

HOW LUKE WAS WRITTEN

by

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ABBREVIATIONS

Ancient Works, Including Books of the Bible:

Ant. Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews*

Ant. rom. Dionysius *Roman Antiquities*

Chr Chronicles

Hist. Livy *Histories*

Lk. Luke

Mk. Mark

Matt Matthew

Sam. Samuel

Modern Scholarly Works, Including Periodicals:

JBL *Journal of Biblical Literature*

JHS *Journal of Hellenic Studies*

JRS *Journal of Roman Studies*

JSNT *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*

JSNTSup Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series

Texts and Translations:

LCL Loeb Classical Library

MT Masoretic Text

NRSV New Revised Standard Version

LXX Septuagint

Introduction

At least since the publication of B. H. Streeter's *The Four Gospels* in 1924, the Two-Document Hypothesis has been the dominant theory proposed as a solution to the synoptic problem in English-language scholarship.¹ This theory holds that Matthew and Luke both used Mark and combined it with material from another document, now lost, which has come to be known as Q. Austin Farrer challenged the critical consensus in 1955 by suggesting that one of its two pillars is mistaken. He argued that we may dispense with the hypothesis of a lost Q document. Matthew used Mark and Luke used Mark and Matthew.²

Streeter had hypothesized that Luke had followed his sources in alternating blocks. The Infancy Narrative in the first two chapters of Luke came from one source. Luke also used Mark as a source for much of the narrative in his gospel. Luke alternated blocks of Markan material with blocks of non-Markan material. This non-Markan material came from two sources. Following earlier German scholarship, Streeter called these other sources Q and L. Q was the material Luke shared with Matthew, while L was material from a source or sources peculiar to Luke. Luke placed this Q and L material in his gospel in three or four blocks, Lk. 3.1-4.15, Lk. 6.20-8.3, and Lk. 9.51-18.14, Lk. 19.1-27 and alternated these blocks with blocks of material from Mark. Where Luke

¹ B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins, Treating of the Manuscript Tradition, Sources, Authorship, and Dates* (London: MacMillan, 1924).

² Austin M. Farrer, "On Dispensing with Q," in D. H. Nineham, ed., *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1955) 55-88.

found versions of a particular story or saying in both Mark and Q (a “Mark-Q overlap”), he omitted the Markan version and used the Q version.³ Farrer’s modification of Streeter’s theory was to dispense with Q, the hypothetical source of Matthew and Luke, and to argue that Luke had supplemented his Markan material with blocks of material taken from Matthew’s gospel.

One of the most influential counter-arguments against Farrer’s attempt to dispense with Q comes from F. G. Downing. In a series of articles spanning four decades, Downing has argued that the way Luke is held to have dealt with his sources on the Farrer theory is completely implausible.⁴ Not only would it be difficult to understand why Luke treated his sources in the way that the Farrer theory proposes, but the compositional methods Luke would have to have used are both difficult and unprecedented. According to Downing, the Two-Document Hypothesis is the better theory because it proposes that the evangelists wrote their gospels using methods that other authors writing in or around the first century are believed to have used, while the Farrer theory proposes that Luke invented new methods of dealing with his sources that are both difficult and unparalleled.

³ Streeter, *Four Gospels*, 199-222. The exact number of blocks will depend on whether one counts the material in Lk. 9.51-18.14 and Lk. 19.1-27 as a single block with a brief interruption or as two separate blocks.

⁴ F. G. Downing, “Towards a Rehabilitation of Q,” *NTS* 11 (1964) 169-81, reprinted in A. J. Bellinzoni, ed., *The Two-Source Hypothesis: A Critical Appraisal* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1985) 269-96; idem, “Redaction Criticism: Josephus’ *Antiquities* and the Synoptic Gospels,” part 1, *JSNT* 8 (1980) 46-65, part 2, *JSNT* 9 (1980) 29-48; idem, “Compositional Conventions and the Synoptic Problem,” *JBL* 107 (1988) 69-85, reprinted in F. G. Downing, *Doing Things with Words in the First Christian Century* (JSNTSup 200; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000) 152-73; idem, “A Paradigm Perplex: Luke, Matthew, and Mark,” *NTS* 38 (1992) 15-36, reprinted in Downing, *Doing Things with Words*, 174-97. All references in this thesis will be to the most recent edition of each work.

In particular, Downing draws attention to the practical difficulties ancient authors faced in dealing with multiple sources. Downing finds that classical methods of composition tended to be simple. Classical authors generally followed a single source at a time, paraphrasing as they went, rather than attempting to break down the material from their sources in detail and then reformulating it into a new narrative. According to Downing, the Farrer theory requires us to believe that Luke “unpicked” and then re-combined the material in Mark and Matthew in a complex manner. Downing contends that the Two-Document Hypothesis, on the other hand, postulates that Matthew and Luke combined Mark and Q in a simple manner without having to do any prior “unpicking.”⁵

Downing’s work on this subject has been very favourably received by advocates of the Two-Document Hypothesis. Introductory works on the gospels often cite Downing as having established that the Two-Document Hypothesis fits with ancient compositional practices while the Farrer theory does not.⁶ Similarly, scholarly monographs on Q frequently refer to Downing’s work as helping to establish the need for the Q hypothesis. The first chapter of Christopher M. Tuckett’s book on Q is devoted to establishing the existence of the hypothetical Q document, and one of its five sub-chapters is largely a summary of Downing’s work.⁷ In *Logoi Iesou: Studies in Q*, Petros Vassiliadis goes so

⁵Downing, “Compositional Conventions,” 159.

