became a canon of authoritative Gospel texts.[2] Yet scholars often overlook the varied practices through which early readers charted a pluriform constellation of Gospel texts. In this article, we seek to reorient the conversation by drawing attention to how early Christian thinkers negotiated Gospel similarity and difference. Although several of these figures engaged a corpus corresponding to the emergent fourfold Gospel, the practices on which we focus did not require—and do not always reflect—this fourfold construct.[3] For this reason, we center the materially embedded practices—taking notes, making lists, constructing tables, and so forth—through which second-century figures negotiated a pluriform Gospel corpus.[4]

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[2] On why, from the second century onward, some Christians understood four particular texts as an authoritative Gospel collection, see O. Cullmann, 'Die Pluralität der Evangelien als theologisches Problem im Altertum', *TZ* 1 (1945), pp. 23–42; H. von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), pp. 153–76; G. N. Stanton, 'The Fourfold Gospel', *NTS* 43 (1997), pp. 317–46; Th. K. Heckel, *Vom Evangelium des Markus zum viergestaltigen Evangelium* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999); J. Schröter, *Von Jesus zum Neuen Testament: Studien zur urchristlichen Theologiegeschichte und zur Entstehung des neutestamentlichen Kanons* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007); M. Hengel, *Die vier Evangelien und das eine Evangelium von Jesus Christus: Studien zu ihrer Sammlung und Entstehung* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008); C. E. Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels? Probing the Great Gospel Conspiracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); F. Watson, *Gospel Writing: A Canonical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013); L. M. McDonald, *The Formation of the Biblical Canon* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017). Irenaeus of Lyons and his articulation of a fourfold Gospel figure prominently in these scholarly accounts (esp. *Haer.* 3.1.1; 3.11.7–9).

[3] At the same time, the figures and texts that we discuss in this article centre on a corpus of Gospel texts that *does* largely correspond to the emergent fourfold Gospel.

[4] Although reconstructions of second-century intellectual activity frequently centre elite individuals, literary activity in the Roman Mediterranean depended on the pervasive exploitation of the labour and expertise of enslaved and formerly enslaved individuals. We should not assume that the situation was otherwise for elite Christian figures in the second century. On enslavement and Roman literary activity, see P. E. Arns, *La technique du livre d'après saint Jérôme* (Paris: de Boccard, 1953), pp. 37–62; N. I. Herescu, 'Le mode de composition des écrivains ("dictare")', *REL* (1956), pp. 132–46; E. Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1958), pp. 953–9; J. Schlumberger, '"*Non scribe sed dicto*" (HA T 33,8): Hat der Autor der *Historia Augusta* mit Stenographen gearbeitet?', in *Bonner Historia Augusta Colloquium 1972–1976*, ed. G. Alfoldy, E. Badian, and R. Syme (Bonn: Habelt, 1976), pp. 221–38; N. Horsfall, 'Rome without Spectacles', *G&R* 42 (1995), pp. 49–56; M. McDonnell, 'Writing, Copying, and Autograph Manuscripts in Rome', *CQ* 46 (1996), pp. 469–91; G. Cavallo, 'Écriture et pratiques intellectuelles dans le monde antique', *Genesis* 15 (2000), pp. 97–108; T. Dorandi, *Le stylet et la tablette: Dans le secret des auteurs antiques* (Paris: Les belles lettres, 2000), pp. 51–75.

The hermeneutical and philological challenges posed by textual plurality are fundamental to many disciplines, both ancient and modern. In the ancient Mediterranean world, scholars sought to make sense of parallel texts attributed to Homer and other esteemed figures.[5] Historians grappled with the perennial concerns afforded by parallel texts, divergent details, and conflicting timelines.[6] Writers of technical literature synthesized sources in order to offer better accounts of varied technologies.[7] And, of course, textual plurality mattered for Gospel readers, both before and after the emergence of a fourfold Gospel.[8]

Building on recent scholarship on readers and reading cultures in the Roman Mediterranean, we focus on the strategies that second-century Christian figures employed to map the complex geography of their Gospel texts.[9] To introduce the challenges of coordinating a pluriform Gospel corpus, we begin with the 'Gospel through four' produced by Ammonius of Alexandria. We then analyse two earlier compositions, the mid-second-century *Epistula apostolorum* and the Gospel produced by Tatian in the later second century; both incorporated material from multiple existing Gospels in order to offer new narratives. We turn finally to Irenaeus of Lyons, who analysed a complex landscape of Gospel literature and theorized the shape of a Gospel corpus.[10] Each of these texts navigates the similarity and difference of multiple

[5] F. Schironi, *The Best of the Grammarians: Aristarchus of Samothrace on the* Iliad (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2018).

[6] For classic discussion, see A. D. Momigliano, *Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1977).

[7] M. Asper, *Griechische Wissenschaftstexte: Formen, Funktionen, Differenzierungsgeschichten* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2007).

[8] Not all second-century engagement with Gospel material and not all new Gospel texts primarily reflect the activities of *readers*. A number of scholars have argued for the role of secondary orality in Gospel production and reception. Nonetheless, in this article we focus on second-century practices of reading.

[9] The framework of 'textual geography' builds on J. Coogan, 'Mapping the Fourfold Gospel: Textual Geography in the Eusebian Apparatus', *JECS* 25 (2017), pp. 337–57, which employs Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984) to analyse Gospel books as textual spaces. On reading cultures in the Roman Mediterranean, see W. A. Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture in the High Roman Empire: A Study of Elite Communities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[10] As we discuss below, the sources for second-century Gospel reading pose certain challenges; the evidence is—to varying degrees—fragmentary, versional, or late. We have approached this matter with caution by building our arguments on the aspects of these second-century projects that are clearest in our sources and least open to debate and by discussing major alternative interpretations where relevant.

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existing Gospels, characterized by similar but different narrative sequences and by overlapping but distinct parallel material.[11]

In this article, we articulate the varied ways in which these second-century figures and texts engaged the complexities of a pluriform Gospel corpus and locate these textual practices in a broader second-century context.[12] Building on the work of William Johnson, the concept of 'textual practices' is fundamental to our approach, providing a framework for comparison both between different projects of Gospel reception and between these projects and wider second-century habits of reading and writing. We emphasize *how* second-century figures engaged the burgeoning corpus of Gospel literature. As we argue, their practices of Gospel reading simultaneously involved a vertical dimension (appreciating the sequence of individual Gospels) and a horizontal dimension (observing similarities and differences in Gospel parallels). The spatial thinking that we describe involves both *physically spatial* practices and *conceptual* negotiation in two dimensions—and these two are often intertwined. This bidirectional mode of reading in the later second century differed from the practices that characterized the composition of Gospels and other prose narratives in the first-century Roman Mediterranean. In contrast with second-century readers and writers of Gospel literature, earlier writers of biographies and histories generally used one main source

[11] Following Johnson, we note that such textual practices are 'intimately bound with active interrogation of the text—which itself implies an abiding confidence that texts, especially classic texts, have a depth of meaning that repays the group's efforts at interpretation and discussion' (Johnson, *Readers*, p. 202).

[12] Important studies that locate second-century Christians like Justin, Tatian, and Irenaeus in wider intellectual currents of the second century include K. Eshleman, *The Social World of Intellectuals in the Roman Empire: Sophists, Philosophers, and Christians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) and J. Secord, *Christian Intellectuals and the Roman Empire: From Justin Martyr to Origen* (College Station: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2020).Johnson, *Readers,* focuses on readers and reading culture that orbit around the city of Rome. Similarly, most of the second-century Christian figures we discuss in this article—including Justin, Tatian, and Irenaeus—have significant Roman connections. Ammonius in Alexandria would seem to be an outlier in this regard. We do not know enough about the *Epistula apostolorum* to make strong claims about where it was written or read. Christian textual practices across the Roman Mediterranean, from Gaul to Syria, nonetheless appear to be shaped by intellectual developments centred on the metropolis. On second-century Christian readers in Rome, see also G. H. Snyder (ed.), *Christian Teachers in Second-Century Rome: Schools and Students in the Ancient City* (Leiden: Brill, 2020).

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at a time.[13] They did not hold together the vertical and horizontal dimensions of multiple sources in the way that we observe in second-century attempts to organize the pluriform Gospel corpus. While no sharp break divides first- and second-century phenomena, we discern a substantial shift over the century (or more) separating Luke and Ammonius.

Ammonius: Juxtaposition

The philosopher and textual scholar Ammonius of Alexandria, who flourished at the end of the second century or the beginning of the third, illustrates one of the ways in which Christian thinkers charted the vibrant constellation of texts about the words and deeds of Jesus.[14] Ammonius' approach illuminates how second-century figures negotiated Gospel plurality.

[13] Greek and Latin historiographers up to the second century often used more than one source to construct their accounts (e.g., Arrian, *Anab.* 1.praef; 7.15.5–6; 11.6.1–3; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant.* 1.7.2–4; Tacitus, *Ann.* 4.53; Josephus, *Ant.* 20.154), but seldom used sources in close parallel. Moreover, their aim was not to preserve parallel accounts to be read simultaneously, but to craft their own narratives from the building blocks that they quarried from earlier sources. Cf. F. G. Downing, 'Compositional Conventions and the Synoptic Problem', *JBL* 107 (1988), pp. 69–85; 'Disagreements of Each Evangelist with the Minor Close Agreements of the Other Two', *ETL* 80 (2004), pp. 445–69; R. A. Derrenbacker, *Ancient Compositional Practices and the Synoptic Problem* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005).

[14] On Ammonius, see Eusebius, *Ep. Carp.*, lines 3–6; cf. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.19.6–7, 9–10; Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 55. Cf. J. W. Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to S. Mark Vindicated Against Recent Critical Objectors and Established* (Oxford: James Parker, 1871), pp. 127–8, 295–312; Th. Zahn, *Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons und der altkirchlichen Literatur. I. Theil: Tatian's Diatessaron* (Erlangen: Deichert, 1881), pp. 31–4; A. Harnack, *Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius. Zweiter Band: Die Chronologie der Litteratur von Irenäus bis Eusebius* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1904), pp. 81–2; Th. Zahn, 'Der Exeget Ammonius und andere Ammonii', *ZKG* 38 (1920), pp. 1–22; E. D. Digeser, *A Threat to Public Piety: Christians, Platonists, and the Great Persecution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), pp. 23–71; M. R. Crawford, 'Ammonius of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea and the Origins of Gospels Scholarship', *NTS* 61 (2015), pp. 3–6; M. J. Edwards, 'One Origen or Two? The *Status Quaestionis*', *SO* 89 (2015), pp. 81–103; M. R. Crawford, *The Eusebian Canon Tables: Ordering Textual Knowledge in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 56–95. The debates about the identity of this Ammonius, his relationship to the Christian Origen, and his exact dates are not material to the present argument.

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Ammonius' project is, regrettably, mediated to us only via a brief description by the fourth-century bishop-scholar Eusebius of Caesarea (*c.*260–339 CE).[15] We begin with Eusebius' report:[16]

Ἀμμώνιος μὲν ὁ Ἀλεξανδρεὺς πολλὴν ὡς εἰκὸς φιλοπονίαν καὶ σπουδὴν εἰσαγηοχὼς τὸ διὰ τεσσάρων ἡμῖν καταλέλοιπεν εὐαγγέλιον, τῷ κατὰ Ματθαῖον τὰς ὁμοφώνους τῶν λοιπῶν εὐαγγελιστῶν περικοπὰς παραθείς, ὡς ἐξ ἀνάγκης συμβῆναι τὸν τῆς ἀκολουθίας εἱρμὸν τῶν τριῶν διαφθαρῆναι ὅσον ἐπὶ τῷ ὕφει τῆς ἀναγνώσεως· ἵνα δὲ σωζομένου καὶ τοῦ τῶν λοιπῶν δι' ὅλου σώματός τε καὶ εἱρμοῦ εἰδέναι ἔχοις τοὺς οἰκείους ἑκάστου εὐαγγελιστοῦ τόπους, ἐν οἷς κατὰ τῶν αὐτῶν ἠνέχθησαν φιλαλήθως εἰπεῖν, ἐκ τοῦ πονήματος τοῦ προειρημένου ἀνδρὸς εἰληφὼς ἀφορμὰς καθ' ἑτέραν μέθοδον κανόνας δέκα τὸν ἀριθμὸν διεχάραξά σοι τοὺς ὑποτεταγμένους. (*Ep. Carp.*, lines 3–14)

Ammonius the Alexandrian, exerting great industry and zeal—as is fitting—has left us the 'Gospel through four'. He juxtaposed the corresponding sections of the other evangelists alongside Matthew's Gospel with the unavoidable result that the coherent sequence of the other three was destroyed insofar as concerns the web of reading. But in order that, by the content and sequence of the remaining evangelists being preserved throughout, you would still be able to know the distinct passages of each evangelist, in which they were compelled by love of truth to speak in their own way, I have adopted the raw material from the work of the aforementioned man, but have inscribed the ten canons that are attached for you below by a different method.

Ammonius thus restructured multiple existing narratives to create a new Gospel text, creating a textual space with two dimensions: a horizontal relationship of parallel juxtaposition and a vertical relationship of narrative sequence.

[15] On Ammonius' Gospel, see Eusebius, *Ep. Carp.*, lines 3–6. Later testimonia recycle Eusebius' report. Cf. W. L. Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron: Its Creation, Dissemination, Significance, and History in Scholarship* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 32–3; A. Grafton and M. H. Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 195; Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels?*, pp. 112–14; Crawford, 'Ammonius', pp. 6–15; Crawford, *Eusebian Canon Tables*, pp. 56–95; J. Coogan, *Eusebius the Evangelist: Rewriting the Fourfold Gospel in Late Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023), pp. 59–93. On the suggestion that a Gospel text preserved in the seventh-century Greek undertext of Codex Climaci Rescriptus reflects Ammonius' project, see Crawford, *Eusebian Canon Tables*, pp. 310–13. Although we are unconvinced that this text represents Ammonius' project, it provides further evidence for late ancient Gospel synopses and the critical questions that they address.

[16] Greek text: NA28, pp. 89*–90* (trans.: Coogan, *Eusebius the Evangelist*, pp. xv–xvi).

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We focus first on the horizontal dimension. Ammonius 'juxtaposed the corresponding sections' from multiple evangelists (*τὰς ὁμοφώνους τῶν λοιπῶν εὐαγγελιστῶν περικοπὰς παραθείς*, lines 5–6). That is, he engaged a pluriform corpus of Gospel texts. Segmentation was integral to the project; Ammonius identified 'corresponding' material in Mark, Luke, and John, and placed these blocks of material alongside their Matthean parallels (reflecting, of course, Ammonius' judgement about what material was parallel).[17] Ammonius employed spatial practices to make sense of a complex Gospel corpus.

We turn to the vertical dimension. As Eusebius reports, Ammonius 'juxtaposed the corresponding sections of the other evangelists alongside Matthew's Gospel' (*τῷ κατὰ Ματθαῖον τὰς ὁμοφώνους τῶν λοιπῶν εὐαγγελιστῶν περικοπὰς παραθείς*, lines 5–6). Matthew provided the sequence for Ammonius' new Gospel text. As a corollary to this Matthean sequence, non-Matthean texts were disrupted. After all, Matthew does not always arrange material in the same order as Mark, Luke, or John. This feature of Ammonius' project prompted critique: Eusebius complained that his predecessor's actions had 'the unavoidable result that the coherent sequence' of the other Gospels was destroyed (*ἐξ ἀνάγκης συμβῆναι τὸν τῆς ἀκολουθίας εἱρμὸν τῶν τριῶν διαφθαρῆναι*, lines 6–7), a result that Eusebius found undesirable. The problem of sequence, so central here, occurs in many early projects of reading a pluriform Gospel corpus.

[17] Despite repeated scholarly references to numbered 'Ammonian sections', no evidence indicates that Ammonius numbered sections and there is good reason to think that he did not. Numerous scholars have recognized the point over the past two centuries—including C. Lloyd (ed.), *Novum Testamentum: accedunt parallela S. Scripturae loca vetus capitulorum notatio canones Eusebii* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1827); Burgon, *Last Twelve Verses*, pp. 295–8, 304; Zahn, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, pp. 31–2; C. R. Gregory, *Textkritik des Neuen Testaments* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1900), p. 861; E. Nestle, 'Die eusebianische Evangeliensynopse', *NKZ* 19 (1908), p. 41; Zahn, 'Exeget', p. 8; T. D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 122; Crawford, 'Ammonius', pp. 19–21; Coogan, 'Mapping', p. 351 n. 44; T. O'Loughlin, 'Some Hermeneutical Assumptions Latent within the Gospel Apparatus of Eusebius of Caesarea', StPatr 95 (2017), p. 52; Crawford, *Eusebian Canon Tables*, pp. 81–2; Coogan, *Eusebius the Evangelist*, p. 32—but the misunderstanding persists. The attribution to Ammonius of Eusebius' sections is the result of misreading the *Epistle to Carpianus* and its reference to *περικοπάς* (line 6).

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Ammonius produced a new text that Eusebius described as a '*διὰ τεσσάρων* Gospel' (*τὸ διὰ τεσσάρων…εὐαγγέλιον*, lines 4–5).[18] Both dimensions—horizontal juxtaposition and vertical sequence—worked together to create a new Gospel: a creative spatial arrangement of multiple existing sources into a new composite text. Like an exploded-view diagram that enables one to observe interactions between the various parts of a mechanism, Ammonius' project deconstructed into its constituent components the complex process of ordering Gospel plurality.[19] He created a space for both horizontal juxtaposition and vertical sequence. The Ammonian project thus affords a vantage from which to analyse earlier textual practices that orchestrated a pluriform (sometimes quadriform) Gospel corpus.

Yet Eusebius' description was intended to explain the impetus for his own novel reconfiguration of the Gospels; it does not answer all of our questions about Ammonius' project. The absence of other evidence—direct or indirect—means that it is impossible to answer a number of these questions. But the uncertainties highlight broader issues of scholarly practice and compositional method—not only in Ammonius' project, but in the work of his varied predecessors who likewise engaged multiple Gospel texts.

First, we remain uncertain about the *mise-en-page* of Ammonius' juxtapositions. Eusebius informs us that 'Ammonius the Alexandrian…juxtaposed the corresponding sections of the other evangelists alongside Matthew's Gospel.' How did Ammonius do this? Most scholars have described Ammonius' Gospel as a synopsis in the modern sense, comprising four parallel columns for four parallel Gospels.[20] This model is easy to visualize, offers contemporary analogues, and coheres with Eusebius' complaint that the 'other evangelists' were disordered by the imposition of Matthew's sequence. This reconstruction also parallels two other

[18] Crawford suggests that Eusebius employed 'Diatessaron-Gospel' as the title of Ammonius' project ('Ammonius', pp. 8–12; cf. H. H. Oliver, 'The Epistle of Eusebius to Carpianus: Textual Tradition and Translation', *NovT* 3 [1959], p. 144; Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels?*, p. 114).

[19] Ammonius' Gospel is what Markus Krajewski has termed a 'paper machine' that produces new textual knowledge (*Paper Machines: About Cards & Catalogs, 1548–1929* [Cambridge: MIT, 2011]) cf. Coogan, *Eusebius the Evangelist*, pp. 28–9, 55.

[20] Grafton and Williams, *Christianity*, p. 178; M. Wallraff, *Kodex und Kanon: Das Buch im frühen Christentum* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013), p. 32; Crawford, 'Ammonius', pp. 6–7; Coogan, 'Mapping', pp. 348–9; Crawford, *Eusebian Canon Tables*, pp. 64–5; Coogan, *Eusebius the Evangelist*, pp. 83–4.

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tabular projects: Origen's third-century *Hexapla* and Eusebius' fourth-century Gospel canons. Scholars have imagined an arrangement corresponding to Origen's *Hexapla*, especially because Ammonius is thought to have been the teacher of the Christian Origen, providing a human connection to accompany the technological similarity. The other comparandum, the Gospel canons, is why Eusebius describes Ammonius' Gospel in the first place; Eusebius presented his canons as an improvement. These histories of scholarship invite us to assume that Ammonius' Gospel took a similar tabular form to later projects.

Yet a different model deserves consideration. In his history of Roman information technology, Andrew Riggsby demonstrates that empty cells were rare in Roman tables.[21] In a related essay,[22] Riggsby observes that Origen's *Hexapla* arranged parallel material with corresponding elements in each row; with rare exceptions, every cell in Origen's design is full. The same, however, could not have been true in Ammonius' project. Regardless of how one divides Matthew into sections, many lack parallels in other Gospels. The greater differences between Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John than between the different Greek versions of the Jewish Scriptures mean that numerous cells in Ammonius' design would have remained empty. These technological considerations lead Riggsby to propose a different model. Instead of a four-column synopsis, Riggsby suggests, Ammonius created an annotated Matthew. He added the 'corresponding sections' of other Gospels alongside the relevant Matthean material but did not arrange each Gospel in a distinct column. On this reconstruction, while Ammonius juxtaposed parallel material with a running text of Matthew, he did not distinguish the additional texts spatially from one another.

We observe further late ancient analogues to this arrangement. A number of annotated scrolls and codices from late ancient Egypt, studied by Kathleen McNamee, offer examples; particularly relevant to Ammonius' Gospel is McNamee's discussion of

[21] A. M. Riggsby, *Mosaics of Knowledge: Representing Information in the Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 42–82.

[22] A. M. Riggsby, 'Learning the Language of God: Tables in Early Christian Texts', in L. Ayres, M. W. Champion, and M. R. Crawford (eds.), *The Intellectual World of Late Antique Christianity: Reshaping Classical Traditions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2024). Riggsby states that the traditional reconstruction of the tabular layout of Ammonius is also possible.

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'scholar's texts' that collated variants in their margins.[23] William Johnson also discusses a number of papyri from second-century Oxyrhynchus in Egypt that preserve traces of collation in marginal annotations; explicit mention of such collation is preserved in the second-century CE letter P.Pet. 30.[24] Origen's *Tetrapla* offers a further comparandum for the collation of multiple texts in the margins of an edition.[25] The well-attested practice of annotating alternate readings in the margins illuminates Eusebius' use of the verb *παρατίθημι* ('to place alongside') to describe Ammonius' work. Eusebius used the same verb (*παρατίθημι*) to describe the placement of alternate readings from the Greek versions in the margins of the *Tetrapla*; the evidence for Eusebius' work in this regard is preserved in colophons to the *Syro-Hexapla*.[26] Texts compared in this way are assumed to be multiple versions of the 'same' text. This may indicate that Ammonius understood 'Matthew' and other Gospels as different versions of the same textual phenomenon ('Gospel'). We surmise that, like the parallel texts annotated in McNamee's examples or in the *Tetrapla*, Ammonius may have marked his parallel texts with an attribution of their source.[27]

Does the exploded-view quality of Ammonius' project suggest that Eusebius is describing work in progress, an intermediate step toward creating a new synthetic Gospel like Tatian's? This may be suggested by the similarities between Ammonius' *διὰ τεσσάρων* Gospel and Origen's *Hexapla*; Origen juxtaposed parallel texts in the *Hexapla* as a first step toward creating the new edition known

[23] K. McNamee, *Annotations in Greek and Latin Texts from Egypt* (New Haven: American Society of Papyrologists, 2007), pp. 37–8.

[24] Johnson, *Reading*, pp. 179–99. On P.Pet. 30, see especially p. 184.

[25] The best evidence is provided in the *Syro-Hexapla*, but several Greek manuscripts provide similar evidence. See F. Schironi, 'P.Grenf. 1.5, Origen, and the Scriptorium of Caesarea', *BASP* 52 (2015), pp. 181–223; P. J. Gentry, 'Did Origen Use the Aristarchian Signs in the *Hexapla*?', in *XV Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Munich, 2013*, ed. W. Kraus, M. N. van der Meer, and M. Meiser (Atlanta: SBL, 2016), pp. 133–47.

[26] B. Marsh, Jr., *Early Christian Scripture and the Samaritan Pentateuch: A Study in Hexaplaric Manuscript Activity* (Studia Samaritana 12; Berlin: De Gruyter, forthcoming 2023). Eusebius and his teacher Pamphilus continued to work on Origen's *Hexapla–Tetrapla* project long after Origen's death. Ptolemy the Astronomer, working in the second century, similarly used the verb *παρατίθημι* to describe annotating additions and corrections in the margins of a manuscript (*Geogr.* 2.1.3).

[27] For discussion of collation of Jewish Scriptures before Origen, see J. W. Barker, 'Ancient Compositional Practices and the Gospels: A Reassessment', *JBL* 135 (2016), pp. 109–21.

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as the *Tetrapla*.[28] It is also suggested by Origen's *Comm. Matt.* 15.14, where he explicitly declined a parallel-column approach to the Gospels—even though he had used such an approach for the Jewish Scriptures. Origen implied that the reason for this decision was an unwillingness to conflate the Gospels into a new composite edition that would dissolve their individual integrity.[29] While one cannot decide conclusively between these alternative models given the state of the evidence, they highlight a recurrent question: how important was it to distinguish different sources of Gospel material?

Second, while Eusebius described Ammonius' project as a 'Gospel through four', what does this indicate about Ammonius' material? If Ammonius found identical material in another Gospel—which occurs frequently with Synoptic parallels—would he have redundantly included it alongside Matthew? We do not know. Furthermore, did Ammonius limit himself to material he found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? Even if Ammonius used these texts as his primary sources—as implied by the description 'Gospel through four'—we should not exclude the possibility that he included additional material.[30] A number of other figures in the second, third, and fourth centuries—including some who vocally privileged a collection of precisely four Gospel texts—occasionally cited additional Jesus material (sometimes attributed to specific written Gospels).[31] The evidence does not answer this question either.

[28] This reconstruction of the relationship between *Hexapla* and *Tetrapla* follows Gentry, 'Aristarchean Signs', pp. 146–7.

[29] In *Comm. Matt.* 15.14, Origen discusses scribal errors that lead to divergent Gospel narratives (*ad* Matt. 19:16–22, the rich young man) and compares Matthew with parallels in Luke, Mark, and the Gospel according to the Hebrews. Origen contrasts this engagement with Gospel similarity and difference with the *Hexapla–Tetrapla* project that addressed the diversity of Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible. Origen states that he had not attempted a similar project for the Gospels because he feared recrimination.

[30] Most scholars assume that Ammonius used only Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Yet although Eusebius focused on a fourfold Gospel of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we need not assume that Ammonius' project was so constrained. At the same time, the decision to include additional material need not be understood as a rejection of the emergent fourfold Gospel corpus. As discussed below, both *EpAp* and Tatian employed material not found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. Even Origen's 'sixfold' *Hexapla* included additional columns in some books, especially the Psalter (cf. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.16.2–3; Epiphanius, *Mens.* 7 [Syriac 50c–d, ed. Dean]).

[31] E.g., Clement, *Strom.* 2.9.45.4–5; 3.6.45.3; 3.9.63.1; 3.9.64.1; 3.13.93.1; 5.14.96.3; Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 15.14; *Comm. Jo.* 2.12.87; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.25.5; 3.39.17; 4.22.8; Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 2; *Comm. Matt.* 23.35.

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Third, what did Ammonius do with material that had no Matthean parallel? Numerous sayings and narratives are absent in Matthew but present in other Gospels—especially John, to a lesser extent Luke, and even occasionally Mark. Did Ammonius exclude this material because it did not fit his Matthean structure?[32] Did he incorporate it at an appropriate point?[33] Did he collect it in an appendix at the end?[34] Previous scholars have proposed each of these solutions, but one cannot answer this question with the available evidence.[35]

These uncertainties about Ammonius' project prompt questions about how earlier second-century figures grappled with similar challenges posed by difference in the Gospels. What textual technologies and readerly practices might one use to organize a pluriform Gospel corpus? What Gospel texts does one use? What should one do with material that does not fit one's chosen structure? Ammonius negotiates a plurality of texts by means of creative spatial arrangement, placing four Gospels in the same artefactual geography. He addresses an ongoing question: how should one bring order (*τάξις*) to a variegated constellation of Gospel texts? This, in turn, requires resolving questions of parallel and sequence in a pluriform corpus. In the case of Ammonius, Matthew provided sequence, while he incorporated further material from other texts (primarily Mark, Luke, and John). Ammonius offered a complex Gospel text; the spatial reconfiguration of textual knowledge afforded new possibilities of reading. Ammonius' approach opens up a window into the practices employed by those reading and writing Gospel texts in the second century. These practices—especially

[32] Zahn and Hjelt argued that Ammonius omitted material without Matthean parallel (Zahn, 'Tatian's Diatessaron', p. 33; A. Hjelt, *Die altsyrische Evangelienübersetzung und Tatians Diatessaron besonders in ihrem gegenseitigen Verhältnis* [Leipzig: Deichert, 1901], p. 33).

[33] Von Harnack and Zahn (in a later, revised position) argued that Ammonius left blank space in the Matthew column in order to accommodate material without Matthean parallel: A. von Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius: Erster Theil* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1893), pp. 406–7; Zahn, 'Exeget', p. 7. Riggsby, 'Learning', also suggests this as the most likely option.

[34] Francis Watson suggests that Ammonius included non-Matthean material in an appendix (*The Fourfold Gospel: A Theological Reading of the New Testament Portraits of Jesus* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016], p. 117).

[35] Crawford leaves the question open ('Ammonius', pp. 7–8, 22; *Eusebian Canon Tables*, pp. 64–5).

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visible in the *Epistula apostolorum*, Tatian, and Irenaeus—are the focus of the present article.

Luke and Justin Martyr

Before turning to examples from the later second century, a brief word must be said about Luke and Justin. Neither Luke nor Justin offers clear evidence of reading Jesus books in the two-dimensional, spatial mode that we find in Ammonius' project and in the other figures we discuss below. Yet both Luke and Justin hint at textual practices that would facilitate later two-dimensional Gospel reading. They both excerpt material from earlier Jesus books and rearrange this material into new compositions. Luke does so in the process of writing his own Gospel. Justin employs conflated Gospel material for works in other genres.[36]

Both Luke and Justin read multiple Jesus books together. On the Farrer hypothesis, Luke would be reading Mark and Matthew; on the two-document hypothesis, Luke would be reading Mark and Q. Luke excerpted sayings from one source (Q or Matthew) and interspersed them across the narrative outline of another source (Mark).[37] Justin's use of both Matthean and Lukan distinctive material and redactional features demonstrates that he engaged (material from) Matthew and Luke together.[38] He mentions plural *εὐαγγέλια* (*1 Apol*. 66.3) and refers to multiple *ἀπομνημονεύματα* (*1 Apol*. 66.3; 67.3; cf. *Dial*. 100.4; 101.3; 102.5; 103.6, 8; 104.1; 105.1, 5, 6; 106.1, 3, 4; 107.1), thus gesturing to conceptually

[36] We are agnostic about Justin's use of a separate composition that synthesized material from multiple Gospels, but his use of conflated Gospel material, especially in *1 Apol*. 15–16, is clear.

[37] Cf. Watson, *Gospel Writing*, pp. 117–216. Numerous scholars place Luke's treatment of his sources in the framework of ancient historiography. As Bovon states, '[l]ike every historian of classical antiquity, Luke has at hand a variety of written sources and miscellaneous information.…He reworks them to an extent that, within his entire composition, the sources rarely come to light in their original independent form' (*A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1–9:50* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002], p. 6).

[38] A. J. Bellinzoni, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Writings of Justin Martyr* (Leiden: Brill, 1967), pp. 3, 46–8; N. Perrin, 'What Justin's Gospels Can Tell Us About Tatian's: Tracing the Trajectory of the Gospel Harmony in the Second Century and Beyond', in M. R. Crawford and N. J. Zola (eds.), *The Gospel of Tatian: Exploring the Nature and Text of the Diatessaron* (London: T&T Clark, 2019), pp. 93–110.

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separate Gospels even while he conflates sayings and narrative material.[39] Justin's most concentrated collection of *logia* (*1 Apol*. 15–16) reflects Matthew's narrative sequence. One can discern a progression from Matt. 5:28–30 to Matt. 7:21–23 in *1 Apol*. 15–16, with most (though not all) of the intervening material in sequential order.[40] Outliers exist (corresponding to Matt. 4:10; 9:12; 19:11–12; 19:16–17; 22:37), but these pericopes, in their surrounding narrative contexts, relate to the material in Matt. 5–7 to which Justin juxtaposes them. Justin offers this sequential and contextual Matthean reading while also conflating the wording with Markan (e.g., Matt. 5:29–30//Mark 9:43) and Lukan parallels (Matt. 5:32// Luke 16:18). While some similarities in wording may have been present already in Justin's Matthew, the overall pattern suggests that Justin read Matthew's Gospel with an eye toward the narrative sequence of the passages that he synthesized with Synoptic parallels.[41]

Luke and Justin thus both engage Jesus books in ways that anticipate widespread later practices of reading multiple Gospels along vertical and horizontal axes. Scholars have suggested various technologies that Luke and Justin employed to facilitate these reading

[39] *ἀπομνημονεύματα*, as a plural noun, could refer to a single work in antiquity (e.g., Xenophon's *Ἀπομνημονεύματα Σωκράτους*). In the period after Justin, the term became a technical genre term for memoirs; see H. Koester, 'From the Kerygma-Gospel to Written Gospels', *NTS* 35 (1989), pp. 361–81; W. V. Cirafesi and G. P. Fewster, 'Justin's *Ἀπομνημονεύματα* and Ancient Greco-Roman Memoirs', *EC* 7 (2016), pp. 186–212. Justin may be an early example of this development. Justin's use of *ἀπομνημονεύματα* in synonymous relation with *εὐαγγέλια* in *1 Apol*. 66.3, however, suggests that he uses the plural *ἀπομνημονεύματα* to refer to multiple texts. This is confirmed in *1 Apol*. 67.3 by the parallel with the corpus of Jewish prophetic writings and the communal reading of those texts; see J. Rodriguez, 'Justin and the Apostolic Memoirs: Public Reading as Covenant Praxis', *EC* 12 (2020), pp. 496–515.

[40] In *1 Apol*. 15–16, the progression moves as follows: Matt. 5:28 → Matt. 5:29–30 (+ Mark 9:43) → Matt. 5:32 → Matt. 5:32 (+ Luke 16:18) → Matt. 19:11–12 → Matt. 9:13 → Matt. 5:44, 46 (+ Luke 6:28) → Matt. 5:40 (+ Luke 6:30, 34) → Matt. 6:2 → Matt. 5:45 → Matt. 6:25 → Matt. 6:32 → Matt. 6:26 → Matt. 5:39–40 → Matt. 5:22 → Matt. 5:41 → Matt. 5:16 → Matt. 5:34, 37 → Matt. 4:10 → Matt. 22:37 → Matt. 19:16–17 → Matt. 7:21–23 (+ Luke 13:26) → Matt. 7:15–16, 19. The order of Matthew 5–7 guides Justin's arrangement in *1 Apol*. 15–16 more than comparable material from Mark or Luke. On Justin's Gospel material in this passage, see J. Verheyden, 'Justin's Text of the Gospels: Another Look at the Citations in *1 Apol*. 15.1–8', in C. E. Hill and M. J. Kruger (eds.), *The Early Text of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 313–35.

[41] Perrin ('Justin's Gospels', pp. 93–109) is too optimistic in concluding that Justin had a 'complete' Gospel harmony.

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practices,[42] but the evidence does not allow more than conjecture. In the remainder of this article, we focus on late second-century projects that develop these dynamics of synthetic Gospel reading.

Epistula Apostolorum: Epitome

We turn to two projects of Gospel writing that address questions of sequence and parallel. The first of these texts, the *Epistula apostolorum*, is a second-century text whose origins remain uncertain. Preserved partially in a Coptic translation and some Latin fragments, it remains complete only in medieval manuscripts of a late ancient Ethiopic translation.[43] The *Vorlage* of these translations was probably Greek, and scholars agree that it was written around

[42] On Luke: Derrenbacker, *Ancient Compositional Practices*; R. A. Derrenbacker, 'The "External and Psychological Conditions Under Which the Synoptic Gospels Were Written": Ancient Compositional Practices and the Synoptic Problem', in P. Foster, A. F. Gregory, J. S. Kloppenborg, and J. Verheyden (eds.), *New Studies in the Synoptic Problem, Oxford Conference, April 2008: Essays in Honour of Christopher M. Tuckett* (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), pp. 435–57; J. C. Poirier, 'The Roll, the Codex, the Wax Tablet and the Synoptic Problem', *JSNT* 35 (2012), pp. 3–30; R. A. Derrenbacker, 'Texts, Tables and Tablets: A Response to John C. Poirier', *JSNT* 35 (2013), pp. 380–7; F. G. Downing, 'Waxing Careless: Poirier, Derrenbacker, and Downing', *JSNT* 35 (2013), pp. 388–93; Watson, *Gospel Writing*, pp. 117–216; W. E. Arnal, et al. (eds.), *Scribal Practices and Social Structures among Jesus Adherents: Essays in Honour of John S. Kloppenborg* (Leuven: Peeters, 2016); A. Kirk, *Memory and the Jesus Tradition* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018). On Justin: Bellinzoni, *Sayings of Jesus*; O. Skarsaune, 'Justin and His Bible', in S. Parvis and P. Foster (eds.), *Justin Martyr and His Worlds* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), pp. 53–76; Perrin, 'Justin's Gospels'.

[43] A critical edition of the Ethiopic text, based on five medieval manuscripts, is found in L. Guerrier, *Le Testament en Galilée de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1993; repr. Turnhout: Brepols, 2003). Since Guerrier's work, nine more manuscripts have been made available for research. For a full list, see J. V. Hills, *The Epistle of the Apostles* (Santa Rosa: Polebridge, 2009), pp. 6–7. To date, there is no revised critical edition of the Ethiopic, so scholars must consult the manuscripts when variants occur. A critical edition of a late ancient Coptic manuscript is found in C. Schmidt and I. Wajnberg, *Gespräche Jesu mit seinen Jüngern nach der Auferstehung* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1919; repr. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1967). The fragments of a fifth-century Latin palimpsest are available in J. Bick, 'Wiener Palimpseste, I. Teil: Cod. Palat. Vindobonensis 16, olim Bobbiensis', *Sitzungsberichte der Kaiserliche Akadamie der Wissenschaften in Wien, philosophisch-historische Klasse* 159 (1908), pp. 90–9 (with plate 4). See further the synthetic annotated English translation in F. Watson, *An Apostolic Gospel: The 'Epistula Apostolorum' in Literary Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp. 42–77.

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the middle of the second century.[44] *EpAp* is a 'consensus document',[45] written in the voice of the 11 apostles (excluding Judas).

EpAp negotiates a pluriform corpus of written Gospels, both through the eclectic assortment of Gospel material that it employs and through the textual practices that it reflects. Some scholars have argued that *EpAp* attests a fourfold Gospel prior to Irenaeus.[46] Others maintain that *EpAp* is a Gospel in its own right, continuing a process of Gospel writing that extends from Mark to the later Synoptics and John, proliferating in further Jesus books that would only later be deemed 'non-canonical'.[47] We do not wish to enter that controversy in the present article. We focus on the author's working methods, by which the author identifies particular chunks of Gospel material and arranges them in sequence. What are the textual practices demonstrable in the construction of this new composition that rewrites earlier Gospel texts?

EpAp 3.10–12.4 summarizes numerous stories to offer an epitome of Jesus' life.[48] The selection of material suggests a pluriform Gospel

[44] The majority dating for *EpAp* falls between 120 CE (e.g., M. Hornschuh, *Studien zur Epistula Apostolorum* [Berlin: de Gruyter, 1965], pp. 116–9) and 170 CE (e.g., Schmidt and Wajnberg, *Gespräche Jesu*, p. 402). The parameters of dating are established by Jesus' enigmatic prediction in *EpAp* 17.2 that the parousia would take place 120 (Coptic) or 150 (Ethiopic) years following Jesus' dialogue with the apostles. Since this numbering is enigmatic, it is best not to be more precise than Julian Hills (*Tradition and Composition in the Epistula Apostolorum* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008], pp. 8–9), who considers *EpAp* to reflect a Christian milieu in the mid-second century.

[45] We borrow this phrase from Jens Schröter (*Jesus zum Neuen Testament*, p. 326), who uses it to describe the Acts of the Apostles.

[46] D. D. Hannah, 'The Four-Gospel "Canon" in the *Epistula Apostolorum*', *JTS* 59 (2008), pp. 598–633; C. E. Hill, 'The *Epistula Apostolorum*: An Asian Tract from the Time of Polycarp', *JECS* 7 (1999), pp. 1–53; Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels?*, pp. 169–76.

[47] F. Watson, 'A Gospel of the Eleven: The *Epistula Apostolorum* and the Johannine Tradition', in F. Watson and S. Parkhouse (eds.), *Connecting Gospels: Beyond the Canonical/Non-Canonical Divide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 189–215. For *EpAp*'s reference to previous written Jesus material, see *EpAp* 1.3; 31. For the language of 'proliferation', see J. W. Barker, 'Tatian's Diatessaron and the Proliferation of Gospels', in M. R. Crawford and N. J. Zola (eds.), *The Gospel of Tatian: Exploring the Nature and Text of the Diatessaron* (London: T&T Clark, 2019), pp. 111–41.

[48] Compare the practice of 'deft excerpting' that Johnson describes as characteristic of elite reading practices in the second century (Johnson, *Reading*, p. 118). Comparable practices of excerpting and condensation appear in mythography and historiography; cf. T. M. Banchich, 'The Epitomizing Tradition in Late Antiquity', in J. Marincola (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), pp. 660–73; M. Horster and C. Reitz (eds.), *Condensing Texts – Condensed Texts* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2010); C. Delattre and G. Hawes, 'Mythographical Topography, Textual Materiality and the (Dis)ordering of Myth: The Case of Antoninus Liberalis', *JHS* 140 (2020), pp. 106–19.

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corpus. The author integrated distinctive material from John, Matthew, and Luke,[49] as well as redactional material from Matthew and (probably) Luke.[50] The author incorporated material from the triple tradition, including material where Matthew and Luke agree and material where Luke and Mark agree.[51] The author even included an episode from Jesus' childhood attested in varying forms by Irenaeus and the Infancy Gospel of Thomas.[52] Finally, the author elaborates on an episode found in all four Gospels that became canonical: the feeding of the five thousand (Matt. 14:13–21//Mark 6:32–44//Luke 9:10–17//John 6:1–15//*EpAp* 5.17–22). The *EpAp* thus incorporates an eclectic variety of Gospel material—even though it does not mark the material as derived from multiple sources—in the concentrated space of 3.10–12.4. Since *EpAp* presents itself as a consensus document written by a college of apostles, this eclecticism may intentionally integrate multiple texts about Jesus.[53]

We discern both horizontal and vertical engagement with a pluriform Gospel corpus. The author's textual eclecticism indicates that they were reading Johannine and Synoptic Jesus books together—likely John and Matthew, plausibly also Luke.[54] This

[49] Johannine distinctive material: John 1:14//*EpAp* 3.10; John 2:1–11//*EpAp* 5.1; John 20:24–29//*EpAp* 11.5–7; Matthean distinctive material: Matt. 17:24–27//*EpAp* 5.14–16; Lukan distinctive material: Luke 2:7//*EpAp* 3.12.

[50] For Matthean redaction, see Matt. 14:21 (*ἄνδρες ὡσεὶ πεντακισχίλιοι χωρὶς γυναικῶν καὶ παιδίων*)//*EpAp* 5.18 (ወተረክበ ፡ ኍልቆሙ ፡ ፭ሺዘእንበለ ፡ ደቅ ፡ ወእንስት). Lukan redaction in Luke 8:45 (*τίς ὁ ἁψάμενος μου*) resembles the Ethiopic in *EpAp* 5.4 (መኑ ፡ ገሠሠኒ), although see Mark 5:30 (*τίς μου ἥψατο τῶν ἱματίων*). Compare the Lukan redaction in Luke 24:3 (*οὐχ εὗρον τὸ σῶμα*)//*EpAp* 9.5 (ⲙⲡⲟⲩⲥⲱ ⲡⲥⲱⲙⲁ). Some of these similarities may result from later conflation to the transmitted text of the Gospels in Ethiopic or Coptic, but such conflation is unlikely to be the sole reason.

[51] Matthew/Luke agreement: Matt. 9:20 (*ἥψατο τοῦ κρασπέδου τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ*)// Luke 8:44 (*ἥψατο τοῦ κρασπέδου τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ*)//*EpAp* 5.3 (ለከፈት ፡ ጽጌፈ ፡ ልብሱ); Luke/Mark agreement: only Mark (5:9) and Luke (8:30) include the name 'Legion' (*λεγιών*) in the exorcism narrative in the Gerasenes; *EpAp* 5.10 includes the name (ሌጌዎን).

[52] *EpAp* 4.2–4; Infancy Gospel of Thomas 6.3; 14.2; Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.20.1.

[53] Another second-century text that portrays consensus Gospel writing is the Apocryphon of James (NHC I,2). For a recent treatment that puts John, *EpAp*, and the Apocryphon of James in conversation and competition, see J. Lindenlaub, 'The Gospel of John as Model for Literate Authors and their Texts in Epistula Apostolorum and Apocryphon of James (NHC I,2)', *JSNT* 43 (2020), pp. 3–27.

[54] *Pace* Hannah, 'Four-Gospel "Canon"'; Hill, '*Epistula Apostolorum*'; and Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels?*, pp. 169–72, we are not convinced that *EpAp* offers clear evidence for use of distinctive Markan material. Yet this absence does not necessarily exclude Mark either; since so much of Mark is absorbed into Matthew, there is relatively little distinctive Markan material to draw from. We therefore avoid basing our argument on the presence or absence of Mark.

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eclecticism, and the condensation of Gospel narratives in epitomized form, suggests that the composer had the conceptual framework to divide these Gospels into sections, to excerpt distinctive material, and to rewrite this material into a new sequence, thus creating a new work with its own literary and theological possibilities.

The author's decision to include so many different patterns of Gospel material may indicate that the author had identified and categorized both unique material and various patterns of overlap between Gospel texts. Attention to both unique material and different patterns of material suggests detailed engagement with similarity and difference in these sources. *EpAp*'s horizontal reading differs from what we discovered in Ammonius' Gospel; here it is oriented toward identifying similar material rather than toward conflating parallel passages, since the epitomized form of the Gospel material in *EpAp* does not require the author to integrate a similar degree of parallel detail. *EpAp* negotiates a pluriform Gospel corpus in large part by circumventing the need for either conflating or choosing one version over another. Nonetheless, the compositional practices of *EpAp* imply engagement with the complexities of parallel material in a pluriform Gospel corpus.

EpAp also offers a new vertical narrative sequence. The Gospel epitome begins with the Johannine prologue, offers a Synoptic birth narrative, initiates Jesus' public ministry with the wedding at Cana, fills Jesus' ministry with Synoptic episodes, and concludes with a Johannine resurrection appearance. John, rather than Matthew (as for Ammonius), provides the narrative macrostructure for *EpAp*'s account of Jesus' words and deeds—but *EpAp* nonetheless engages the same conceptual challenge as Ammonius. Moreover, the integration of Synoptic and Johannine material into a single narrative resembles what Tatian would later do in his Gospel.[55] Moreover, like Tatian's Gospel, the author's creative juxtaposition

[55] The author of *EpAp* may have employed similar working methods to the author of the Longer Ending of Mark (Mark 16:9–20). James Kelhoffer has argued that the Longer Ending weaves together resurrection traditions from Matthew, Luke, and John (*Miracle and Mission: The Authentication of Missionaries and Their Message in the Longer Ending of Mark* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000], pp. 137–50; cf. D. C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997], pp. 138–42; A. Y. Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007], pp. 802–18; S. W. Henderson, 'Discipleship After the Resurrection: Scribal Hermeneutics in the Longer Ending of Mark', *JTS* 63 [2012], pp. 106–24; K. Lyons-Pardue, *Gospel Women and the Long Ending of Mark* [London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2020]). The Longer Ending also integrates themes from earlier in Mark, as argued by Henderson, 'Discipleship'. The Gospel

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of episodes from multiple Gospels suggests a particular theological *Tendenz*.[56] Themes of water and blood flow into an allegorical reflection on baptismal faith in *EpAp* 5.21–22.[57] Episodes involving physical touch build to a resurrection scene where the Johannine emphasis on touching the risen Christ is prominent (*EpAp* 11.7; 12.1). Christ's power over the waters and the physical touch of the incarnate Christ are central to the theological impetus of *EpAp* (cf. 2.1; 3.4–5). The Gospel epitome in *EpAp* reflects intentional arrangement of this earlier material.

We might therefore ask what conceptual tools and textual practices *EpAp* reflects. Segmenting existing Gospel narratives into episodes—whether paratextually or mnemonically—was a preliminary step for comparing parallels side by side, identifying similar patterns of shared material, and juxtaposing episodes into a fresh composition. These compositional practices reflect elite readerly habits of interrogating textual structure and locating distinctive material. Although the composition of *EpAp* does not require Ammonius's parallel juxtaposition, the author's segmentation of Gospel material, their ability to excerpt and condense these sections, and their construction of a new meaningful sequence involve the same dynamics of multi-Gospel textual geography. *EpAp* thus reveals nuanced two-dimensional engagement with Gospel material along contours that resemble the emergent fourfold Gospel.

Tatian: Integration

Tatian the Syrian features prominently in discussion about ordering multiple Gospels.[58] The evidence for Tatian's life and works situates

epitome of *EpAp* 3.10–12.4 condenses and weaves together material from earlier Gospel narratives. But the author of *EpAp* employs this technique to compose an entire life of Jesus—from birth to resurrection—rather than only an account of resurrection appearances.

[56] See Watson, 'Gospel of the Eleven'; F. Watson, 'On the Miracle Catena in *Epistula Apostolorum* 4–5', in J. Schröter, T. Nicklas, and J. Verheyden (eds.), *Gospels and Gospel Traditions in the Second Century: Experiments in Reception* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2019), pp. 107–27 (republished in slightly differing form as *An Apostolic Gospel*, pp. 81–104).

[57] Cf. Watson, 'Miracle Catena'.

[58] Tatian is not the only second-century figure to whom a combined Gospel is attributed. Jerome states that Theophilus of Antioch (*fl. c.*169–83 CE) compiled a Gospel from multiple previous texts (*quatuor evangelistarum in unum opus dicta compingens*, *Ep.* 121.6). Elsewhere, Jerome instead says that Theophilus composed a Gospel commentary (*Vir. ill.* 25.3). Jerome's statement in *Ep.* 121.6 may

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him among other second-century intellectuals.[59] He composed a narrative of Jesus' life that he titled simply 'Gospel', as reflected in the Eastern reception of his work.[60] The Western reception, following Eusebius, has often referred to Tatian's work as the *Diatessaron*, an interpretive move that read Tatian's work through the lens of an ascendant fourfold Gospel canon.[61] Since the present project investigates second-century Gospel reading, we refer to this work as Tatian's 'Gospel'.

The evidence for Tatian's project is fragmentary and complex.[62] Since his Gospel is no longer extant, Tatian's sources and method remain obscure; the text remains notoriously difficult to reconstruct. One manuscript is extant, dating to the second or third century, but the attribution of this fragment to Tatian has been questioned.[63] Scholars therefore reconstruct Tatian's Gospel from the quotations, allusions, and lemmata of a fourth-century Gospel

confuse Theophilus and Tatian. Cf. von Campenhausen, *Formation*, pp. 174–5; D. Wünsch, 'Evangelienharmonie', *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 10 (1982), pp. 629–30; Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, p. 32; Hill, *Who Chose the Gospels?*, pp. 92–3, 108–9. Other potential examples of second- or third-century synthetic rewriting of Gospel material include the Dura Gospel fragment (P. Dura 24), the Fayûm Gospel fragment (P. Vindob. G 2325), and the Gospel according to the Hebrews described by a number of early Christian writers.

[59] See Eshleman, *Social World*; Secord, *Christian Intellectuals*.

[60] Here we follow recent scholars who observe of the rarity of the title 'Diatessaron', in early sources, and question whether the title is original: M. R. Crawford, '*Diatessaron*, a Misnomer? The Evidence from Ephrem's *Commentary*', *EC* 4 (2013), pp. 362–85; M. R. Crawford, '"Reordering the Confusion": Tatian, the Second Sophistic, and the So-Called *Diatessaron*', *ZAC* 19 (2015), pp. 209–36; F. Watson, 'Towards a Redaction-Critical Reading of the Diatessaron Gospel', *EC* 7 (2016), pp. 95–112.

[61] For a survey of references to Tatian's composition, see Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, pp. 35–67.

[62] Even the language of Tatian's composition is contested. Some argue for a Greek initial text and others for a Syriac one. One scholar has proposed a Latin composition. In an unusual compromise, Watson argues that Tatian's work was available in Greek and Syriac, 'both probably prepared by Tatian himself' (*Fourfold Gospel*, p. 65).

[63] Identifying the Dura fragment with Tatian's Gospel has been challenged by D. C. Parker, D. G. K. Taylor, and M. S. Goodacre, 'The Dura-Europos Gospel Harmony', in *Studies in the Early Text of the Gospels and Acts: The Papers of the First Birmingham Colloquium on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, ed. D. G. K. Taylor (Atlanta: SBL, 1999), pp. 192–228. It has been defended in M. R. Crawford, 'The Diatessaron, Canonical or Non-Canonical? Rereading the Dura Fragment', *NTS* 62 (2016), pp. 253–77. Ian Mills has recently argued that the Dura fragment diverges from the sequence of the Gospel material attested by Ephrem, *CGos*: I. N. Mills, 'The Wrong Harmony: Against the Diatessaronic Character of the Dura Parchment', in M. R. Crawford and N. J. Zola (eds.), *The Gospel of Tatian: Exploring the Nature and Text of the Diatessaron* (London: T&T Clark, 2019), pp. 145–70. Given these debates, we focus on evidence for Tatian's

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commentary attributed to Ephrem the Syrian,[64] a fifth-century Latin Gospel text in the manuscript known as Codex Fuldensis,[65] and a ninth-century Arabic Harmony preserved in several manuscripts.[66] Ephrem's *Commentary* is the most reliable guide to

Gospel from other sources than the Dura fragment. For the manuscript, see the edition of Parker, Taylor, and Goodacre; cf. the *editio princeps* (C. H. Kraeling, *A Greek Fragment of Tatian's Diatessaron from Dura* [London: Christophers, 1935]) and the excavation report (C. B. Welles, R. O. Fink, and J. F. Gilliam [eds.], *The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters: Final Report 5, Pt. 1: The Parchments and Papyri* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959], pp. 73–4). If the Dura fragment is a manuscript of Tatian's Gospel, it would be the only direct evidence. If the Dura fragment is not a witness to Tatian's project, it offers additional evidence for expansive Gospel writing in the second or early third century.

[64] The Syriac version of Ephrem's *Commentary* is edited in L. Leloir, ed., *Commentaire de l'évangile concordant, texte syriaque (Manuscrit Chester Beatty 709)* (Dublin: Hodges Figgis, 1963); L. Leloir, ed., *Commentaire de l'évangile concordant: Texte syriaque (Manuscrit Chester Beatty 709) folios additionels* (Leuven: Peeters, 1990). The Armenian is edited in L. Leloir, ed., *Éphrem de Nisibe: Commentaire de l'évangile concordant, version arménienne* (Louvain: Durbecq, 1953–1954). On the relationship between the two versions, see L. Leloir, 'Divergences entre l'original syriaque et la version arménienne du *Commentaire* d'Éphrem sur le Diatessaron', in *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant. Vol. 2: Orient chrétien (Première partie)* (Vatican: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1964), pp. 303–31; T. Baarda, *Early Transmission of Words of Jesus: Thomas, Tatian, and the Text of the New Testament: A Collection of Studies* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1983), pp. 289–311; W. L. Petersen, 'Some Remarks on the Integrity of Ephrem's *Commentary on the Diatessaron*', *StPatr* 20 (1989), pp. 197–202; C. McCarthy, trans., *Saint Ephrem's Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron: An English Translation of Chester Beatty Syriac Ms 709 With Introduction and Notes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 23–38. Questions have been raised about the authenticity of the attribution to Ephrem—on which see especially C. Lange, *The Portrayal of Christ in the Syriac Commentary on the Diatessaron* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005)—but these are not material to our argument.

[65] Fulda, Hochschul- und Landesbibliothek, Codex Bonifatianus I. Diplomatic edition: E. Ranke, ed., *Codex Fuldensis: Novum Testamentum latine interprete Hieronymo* (Marburg: Sumptibus N.G. Elwerti Bibliopolae Academici, 1868). Ranke's edition is not always reliable. Codex Fuldensis has been digitally imaged (<http://fuldig.hs-fulda.de/viewer/ppnresolver?id=PPN325289808>). On Codex Fuldensis: H. A. G. Houghton, *The Latin New Testament: A Guide to Its Early History, Texts, and Manuscripts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 56–8. Various methodological challenges attend the use of Fuldensis and other Latin and Latin-derived harmonies for reconstructing Tatian's Gospel (see note 85 below).

[66] The Arabic Gospel Harmony is edited in A.-S. Marmardji, *Diatessaron de Tatien: Texte arabe établi, traduit en français, collationné avec les anciennes versions syriaques, suivi d'un évangéliaire diatessarique syriaque* (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1935); cf. P. A. Ciasca, *Tatiani evangeliorum harmoniae arabice* (Rome: Typographia Polyglotta, 1888). On the manuscripts and editions, see B. M. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament: Their Origin, Transmission, and Limitations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 14–6; Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, pp. 448–51.

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Tatian's Gospel and is the primary basis for our argument. The Latin and Arabic texts cannot be relied upon for Tatian's wording—and there is always the possibility that they have been expanded to include material that Tatian did not—but they remain valuable for the sequence of material in Tatian's Gospel. Although Tatian's precise wording often remains inaccessible, we can be reasonably confident of the sequence when these three major witnesses agree.

Tatian continues the project of synthetic Gospel writing along the same compositional lines as Luke.[67] He interweaves multiple Gospels (at least Matthew, Luke, and John; we suggest also Mark) in order to produce an expanded text. Tatian integrated narrative structures, redactional features, and distinctive material from Matthew, Luke, and John, and probably Mark. He also included several brief units of material about Jesus that are paralleled in other sources.[68]

Tatian employed Matthew, Luke, and John. For example, from Matthew, Ephrem comments on the visit of the Magi, the Matthean antitheses, the fish and the temple tax, and several Matthean parables.[69] From Luke, Ephrem comments on the annunciation of the birth of John the Baptist, Jesus the boy at the temple, and several Lukan parables.[70] Ephrem begins his *Commentary* with a reflection

[67] Crawford, '*Diatessaron*, a Misnomer?'; Crawford, 'Diatessaron, Canonical or Non-Canonical'; Watson, 'Redaction-Critical Reading'; M. R. Crawford, 'Rejection at Nazareth in the *Gospels of Mark, Matthew, Luke*—and *Tatian*', in F. Watson and S. Parkhouse (eds.), *Connecting Gospels: Beyond the Canonical/Non-Canonical Divide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 97–124; J. W. Barker, *Tatian's Diatessaron: Composition, Redaction, Recension, and Reception* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021); contrast Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, p. 74. As we noted above for Luke, one might understand such synthesis of existing sources within the framework of ancient historiography. For such an argument with respect to Tatian, see T. Baarda, '*Διαφωνία – Συμφωνία*: Factors in the Harmonization of the Gospels, Especially in the *Diatessaron* of Tatian', in W. L. Petersen and B. Aland (eds.), *Gospel Traditions in the Second Century: Origins, Recensions, and Transmission* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), pp. 133–54; Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, pp. 75–6.

[68] Especially because the title 'Diatessaron' may be a later attribution, we should not assume that Tatian used exactly four Gospels. The title does, however, indicate that later readers saw Tatian's composition as referring to four sources (cf. e.g., Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.29.6).

[69] Visit of the magi: Matt. 2:1–12 (*CGos.* 2.18–3.5); Matthean antitheses: Matt. 5:21–48 (*CGos.* 6.4–15); the fish and the temple tax: Matt. 17:24–27 (*CGos.* 14.16–17); Matthean parables: Matt. 21:28–32 (*CGos.* 16.18); Matt. 25:1–13 (*CGos.* 18.19); Matt. 25:14–30 (*CGos.* 18.20).

[70] Annunciation of John's birth: Luke 1:5–25 (*CGos.* 1.9–24); boy Jesus at the temple: Luke 2:41–50 (*CGos.* 3.16); Lukan parables: Luke 15:1–32 (*CGos.* 14.19–20); Luke 16:19–31 (*CGos.* 15.12–13); Luke 18:10–14 (*CGos.* 15.24).

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on the Johannine prologue, and includes Johannine episodes such as the wedding at Cana, Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus, the raising of Lazarus, and Jesus' festal visits to Jerusalem.[71]

Tatian's use of Mark is less obvious, but Ephrem's *Commentary* reveals several instances of Markan redaction.[72] (1) Ephrem describes the spirit as the one who 'casts' Jesus out into the desert (cf. Mark 1:12).[73] (2) In the episode of Jesus healing the haemorrhaging woman, Ephrem records the Markan reference to Jesus' garment, 'who touched my garments?' (Mark 5:30).[74] Furthermore, Ephrem states that the woman 'perceived within herself that she was healed of her afflictions' (cf. Mark 5:33)[75] and that she had spent her money on doctors who were unable to heal her (cf. Mark 5:26).[76] (3) Ephrem relates a story in which Jesus heals a blind man in stages, and he recounts how the blind man finally 'saw everything clearly' (cf. Mark 8:25).[77] (4) When Jesus heals the epileptic demoniac, Ephrem preserves the saying, 'I command you, mute spirit, come out from him and never come back again' (cf. Mark 9:25).[78] (5) Ephrem includes the name of the blind man healed on the road to Jericho, Bartimaeus (cf. Mark 10:46, 50).[79] Moreover, Ephrem mentions the Markan detail that Bartimaeus 'abandoned his cloak' (cf. Mark 10:50).[80] (6) Ephrem

[71] Prologue: John 1:1–5 (*CGos*. 1.3–5); wedding at Cana: John 2:1–11 (*CGos*. 5.1–5); Jesus' visit with Nicodemus: John 3:1–21 (*CGos*. 16.11–15); raising of Lazarus: John 11:1–46 (*CGos*. 17.1–10); Jesus' festal visits to Jerusalem: John 2:13–20 (*CGos*. 15.23); John 5:1–18 (*CGos*. 13.1–4); John 7:1–19 (*CGos*. 14.28–29); John 12:1–8 (*CGos*. 17.11–13).

[72] Barker ('Tatian's Diatessaron', pp. 136–8) identifies several examples of Markan redaction in Diatessaron witnesses; we expand his list below, focusing on Ephrem's *Commentary* as the most reliable source for Tatian. Although Ephrem knew the four separated Gospels, repeated Markan material in the lemmata of Ephrem's *Commentary* and the presence of this material across witnesses to Tatian's Gospel indicate that it was part of Tatian's composition. On Ephrem's knowledge of the separate Gospels, see M. R. Crawford, 'The Fourfold Gospel in the Writings of Ephrem the Syrian', *Hugoye* 18 (2015), pp. 9–51.

[73] *CGos*. 4.4: *Spiritus sanctus traxit, evexit eum in desertum*. This passage is preserved only in the Armenian and is less secure than the other examples. The Latin is Leloir's translation (*Commentaire de l'évangile concordant, version arménienne*, 2.35–36).

[74] *CGos*. 7.6: مح منذ حسأ.

[75] *CGos*. 7.16: اوحعه حم حصعة وإلاسطعه مع مصماة.

[76] *CGos*. 7.19.

[77] *CGos*. 13.13: لمأمعه معم حلا حمز حم ١٥٥ ١٣١.

[78] *CGos*. 14.15: حه حلحل لا ماحت .حصه حصه.

[79] *CGos*. 15.22.

[80] *CGos*. 15.22: ولهؤنه حم حصه.

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even preserves a Markan intercalation in *CGos*. 16.1–5: Ephrem first mentions Jesus' cursing of the fig tree; then, he comments on the Temple incident; finally, he resumes the discussion of the cursing of the fig tree, citing the lemma from Mark 11:20 that presupposes the Markan intercalation. The evidence thus strongly suggests that Tatian used Mark's Gospel.[81]

Tatian's use of other Gospels is more difficult to establish than his use of the four Gospels that became canonical. The presence of non-canonical sources in Tatian's Gospel has been debated by scholars since at least the nineteenth century.[82] Of 11 or so proposed parallels with non-canonical Gospels,[83] four appear

[81] Further Markan redactional features that are present both in the Arabic Harmony and Codex Fuldensis might be added to these six cases of Markan redaction in Ephrem's *Commentary*. Features present both in the Arabic Harmony and Codex Fuldensis include the Markan parable of seeds growing secretly (Mark 4.26–29; Arabic Harmony §16.49–52; Fuldensis §77); the healing of the deaf and mute man (Mark 7.31–37; Arabic Harmony §21.1; Fuldensis §87), located in the same narrative spot in both the Arabic and Fuldensis (i.e., between the episodes of the Canaanite and Samaritan women); the man who fled the scene of Jesus' arrest naked (Mark 14.51–52; Arabic Harmony §48.45–47; Fuldensis §93); Salome at the crucifixion (Mark 15.40; Arabic Harmony §52.23; Fuldensis §171).

[82] A number of scholars argue for a 'fifth' source behind Tatian's Gospel: C. A. Phillips, 'Diatessaron – Diapente', *Bulletin of the Bezan Club* 9 (1931), pp. 6–8; Baarda, '*Διαφωνία – Συμφωνία*'; Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, pp. 419–20; W. L. Petersen, 'The Diatessaron and the Fourfold Gospel', in C. Horton (ed.), *The Earliest Gospels: The Origins and Transmission of the Earliest Christian Gospels – The Contribution of the Chester Beatty Gospel Codex P45* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), pp. 50–68; Crawford, '*Diatessaron*, a Misnomer?', p. 383. Recognizing that many of these details are associated with so-called 'Jewish Christian' Gospel material, Petersen argues that Tatian employed such a Gospel text in addition to the four that became canonical. Crawford suggests that 'Tatian used more than simply the canonical four, in keeping with his maximalist editorial approach' ('*Diatessaron*, a Misnomer?', p. 383; cf. E. J. Hunt, *Christianity in the Second Century: The Case of Tatian* [London: Routledge, 2003], p. 56). Crawford later changes his mind on this question; see M. R. Crawford and N. J. Zola, 'Introduction', in M. R. Crawford and N. J. Zola (eds.), *The Gospel of Tatian: Exploring the Nature and Text of the Diatessaron* (London: T&T Clark, 2019), pp. 1–9. Hill counters that the paucity of non-canonical additions makes it 'difficult to argue that [Tatian] regarded it or them as having "equal validity" with the four': C. E. Hill, 'Diatessaron, Diapente, Diapollon? Exploring the Nature and Extent of Extra-Canonical Influence in Tatian's Diatessaron', in M. R. Crawford and N. J. Zola (eds.), *The Gospel of Tatian: Exploring the Nature and Text of the Diatessaron* (London: T&T Clark, 2019), p. 53.

[83] These non-canonical details are (1) that the man with the withered hand could not work (cf. Liège and Stuttgart Harmonies at Mark 3:1; cf. Jerome, *Comm. Matt*. 12.13, who says he found this fragment *in euangelio quo utuntur Nazareni et Hebionitae*); (2) that Satan took Jesus to 'Jerusalem' (cf. Matt. 4:5//Luke 4:9; *τὸ*

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only in the post-Fuldensis Western vernacular tradition[84] and therefore do not meet the methodological threshold of the 'New Perspective' in Diatessaron studies.[85] (They may instead be later developments without connection to Tatian's own project.) The remaining seven fragments resonate with a variety of texts, such as the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Peter, the Gospel according to the Hebrews, and the Protevangelium of James. The systematic use of another text as a 'fifth' Gospel is not demonstrable. The non-canonical fragments in Tatian's composition resemble the floating units of Jesus material (sometimes called *agrapha*) that

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ἰουδαϊκόν marginalia to Matt. 4:5); (3) Jesus' command to Peter to forgive the sinner seventy times 'in one day' (*CGos*. 14.22; Aphrahat, *Dem*. 14.44; Gospel according to the Hebrews *apud* Jerome, *Pelag*. 3.2); (4) Barachiah the 'son of Joiade' (cf. Jerome, *Comm*. *Matt*. 23.35, attributing this detail to *euangelio quo utuntur Nazareni*; see also the *capitularia* of some manuscripts of Zacharias Chrysopolitanus' *Commentary* on *In unum ex quatuor* at Chapter 141); (5) the splitting of the 'lintel of the temple' at Jesus' crucifixion (cf. Jerome, *Comm*. *Matt*. 27.51, attributing this detail to a Gospel according to the Hebrews; see also the *capitularia* of some manuscripts of Zacharias Chrysopolitanus' *Commentary*, Chapter 170); (6) the mention of 'another rich man' (cf. the sequence of the Arabic Harmony §§28–29; the Latin text of Origen's *Comm*. *Matt*. 15.14, referencing a 'Hebrew Gospel' that speaks of 'another rich man'); (7) the fire or light at Jesus' baptism (*CGos*. 4.5; Justin, *Dial*. 88.3; Codex Vercellensis at Matt. 3:16; Codex Sangermanensis at Matt. 3:16; Gospel according to the Hebrews *apud* Epiphanius, *Pan*. 30.13.3–4); (8) the woes at the crucifixion (cf. *CGos*. 20.28; Syr^{sc} Luke 23:48; Aphrahat, *Dem*. 14.26; *Doctrine of Addai*, f. 18; Codex Sangermanensis; Gos. Pet. 7); (9) the murder of Zechariah on the altar (*CGos*. 2.5; Prot. Jas. 22.1–24.4); (10) the 'flying Jesus' (*CGos*. 11.24, 27; Aphrahat, *Dem*. 2.20); (11) Jesus' saying, 'where there is one, I am there' (*CGos*. 14.24; Gos. Thom. 30). This list consolidates observations from the studies listed above, particularly Phillips, 'Diatessaron – Diapente'; Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*; Hill, 'Diatessaron, Diapente, Diapollon?'.

[84] Of the fragments listed in the previous note, (1), (2), (4), and (5) do not appear in Eastern witnesses (Ephrem, Aphrahat, Arabic Harmony, etc.), nor do they appear in the Fuldensis Gospel.

[85] The 'New Perspective', in Diatessaron studies is associated with U. B. Schmid, *Unum ex quattuor: Eine Geschichte der lateinischen Tatianüberlieferung* (Herder: Freiburg, 2005). For a briefer sketch, see U. B. Schmid, 'The Diatessaron of Tatian', in B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes (eds.), *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research: Essays on the Status Quaestionis* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 115–42. The 'New Perspective' revises the previous consensus of scholarship, up to and including Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, which saw the Western vernacular Gospel harmonies as distinct witnesses to Tatian's work. Instead, the New Perspective regards Tatianic influence in the Western vernacular tradition as dependent upon Codex Fuldensis. Barker, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, argues, against the New Perspective, that Western vernacular harmonies preserve evidence independent of Fuldensis.

appear in manuscripts of the canonical Gospels or in other early Christian writings rather than Tatian's extensive use of Matthew, Luke, and John.[86]

We turn from Tatian's sources to his compositional methods. When we tabulate the sequence of the material from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John that Ephrem cites in his *Commentary on the Gospel*, several important observations can be made. On the horizontal axis, Tatian included material from each of the four Gospels. This is true of distinctive material from Matthew, Luke, and John (and from Mark, if we accept the multi-stage healing of the blind man as Markan distinctive material). Tatian's desire to include is especially visible in episodes that appear in all four of these Gospels. If we may recover the intra-pericope sequence of the empty tomb account from the correspondences between the Arabic Harmony and Codex Fuldensis,[87] we find that Tatian densely interweaves Matthean, Markan, Lukan, and Johannine elements. The Arabic Harmony (§52.45–47) and Fuldensis (§174) both include key phrases from Matthew 28:1, John 20:1, Luke 24:1, and Mark 16:3 in the same sequence, bringing order to polyvalent resurrection material. (This complex shared sequence makes it overwhelmingly probable that the sources reflect Tatian's order.) After interweaving elements from Matthew 28:2–8, Mark 16:3–4, Luke 24:2–8, and John 20:1 (Arabic Harmony §52.48–53.7 and Fuldensis §174 mostly agree in their ordering),[88] both the Arabic Harmony (§53.9–24) and

[86] On units of floating material, see T. van Lopik, 'Once Again: Floating Words, Their Significance for Textual Criticism', *NTS* 41 (1995), pp. 286–91; G. Bazzana, 'Replaying Jesus' Sayings in the "Agrapha": Reflections on the Neu-Inszenierung of Jesus' Traditions in the Second Century Between 2 Clement and Clement of Alexandria', in J. Schröter, T. Nicklas, and J. Verheyden (eds.), *Gospels and Gospel Traditions in the Second Century: Experiments in Reception* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2019), pp. 27–44. Tatian may have encountered some of this material—particularly the details associated with one or more Gospel texts identified as 'according to the Hebrews'—in his texts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. Although less evidence attests Tatian's use of Mark, evidence for Mark is substantially greater than evidence for other potential sources.

[87] Mills, 'Wrong Harmony,' questions the reliability of Fuldensis for recovering the intra-pericope sequencing of Tatian's Gospel, but the extent of correspondence between the Arabic Harmony and Fuldensis in the resurrection narrative suggests at least remnants of Tatian's order.

[88] Although their sequences are not identical, the resurrection scenes in the Arabic Harmony and Fuldensis overlap by inserting the same elements from the following verses in the same sequence: Matt. 28.1 → John 20:1 → Matt. 28:1 → Luke 24:1 → Mark 16:3 → Mark 16:4 → Matt. 28:2 → Luke 24:2 → Matt. 28:2 → Matt. 28:3 → Matt. 28:4 → Matt. 28:5 → Matt. 28:6 → Luke 24:4 → Luke 24:5 → Luke 24:6 → Luke 24:7 → Matt. 28:7 → Luke 24:8 → Matt. 28:8 → John 20:2-10.

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Fuldensis (§174) insert the Johannine account of Mary's first visit to the tomb (John 20:2–10). A few sentences later, the Arabic Harmony (§53.35–61) and Fuldensis (§177–78) both start alternating between the Longer Ending of Mark and Luke 24:10–35, sandwiching the Emmaus episode (Luke 24:13–35) between Mark 16:12 and 16:13. These observations demonstrate Tatian's spatial practice of organizing material from multiple Gospels on the horizontal axis.

We turn to the vertical axis, narrative sequence. We find that Tatian is versatile in the ways he handles episodes from different points in separate Gospels. He includes Luke's version of the sinful woman anointing Jesus' feet early in his Gospel (Luke 7:36–50; *CGos*. 10.8–10) and includes the Matthean (Matt. 26:6–13)// Markan (Mark 14:3–9)//Johannine version in its Johannine position (John 12:1–11) before the triumphal entry (*CGos*. 17.11–13). Yet Tatian's Gospel had only one Temple incident (*CGos*. 15.23), differing from both the Synoptic and Johannine narrative locations. Tatian appears to place the Temple incident at a separate feast that Jesus celebrates in Jerusalem, a year before his final visit to Jerusalem.[89] No single Gospel dominates the sequence of Tatian's composition.[90] Instead, he coordinates the sequences of Matthew, Luke, John, and (as with the intercalation of the fig tree story) even Mark. The opening and closing frame for Tatian's Gospel is Johannine, and he builds the Johannine festal chronology into the structure of his text.[91] At the same time, the macrostructure of Tatian's Gospel, as reflected in the sequence of pericopes throughout, is primarily Matthean, with Johannine blocks interspersed in this narrative structure.[92] Yet Tatian's order is not mechanically Matthean, either; material occasionally appears in Lukan or even

[89] On Tatian's placement of the Temple incident, see N. J. Zola, 'Evangelizing Tatian: The *Diatessaron*'s Place in the Emergence of the Fourfold Gospel Canon', *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 43 (2016), pp. 399–414; J. W. Barker, 'The Narrative Chronology of Tatian's Diatessaron', *NTS* 66 (2020), pp. 288–98.

[90] Tatian's sequence has been a central subject of Diatessaron scholarship. See *inter alia* Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron*, and Barker, *Tatian's Diatessaron*.

[91] On John's festal chronology in Tatian's Gospel, see Barker, 'Narrative Chronology'.

[92] Tatian's project is framed with John's prologue and Galilean resurrection appearances and he negotiates the relationship between Johannine and Synoptic material so as to preserve key features of John's festal sequence. Yet much of the Synoptic material cannot be structured by John, since there is no corresponding Johannine material to structure it. For this reason, Matthew is also architectonically central. On the joint Matthean and Johannine structure that predominates in Tatian's Gospel, see Baarda, '*Διαφωνία – Συμφωνία*', esp. p. 150. Baarda does not recognize the substantial section of Tatian's Gospel structured by Luke and Mark.

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Markan sequence, either for reasons of narrative coherence or because there was not an obvious home for non-parallel material.[93]

These observations invite a question: what technologies facilitated Tatian's complex negotiation of multiple Gospel texts? Bruce Metzger suggested in 1977 that, in order for Tatian to accomplish such meticulous work without clunky repetition, he would have needed to consult four individual Gospel manuscripts simultaneously, annotating them as he used each pericope, and marking them off in order to avoid redundancy.[94] Yet the intricacy of Tatian's Gospel combinations may have required a more sophisticated technology than four manuscripts in the hands of (enslaved?) scribal assistants; Tatian's control of multiple imperfectly parallel narrative sequences may imply a physical map by which to coordinate these textual trajectories.[95] Tatian's weaving of the Johannine festal pilgrimages to Jerusalem into a Synoptic narrative scheme, and his solution to the placement of the temple incident, would have been difficult to execute without a visual aid to the textual geography of the four Gospels. Tatian could even locate Lukan redactions of triple and double tradition (which Luke often scattered across his narrative in different locations than either Matthew or Mark) and insert them into this Matthean and Markan sequence; this would have been difficult without a graphic tabulation of multiple Gospel sequences—perhaps resembling what Ammonius developed. Given Tatian's nuanced negotiation of parallel Gospel material, one might imagine that he constructed a synopsis to facilitate his project.[96]

[93] On the basis of Ephrem's *Commentary*, we deduce that Tatian followed the sequence of Mark 2:1–28 and Luke 5:1–6:5 against Matthew (*CGos*. 5). Tatian also appears to follow Mark's sequence from Mark 9:14–29 to Mark 10:2–12, against Matthew (*CGos*. 14), and much of the Lukan sequence of the passion narrative against Matthew and Mark (*CGos*. 20). See the Appendix.

[94] Metzger, *Early Versions*, pp. 11–12.

[95] For other brief discussion of the media-technological constraints of Tatian's Gospel writing, see Baarda, '*Διαφωνία – Συμφωνία*', pp. 150–1; S. L. Mattila, 'A Question Too Often Neglected', *NTS* 41 (1995), pp. 199–217; Barker, 'Ancient Compositional Practices'; A. Garrow, 'Streeter's "Other" Synoptic Solution: The Matthew Conflator Hypothesis', *NTS* 62 (2016), pp. 218–19.

[96] This is precisely what was proposed by Baarda ('*Διαφωνία – Συμφωνία*', p. 151), who asserts that 'one of the required preparatory tasks was to create a kind of synopsis of the sources' since Tatian's ambitious project 'could not be fulfilled just with "scissors and paste"'. This is as much as Baarda explores this tantalizing technological suggestion. Baarda does not differentiate between the columnar synopsis and the annotated running text, the two alternate models we discussed for Ammonius. In either case, Tatian's Gospel does not run precisely according to the order of any other Gospel—unlike Ammonius' Matthew-structured Gospel—which raises questions about how he would have structured such a preliminary project.

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Tatian integrates both larger narratives and granular textual details, engaging both narrative sequence and parallel material in a way that reflects hermeneutically and technologically sophisticated practices for negotiating a pluriform Gospel corpus.

Irenaeus: Mapping

Writing around the year 180 CE, Irenaeus presented four Gospels as distinct and yet unified, a quadriform whole.[97] Irenaeus' theology of the fourfold Gospel is well known, but our present concern is the conceptual and material practices that facilitated his spatial engagement with these four Gospels. This has received far less attention. Irenaeus' negotiation of a pluriform Gospel differs from that of Ammonius, *EpAp*, or Tatian; he did not produce a new Gospel. Nonetheless, his engagement with the multiple Gospels reveals the same dynamics of spatial thinking, in horizontal and vertical dimensions, that we have explored throughout this article. Irenaeus engaged his four Gospels as distinct works.[98] He was an active reader, engaged in thinking both *horizontally* and *vertically* about the Gospels.[99] Spatial engagement with Gospel literature included both the production of new Gospel texts and broader practices of Gospel reading that have left their traces in texts—like Irenaeus'—*about* Gospels and Gospel writing.[100]

Irenaeus' horizontal engagement with parallel Gospel material is clear in his use of distinctive material. He analysed both

[97] See *Haer*. 3.1.1 and 3.11.7–9; cf. A. Y. Reed, '*Εὐαγγέλιον*: Orality, Textuality, and the Christian Truth in Irenaeus' *Adversus Haereses*', *VC* 56 (2002), pp. 11–46.

[98] Here we disagree with Matthew Larsen (*Gospels Before the Book* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2018], esp. p. 95), who argues that Irenaeus distinguished Mark from other Gospels, declining to describe it either as 'published' or as a 'book', but instead as unfinished 'notes', an unstable trace of oral speech. Larsen discusses *Haer*. 3.1.1 in particular, suggesting that Irenaeus did not regard Mark as a book at all. For a rebuttal of this position, see M. M. Mitchell, 'Mark, the Long-Form Pauline *εὐαγγέλιον*', in R. M. Calhoun, D. P. Moessner, and T. Nicklas (eds.), *Modern and Ancient Literary Criticism of the Gospels: Continuing the Debate on Gospel Genre(s)* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), pp. 201–18.

[99] One might compare Irenaeus' practices of reading with those of the varied first- and second-century readers, described by Johnson, *Reading*. On readers' active engagement in elite second-century Roman reading culture, see especially his conclusion (*Reading*, pp. 201–2). On 'active reading' in the second century, see also D. Konstan, 'The Active Reader and the Ancient Novel', in M. Paschalis, S. Panayotakis, and G. Schmeling (eds.), *Readers and Writers in the Ancient Novel* (Groningen: Barkhuis, 2009), pp. 1–17.

[100] These practices continue in third- and fourth-century figures like Origen and Eusebius; cf. Grafton and Williams, *Christianity*; Crawford, *Eusebian Canon Tables*; Coogan, *Eusebius the Evangelist*.

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parallels and the absence of parallels, including sustained attention to distinctive material. Irenaeus' treatment of distinctive material implies horizontal reading and spatial practices of comparison.[101] (We return below to think about the technologies involved.) We see examples in Irenaeus' treatment of both Luke and John.

In *Haer.* 3.14.3, Irenaeus identifies approximately 27 episodes of Lukan distinctive material.[102] Irenaeus differentiates between distinctive and shared material as follows:

Et omnia huiusmodi per solum Lucam cognouimus, et plurimos actus Domini per hunc didicimus, quibus et omnes utuntur.

All things of this kind [i.e., distinctive material] we have known through Luke alone, and many deeds of the Lord we have learned through him which also all [the evangelists] mention.[103]

[101] As suggested by an anonymous reviewer, it is possible that these lists of distinctive material were produced prior to Irenaeus. This would not diminish the significance of Irenaeus' lists as evidence for spatial engagement with Gospel literature. In his framing comments, Irenaeus makes clear that he is using this list of distinctive Lukan material to think in both vertical (narrative) and horizontal (comparative) terms about Luke's Gospel. This is true regardless of whether Irenaeus created the list himself or derived it from others. The prior existence of such a list cannot be demonstrated from the available evidence, but if it could be confirmed it would provide further evidence for our model by showing other second-century readers engaging Gospels along both vertical and horizontal axes. The Lukan distinctive material discussed by Irenaeus implies a corpus corresponding to Irenaeus' fourfold Gospel as the basis for identifying what is distinctively Lukan; we note in particular that his list of distinctive material does not include material found in Luke–Mark parallels or Luke–John parallels (suggesting that Luke was compared against Mark and John, and not just against Matthew) but also that it does not omit obvious major blocks of Lukan distinctive material (suggesting that the list was not constructed by comparison with other Gospel texts that overlapped with Luke). The Gospel corpus implied by such a comparative project makes it unlikely that such distinctive material lists antedate the mid-second century.

[102] The material that Irenaeus lists corresponds to the following pericopes of Lukan distinctive material: (1) 1:57–66, (2) 1:5–25, (3) 1:26–38, (4) 1:42, (5) 2:8–14, (6) 2:15–20, (7) 2:22–38, (8) 2:41–52, (9) 3:1–2, 3:23, (10) 6:24–26, (11) 5:1–11, (12) 13:10–17, (13) 14:1–6, (14) 14:7–11, (15) 14:12–24, (16) 11:5–8, (17) 7:36–50, (18) 12:13–21, (19) 16:19–31, (20) 17:5–6, (21) 19:1–10, (22) 18:9–14, (23) 17:11–19, (24) 14:21, (25) 18:1–8, (26) 13:6–9, (27) 24:13–35.

[103] Authors' translation. Note the language of categorization (*huiusmodi*, reconstructed by Rousseau in the SC edition as *τὰ τοιαῦτα*) and of attribution (*per solam Lucam*, reconstructed by Rousseau as *διὰ μόνου τοῦ Λουκᾶ*). Cf. *Haer.* 3.15.1, in which Irenaeus emphasizes the importance of material available only through Luke's account (*per Lucam*) and the similar appeal to distinctive Matthean evidence (*per Matthaeum*) at *Haer.* 3.16.2. Compare Johnson's discussion (discussed below) of the attention that elite second-century readers devoted to diction and usage—including the sorts of phenomena that we might classify as matters of redactional tendency and distinctive material.

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Such knowledge implies practices of detailed textual comparison. Obviously, Irenaeus did not have Stephanus' chapter-and-verse division system to designate these 27 distinctive Lukan episodes. Instead, Irenaeus uses key words or phrases to identify these Lukan episodes. This use of key words or phrases might reflect either mnemonic or written lists.[104] Irenaeus' manipulation of these units of material as distinct entries in a list is evident in the parataxis of *Haer.* 3.14.3, punctuated by the formulae *et* + episode theme in the accusative, *et* + episode theme in the genitive, *et de* + episode theme in the genitive, and similar formulae.[105] For example,

Plurima enim et magis necessaria Euangelii per hunc cognouimus, sicut Iohannis generationem…et aduentum [καὶ τὴν ἔλευσιν] *angeli ad Mariam… et quod duodecim annorum* [καὶ τὸ δωδεκαετῆ] *in Hierusalem relictus sit… et quoniam apud Pharisaeum, recumbente eo* [καὶ ὅτι παρὰ τῷ Φαρισαίῳ, κατακλινομένου αὐτοῦ], *peccatrix mulier osculabatur pedes eius et unguebat unguento…et diuitis* [καὶ τοῦ πλουσίου] *qui uestitur purpuram et iocundatur nitide… et de Pharisaeo et de publicano* [καὶ περὶ τοῦ Φαρισαίου καὶ τοῦ τελώνου] *qui simul adorabant in templo… et super haec omnia post resurrectionem in via ad discipulos suos quae locutus est, et quemadmodum cognouerunt* [καὶ πῶς ἔγνωσαν] *eum in fractione panis*.[106]

For we have come to know very many and important things of the Gospel through him [i.e., Luke], for example, the begetting of John… and the coming of the angel to Mary… and that he was left behind in Jerusalem at twelve years… and that as he was reclining at table with the Pharisee, a

[104] Drawing on the work of Jack Goody (*The Domestication of the Savage Mind* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977]), Riggsby calls attention to such formulaic features in his discussion of organizing information with structured lists (Riggsby, *Mosaics*, pp. 10–41). Compare how the figure Jesus in the Apocryphon of James (NHC I,2) lists particular 'parables' by name: 'The Shepherds [cf. Luke 15:3–7], The Seed [cf. Mark 4:3–9 parr.; 4:26–29], The Building [cf. Luke 14:28–30?], The Virgins' Lamps [cf. Matthew 25:1–13 parr.], The Workers' Wage [cf. Matthew 20:1–16], The Double Drachma [cf. Matthew 17:24–27], and The Woman [cf. Luke 15:8–9]' (*Apoc. Jas.* 8.6–10). It is not clear in every case what material from Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John might correspond with these titles. On early Christian lists of Jesus material—discussing *EpAp* 4–5, the Gospel of Thomas, and the parable list in the Apocryphon of James—see J. D. Crossan, 'Lists in Early Christianity: A Response to *Early Christianity, Q and Jesus*', *Semeia* 55 (1991), pp. 235–43. On the Gospel of Thomas, see also S. J. Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas: Introduction and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp. 137–39.

[105] Compare the likely Greek *Vorlagen*: καὶ τὸν/τὴν/τὸ + accusative episode theme, καὶ τοῦ + genitive episode theme, and καὶ περὶ τοῦ + genitive episode theme.

[106] Only the Latin text is preserved; the Greek text in brackets is Rousseau's reconstruction.

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sinful woman kissed his feet and anointed him with perfume… and of the rich man who was dressed in purple and took delight in fancy things… and about the Pharisee and the publican who were worshiping in the temple at the same time… and [that], in addition to all these things, after the resurrection, he spoke to his disciples on the road, and how they recognized him in the breaking of the bread.[107]

The paratactic prose of *Haer.* 3.14.3 suggests that Irenaeus accessed Lukan distinctive material as a mental or written list.[108]

Similarly, Irenaeus engages the Johannine distinctive material of Jesus' celebrations of Jewish feasts in Jerusalem in their Johannine sequence. In *Haer.* 2.22.3, Irenaeus presents a Johannine sequence for Jesus' ministry, focusing on distinctive Johannine material: the wedding at Cana in Galilee (cf. John 2:1–11), Jesus and the Samaritan woman (cf. John 4:1–42), Jesus healing the centurion's son (cf. John 4:43–54),[109] Jesus healing the paralytic beside the pool (cf. John 5:1–15), Jesus feeding the multitude by the Sea of Tiberias (cf. John 6:1–15),[110] Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead (cf. John 11:1–44), Jesus' withdrawal to Ephraim (cf. John 11:54), and Jesus' visit to Bethany (cf. John 12:1–11). Irenaeus thus provides a table of contents, as it were, for the first half of John's

[107] Authors' translation.

[108] Although Irenaeus presents Lukan distinctive material in broadly Lukan sequence, he rearranges several episodes, especially parables and sayings. These occasional changes in sequence may suggest a mental list but may also reflect a slightly disordered written one.

[109] John uses the term 'royal official' (*βασιλικός*, John 4:46), but Irenaeus calls this official a 'centurion' (*et filium centurionis absens uerbo curait*, *Haer.* 2.22.3; SC 294.218). This indicates that Irenaeus is conflating a Johannine episode with a Synoptic parallel (*ἑκατόνταρχος*, Matt. 8:5–13//Luke 7:1–10). That Irenaeus has the Johannine version in focus is clear by the quotation: 'Go; your son lives' (*vade, filius tuus uiuit*, *Haer.* 2.22.3; SC 294.218; John 4:50). Even as Irenaeus is thinking about John in vertical (narrative) sequence, his engagement also reflects horizontal (parallel) comparison between Gospels. Although Eusebius connected these three passages in his Gospel canons, Origen links Matthew and Luke, but not John (*Matt. Frag.* 154).

[110] The healing of the paralytic by the pool has a Synoptic parallel (Matt. 9:1–8// Mark 2:1–12//Luke 5:17–26), and the feeding of the 5,000 has an even closer parallel (Matt. 14:13–31//Mark 6:32–44//Luke 9:10–17). In both cases, Irenaeus signals that he is drawing from the Johannine version (locating the healing by the pool and the feeding by the Sea of Tiberias). Tatian and Irenaeus address similar questions, although they do not consistently answer them the same way.

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Gospel (until Jesus' final week).[111] He tells us that the material is what 'John, the disciple of the Lord, records'.[112] Irenaeus thus identifies both material present in one Gospel but absent in the other three and also material present in more than one Gospel—all while maintaining their sequences even in comparison.[113]

Irenaeus' engagement with Gospel similarity and difference on the horizontal dimension intersects with his vertical awareness of Gospel sequence. Not only do the lists of distinctive Lukan and Johannine material reveal attention to narrative sequence, but we find further evidence in Irenaeus' discussion of Mark.[114] Although he does not cite Mark as much as the other three Gospels, Irenaeus engages Mark's Gospel as a whole.[115] This is noteworthy since Mark had largely remained hidden in the shadow of Matthew and Luke in the first half of the second century. Irenaeus speaks of Mark 'commencing his Gospel writing' and of what Mark says 'towards the conclusion of his Gospel'.[116] Irenaeus can thus

[111] With the exception of the withdrawal to Ephraim, each of the episodes that Irenaeus lists corresponds to one of the later *τίτλοι* from the Johannine manuscript tradition, although Irenaeus does not mention all of the episodes that appear in the *τίτλοι*. This suggests similar practices of identifying Gospel material. On the Johannine *τίτλοι* and their emphasis of the 'wondrous', see J. Knust and T. Wasserman, 'The Wondrous Gospel of John: Jesus's Miraculous Deeds in Late Ancient Editorial and Scholarly Practice', in M. Tellbe, T. Wasserman, and L. Nyman (eds.), *Healing and Exorcism in Second Temple Judaism and Early Judaism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), pp. 160–91.

[112] *sicut Iohannes Domini discipulus meminit* (SC 294.218).

[113] In one instance, Irenaeus mistakenly attributes a double tradition saying to Mark as well as to Matthew and Luke. In *Haer.* 4.6.1, he attributes the saying 'No one knows the Son except the Father…' (Matt. 11:27//Luke 10:22) to Matthew, Luke, and (incorrectly) Mark. Even in this error, Irenaeus demonstrates a practice of identifying where Gospels overlap—a feature of reading horizontally. We are grateful to Peter Head for bringing this example to our attention; see further J. Verheyden, 'Four Gospels *Indeed*, but Where Is Mark? On Irenaeus' Use of the Gospel of Mark', in *Irénée de Lyon et les débuts de la Bible Chrétienne: Actes de la journée du 1.VII.2014 à Lyon*, ed. A. Bastit-Kalinowska and J. Verheyden (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), pp. 196–7.

[114] Given the significance of Matthew in shaping second-century Gospel reading (including Irenaeus' Gospel reading), it is surprising that we do not see an explicit engagement with Matthew's sequence that parallels Irenaeus' survey of Lukan and Johannine material. It is possible, however, that Matthew is so central to Irenaeus' Gospel reading that this would have seemed superfluous. On Irenaeus' reception of Matthew, see D. J. Bingham, *Irenaeus' Use of Matthew's Gospel in Adversus Haereses* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998).

[115] On Mark's reception in Irenaeus, see Verheyden, 'Four Gospels'.

[116] *Haer.* 3.10.6: *et Marcus…initium Euangelicae conscriptionis fecit sic… in fine autem Euangelii ait Marcus…* (SC 211.134–36). For similar discussion of the significance of Irenaeus' citation of both the beginning and end of Mark, see Verheyden, 'Four Gospels', p. 184.

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visualize both the bookends of individual Gospels and their narrative sequences. The vertical (sequence) and horizontal (parallels) axes converge in *Haer.* 5.21.2, where Irenaeus lays out the Matthean sequence of temptation narrative (Matt. 4:1–10, bread → temple → kingdoms) but says that he is quoting the wording from Luke (Luke 4:1–13).[117] As these examples show, Irenaeus compared Gospel material with a spatial command of both narrative and parallel.[118]

Attending to textual and material practices brings into focus Irenaeus' detailed engagement with a fourfold Gospel and, moreover, his negotiation of this corpus as a single canonical space composed of four distinct yet interwoven narratives.[119] It also invites further analysis of the other examples we have discussed in this article. Irenaeus organized Gospel narratives into narrative-thematic units (e.g., the sequential lists of events for Luke and John); this approach differs from the projects of Ammonius and Tatian, which focused first on parallel material. It has more in common with the summary form in which *EpAp* engages a pluriform textualized Gospel corpus. Unlike *EpAp*, though, Irenaeus employs this conceptual map for granular comparisons of parallel Gospel material, which brings him closer to Tatian and Ammonius. Unlike the other examples discussed here, Irenaeus' approach to the Gospels is not bound to a single narrative sequence. It is not Matthean like the project of Ammonius, or primarily Johannine like *EpAp*, or composite like that of Tatian. His approach to Gospel sequence—in keeping with his emphasis on preserving a fourfold Gospel—enabled him to think about both parallels and divergent Gospel narratives.

[117] *tertio ostendit ei saeculi regna omnia et gloriam ipsorum, dicens, quemadmodum meminit Lucas: Haec omnia tibi dabo, quoniam mihi tradita sunt et cui volo do ea, si procidens adoraveris me* (SC 153.272; cf. Luke 4:5–7//Matt. 4:8–9). Note the parallel in Tatian's Gospel; he likewise follows Matthew's order for the temptation, and integrates material from Luke's temptation account (Ephrem, *CGos.* 2).

[118] On tables of contents in the Roman Mediterranean, see A. M. Riggsby, 'Guides to the Wor(l)d', in J. König and T. Whitmarsh (eds.), *Ordering Knowledge in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 88–107; J. A. Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture: Text, Presence, and Imperial Knowledge in the Noctes Atticae* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 52–64; Riggsby, *Mosaics*, pp. 22–9; J. Coogan, 'Transforming Textuality: Porphyry, Eusebius, and Late Ancient Tables of Contents', *SLA* 5 (2021), pp. 6–27. On tables of contents in Gospel manuscripts, see note 124 below.

[119] The famous passage in *Haer.* 3.11.8 also suggests attention to the distinctive content and character of each Gospel (e.g., *καὶ ὁποία ἡ τῶν ζῴων μορφή, τοιοῦτος καὶ ὁ χαρακτὴρ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου*).

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Irenaeus' spatial engagement with Gospel literature may reflect mnemonic practices in addition to writing on physical media.[120] Here one might compare William Johnson's discussion of elite Roman reading culture in the second century. Johnson describes practices of remembering and reviewing passages from a text that were considered 'worthy of note'.[121] These include striking diction, unusual vocabulary, or useful *sententiae*.[122] As Johnson writes, 'reading and memorizing are by habit intertwined'.[123] It is not difficult to imagine that educated second-century readers such as Irenaeus—or, indeed, the other figures discussed in this article—might have engaged in such a practice when reading Gospel literature, including identifying distinctive material and constructing

[120] Mnemonic devices themselves are often spatial, as in the case of the 'memory palace'. On such mnemonic practices (including spatial mental maps) in the Roman Mediterranean, see Quintilian, *Inst*. 2.7; 11.2, with F. A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Oxford: Routledge, 1999 [1966]), pp. 1–26 (Yates underestimates the access that educated and wealthy individuals had to the technologies of literacy). On mnemonic practices broadly, see M. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Attention to mnemonic practice in the extant scholarly literature focuses on oratory, with less attention to reading (but see Quintilian, *Inst*. 2.7).

[121] Cf. Johnson, *Reading*, pp. 118–20, discussing Aulus Gellius' habits of reading and note-taking with reference to *Noctes Atticae* 17.2. Gellius describes both memorization of literary material and the practice of making notes. He states that, when reading, it was his practice to 'recall and review any passages…which were worthy of note (*adnotamentis digna*)' (*NA* 17.2, LCL 212: 200–1); he presents this as an exercise of memory. This mnemonic practice, however, does not conflict with taking written notes; in the same passage, Gellius offers a series of reading notes—and, indeed, much of the *Noctes Atticae* might be characterized as reading notes. For Gellius on remembering and writing down textual oddities, see further *Noctes Atticae* 19.7 (cf. Johnson, *Reading*, p. 191). A parallel to Gellius' practice of note-taking is offered by Clement of Alexandria; cf. J. M. F. Heath, *Clement of Alexandria and the Shaping of Christian Literary Practice: Miscellany and the Transformation of Greco-Roman Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020). In a further example not discussed by Johnson, the conclusion of Aelius Theon's first-century *Progymnasmata*, preserved in Armenian, discusses the reading practices a teacher should inculcate in students (§14 [*Théon: Progymnasmata*, ed. M. Patillon (Paris: Les belles lettres, 1997), p. 106]). Theon focuses on how one engages *after* reading: one recalls the text, organizes the main points, and remembers the best passages and their structure.

[122] Collections of *sententiae* and *chreiai* like the Sentences of Sextus and even the Gospel of Thomas might reflect such reading practices (cf. Gathercole, *Gospel of Thomas*, pp. 137–43).

[123] Johnson, *Reading*, p. 119. Cf. Quintilian, *Inst*. 10.1; 11.2.

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mental maps of the texts. Yet, as Johnson demonstrates, mnemonic practices were intertwined with excerpting and writing. Whether Irenaeus' strategies of textual summary and segmentation were physically applied to divide his Gospel texts (with section divisions or *τίτλοι*) or to preface his Gospel books (with a *ὑπόθεσις* or a list of *κεφάλαια*) remains impossible to demonstrate.[124] Summaries may have been transcribed elsewhere (perhaps on wax tablets or in a parchment notebook) or may have been part of a memorized textual map. Nonetheless, Irenaeus' detailed attention to Gospel similarity and difference—in terms of both parallel material and varied narrative sequence—demonstrates that he engaged the fourfold Gospel as a two-dimensional textual space.[125]

[124] On second-century practices of paratextual organization (e.g., Galen, *Diff. puls*. 2.6 = 8.591–92 Kühn), see Riggsby, *Mosaics*, pp. 22–9; J. Coogan, 'Gospel as Recipe Book: Nonlinear Reading and Practical Texts in Late Antiquity', *EC* 12 (2021), pp. 40–60. Such strategies are attested for Gospel books by the third century in Latin and by the fourth century in Greek. Latin Gospel *capitula*: Houghton, *The Latin New Testament*, p. 56. Greek Gospel *κεφάλαια*: H. von Soden, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt hergestellt auf Grund ihrer Textgeschichte. 1. Teil* (Berlin: Duncker, 1902), p. 422; H. K. McArthur, 'The Earliest Divisions of the Gospels', in *Studia Evangelica. Vol. 3: Papers Presented to the Second International Congress on New Testament Studies Held at Christ Church, Oxford 1961. Part II: The New Testament Message*, ed. F. L. Cross (Berlin: Akademie, 1964), p. 271; G. Goswell, 'Early Readers of the Gospels: The *Kephalaia* and *Titloi* of Codex Alexandrinus', *JGRCJ* 6 (2009), pp. 134–74; J. Edwards, 'The Hermeneutical Significance of Chapter Divisions in Ancient Gospel Manuscripts', *NTS* 56 (2010), pp. 413–26; Knust and Wasserman, 'Wondrous Gospel'; Coogan, 'Gospel as Recipe Book'. Knust and Wasserman illuminate the role of these chapter divisions in shaping reading. The emergence of these textual strategies for Gospel books is part of a larger shift in the later Roman empire toward the paratextual organization of books and knowledge, a shift for which Christian books and readers were often on the forefront. See Riggsby, *Mosaics*, esp. pp. 216–22; Coogan, 'Transforming Textuality'.

[125] After Irenaeus, one can observe similar textual practices in the work of Clement of Alexandria (*fl. c*.190–210 CE). In *Quid dives* 4–5, he gives the Markan version of the rich man episode (Mark 10:17–31), and acknowledges the other parallels as occupying the same conceptual space. He says they do not agree on particular wording here and there, but they 'all exhibit the same symphony of meaning' (*πάντα δὲ τὴν αὐτὴν τῆς γνώμης συμφωνίαν ἐπιδείκνυται*). In *Quid dives* 17, he describes Matthew as a redactor adding 'in spirit' to the beatitude 'blessed are the poor'. In *Strom*. 4.6.41.1–3, Clement discusses those who 'transpose the Gospels' (*τινες τῶν μεταθέντων τὰ εὐαγγέλια*) and gives an example of integrating Matthean and Lukan beatitudes; he also improvises on beatitudes in similar ways to Gos. Thom. 68–69 (cf. Watson, *Gospel Writing*, pp. 423–4). All of these demonstrate that Clement read the Synoptics horizontally. Christians were not the only ones to compare Gospels. Origen's response to the second-century critic Celsus suggests that Celsus was aware of differences between Gospel texts (*Cels*. 2.27), on Celsus'

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Conclusion

New Testament scholarship over the past century has exhibited a persistent fascination with the emergence of a fourfold Gospel canon. There are good reasons for the time and labour devoted to the subject. The articulation of a fourfold Gospel composed of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (not always in that order) is a pivotal development in the history of early Christian reading. Moreover, it is central to the formation of the collection we know as the New Testament, and thus to the discipline of New Testament studies itself. Canon intersects with important questions of reading, technology, and authority. At the same time, a focus on the emergence of an authoritative list of books has often eclipsed further important historical phenomena. In this article, therefore, we redirect attention to reading and technology. What are the textual practices—both material and conceptual—by which Christians in the second century negotiated a pluriform constellation of Gospel texts? These textual practices are, of course, interwoven with broader questions of reception and of the emergent fourfold Gospel canon: *how* one reads parallel texts together depends, to a certain extent, on *which* parallel texts one chooses to read. In the present article, however, we shift the focus away from canon in order to call attention to a broader, but neglected, practical and hermeneutical question: how does one read parallel texts together?

As we have argued, a number of second-century Christians engaged a pluriform Gospel corpus through sophisticated textual practices. As with any historical reconstruction, our analysis is imaginative. We have used the work of Ammonius of Alexandria to examine the textual space in which readers engaged Gospel literature. A range of other ancient readers—from Theon and Quintilian to Gellius and Galen—enable us to ask better questions and imagine new possibilities. As we have demonstrated, second-century projects of reading and writing Gospel literature engaged two dimensions—vertical narrative and horizontal parallel—in variegated ways and for divergent ends. Nonetheless,

criticism of Gospel differences, see L. Alexander, 'The Four Among Pagans', in M. Bockmuehl and D. A. Hagner (eds.), *The Written Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 222–4 ; J. Coogan, 'Meddling with the Gospel: Celsus, Early Christian Textuality, and the Politics of Reading', *Novum Testamentum* 65 (2023). Alexander sees evidence not only for Matthew, but also for Luke and John. Both Clement and Celsus thus provide further evidence of second-century figures comparing Gospel books.

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these varied practices—dividing texts into units, listing pericopes, excerpting material, arranging Gospel texts side by side, integrating parallel material into new narrative compositions—each contributed to the spatial imagination that characterized engagement with Gospel literature in the later second century. These scholarly practices are attested across the Roman Mediterranean—in Alexandria, Syria, Rome, and Gaul—as Christian thinkers used increasingly sophisticated textual technologies and hermeneutical strategies to negotiate similarity and difference across an emergent fourfold Gospel corpus.

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Appendix: Tatian's Macro-Sequence in Ephrem's *Commentary on the Gospel*

CGos.	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
1				1:1–18
			1:5–79	
2	1:18–4:11		2:1–4:13	
3				1:9–23
4		1:12 MkR		1:35–46
5				2:1–11
		1:15 MkR		
	9:1–17; 12:1–8	2:1–28 MkR	5:1–6:5	
6	5:1–7:29		6:20–26; 6:29–30	
			11:1–4; 11:34–36;	
			12:33–34; 12:22–	
			32; 6:37–38	
			7:1–17; 9:57–60; 8:22–39	
	8:5–34	4:35–5:20		
7	9:20–34; 10:1–39	5:25–34 MkR	8:43–56; 7:36–50	
8			10:1–10; 10:38–42	
9	11:1–15		7:18–28; 16:16	

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Appendix: Continued

CGos.	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
10	20:20–28	10:35–45		
	12:31–32	3:28–30	12:10	
	12:22–24	3:22	11:14–15	
			7:36–50	
	9:35–38			
			10:17–20	
	11:25–30		10:21–22	
			14:26–30	
11	12:38–50	3:31–35	11:29–32; 11:24–26; 11:27–28;	
			8:19–21	
			8:4–8	
	13:1–9	4:1–19	13:18–21	
	13:24–33	4:30–32	4:16–30	
	13:47–58	6:1–6		
	14:1–12	6:14–29		
12	14:13–15:13	6:32–52	9:10b–17	6:1–15 JFst3

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Appendix: Continued

CGos.	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
				6:16–21
				6:26–59
		7:1–17; 7:24–30		
	15:21–28			
	8:1–4	1:40–45	5:12–16	4:4–42
13				5:1–18 JFst2
				5:24–47
		8:22–26 MkS		
14	16:13–23	8:27–33	9:18–22	
	16:21–23//	8:31–33//	18:31–34	
	20:17–19	10:32–34		
	16:28–17:9	9:1–10	9:27–36	
			13:31–33	
	17:14–21	9:14–29	9:37–43	
	17:25–27			
	19:3–12	10:2–12		

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Appendix: Continued

CGos.	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
			15:1–16:12	
	18:21–22		17:4	
	18:10–20			
			13:1–9	
				7:1–19 JFst4
15	19:16–30	10:17–31	18:18–30	
			16:19–31	
	20:1–28	10:32–45	18:31–34	
			19:1–10	
	20:29–34	10:46–52 MkR	18:35–43	
	21:12–13	11:15–17	19:45–46	2:13–20 JFst1
			18:9–14	
16	21:18–22	11:12–14, 20–25 MkR		2:19–20
				3:1–15
			18:1–8	
	21:23–46	11:27–33;		
		12:1–12	20:9–19	

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Appendix: Continued

CGos.	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
	22:15–40	12:13–34	20:20–40; 10:25–28	
			10:37–39	
				7:37–39; 8:39–59; 9:1–41; 10:1–18;
17				11:1–48;
	26:6–13	14:3–9		12:1–8 JFst6
18	21:1–9	11:1–10	19:28–38	12:12–15
			19:41–44	
	21:14–16			
				12:30–36
			17:20–21	
				10:37; 7:27; 7:42; 7:26
	24:26–27		17:23–24	
			11:52; 17:21	
	23:35–37			

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Appendix: Continued

CGos.	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
				12:47–48
	24:15–25, 29–42	13:14–37	21:20–28; 21:34–36	
			17:34; 12:42–46	
		12:35–40		
	24:45–25:30			13:1–11
19	26:21–29	14:18–25	22:21–22, 15–20, 31–32	13:21–26
				14:8–30
				16:33
	26:20–24	14:17–21	22:35–38, 21–23	
				15:12–17;
				16:7–11
				17:1–5
20	26:36–46	14:32–42	22:40–46	
	26:51–52			18:10–11
	26:39	14:36	22:42	
	26:45–50		22:46–48	
				18:4–8
	26:51–52			18:10–11

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Appendix: Continued

CGos.	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
				18:12–13
	26:69–75	14:66–72	22:54–62	18:15–18, 25–27
	26:64–65	14:62–63	22:67–70	
				18:28
				19:12–16
	27:29	15:16–17	23:2	19:2
	27:3–10			
	27:31–32	15:20–21	23:26	19:16–17
			23:31	
	27:38, 40	15:27,32	23:32–43	
	27:34, 48	15:23, 36		19:29, 23
	27:54	15:39		
	27:46–48	15:34–35		
	27:42	15:31		
21			23:46	
	27:51, 52–53	15:38	23:45	

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Appendix: Continued

CGos.	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
			23:49	
				19:34
		15:42	23:54	19:31
	27:58	15:43	23:52	19:38
	27:66			
	27:60	15:46		
				20:1, 5–7
	28:11–15			
				20:11–18
				21:18–22
			24:49	

Key:
MkR = Markan Redaction.
MkS = Markan Distinctive Material.
JFst = Johannine Feast (feast numbers given in original Johannine order).
Shaded = guiding the sequence.

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