⁶So, e.g., Graham Stanton, *Gospel Truth: New Light on Jesus and the Gospels* (Valley Forge, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1995) 68-69, 200 n. 2; Robert H. Stein, *Studying the Synoptic Gospels: Origin and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2001) 147-148.

⁷Christopher M. Tuckett, *Q and the History of Early Christianity: Studies in Q* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996) 31-34.

far as to say that it was Downing's argument that most effectively restored the credibility of Q in the face of Farrer's criticisms.⁸ Most recently, Paul Foster has argued that Downing has shown the Farrer theory's conception of how Luke worked to be impractical and unlikely, based on numerous illustrations of the compositional techniques used by Luke's contemporaries.⁹

Nonetheless, Downing's work has not gone entirely without criticism. Sharon Mattila accepts Downing's criticisms of the Farrer theory, but questions whether he has shown the Two-Document Hypothesis fits in well with known ancient methods of composition. In particular, the procedure Matthew must have used to rearrange and conflate Mark and Q in detail seems more complex than might be expected in an ancient author.¹⁰

Another response to Downing's work came from an advocate of the Farrer theory who had been the target of some of Downing's criticisms. Michael Goulder, a former student of Farrer's, is the leading exponent of the Farrer theory, which has come to be known in some circles as the Farrer-Goulder Hypothesis. In his *Luke: A New Paradigm*, Goulder undertook to show in detail how Luke could have been written using Mark and Matthew as sources.¹¹ Downing's article "A Paradigm Perplex" is an extended critique

⁸Petros Vassialidis, *Logoi Iesou: Studies in Q* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999) 35.

⁹Paul Foster, "Is It Possible To Dispense With Q?" *Novum Testamentum* 44 (2003) 313-337, especially 315-320.

¹⁰Sharon Lea Mattila, "A Question Too Often Neglected," *NTS* 41 (1995) 199-217, p. 206.

¹¹Michael D. Goulder, *Luke: A New Paradigm* (JSNTSup 20; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989).

of Goulder's book. In his brief response to Downing's article, Goulder disputes Downing's claim that examination of ancient compositional practices demonstrates the impracticability of the Farrer theory. Goulder finds Downing's discussion of the issue unclear and self-contradictory. He argues that his own theory, that Luke wrote by paraphrasing one source at a time, fits known ancient models of composition better than does Downing's Two-Document Hypothesis, which postulates that Matthew conflated his two written sources, Mark and Q.¹²

If we allow that Downing is correct that we should prefer the solution to the synoptic problem most in keeping with the compositional procedures used by other authors of the same period, is he also correct in saying that the Two-Document Hypothesis fits these conventions while the Farrer theory does not? Or is it possible that Goulder is correct and the Farrer theory, in fact, fits better with the ancient compositional practices that Downing describes? I will not attempt to deal with the entire host of issues that fall under the rubric of "ancient compositional methods" here. Instead, I will concentrate on Downing's central argument concerning the way in which ancient authors conflated or unconflicted their sources and whether the Farrer theory asks us to accept that Luke used a difficult and unprecedented procedure in his supposed use of Mark and Matthew.

¹²Michael D. Goulder, "Luke's Compositional Options," *NTS* 39 (1993) 150-52.

Classical Methods of Composition

Downing deserves a great deal of credit for attempting to understand the synoptic problem by comparing the compositional methods the authors of the gospels are held to have used on the various proposed solutions to the compositional methods used by other writers of the period. He presents a brief survey of the ways in which modern classicists believe ancient authors used their source materials.¹³ He considers T. J. Luce's work on Livy's use of Polybius and other sources, D. S. Russell's examination of Plutarch's supposed use of Dionysius of Halicarnassus' *Roman Antiquities* for his *Coriolanus*, J. Hornblower's review of classical composition in her book on Hieronymus of Cardia, and C. R. B. Pelling's studies of Plutarch as well as his own study of Josephus.¹⁴

The common finding of all of these classicists is that ancient compositional techniques were extremely simple. Detailed conflation, the combination of material from two or more different sources into a single passage, appears to have been a fairly unusual procedure. Pelling observes:

Time and again, we find Greek and Roman historians claiming a wide range of reading, and deserving to be believed; yet, time and again, we find them

¹³Downing, "Compositional Conventions," 154-62.

¹⁴The following are cited in Downing, "Redaction Criticism," part 1, 46-65: T. J. Luce, *Livy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977); D. S. Russell, "Plutarch's Life of Coriolanus," *JRS* 53 (1963) 17-35; J. Hornblower, *Hieronymus of Cardia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1981); C. B. R. Pelling, "Plutarch's Method of Work in the Roman Lives," *JHS* 99 (1979) 74-96; idem, "Plutarch's Adaptation of his Source material," *JHS* 100 (1980) 127-40.

demonstrably basing their narrative of individual episodes on a single source.¹⁵

Luce's work on Livy, in particular, strongly supports Pelling's view. Luce includes a discussion of what Livy did when he was faced with accounts of the same event in two or more different sources. According to Luce, Livy did carefully compare his sources, but did not generally combine elements from different accounts of individual episodes. Luce believes that Livy did at times compare and evaluate individual elements taken from different accounts, but not with the aim of selecting the best elements, but in order to identify which of his sources gave the best account overall. That it was possible or desirable to create his own account of an event out of different elements drawn from different sources did not occur to him.¹⁶

Luce contends that, for any given episode, Livy chose to follow one of his sources as the basis for his own account. He used other sources mainly to supplement his main source rather than to correct or verify the account in his main source.¹⁷ He made his decisions about which source to follow for each episode after reading through and comparing his sources but prior to drafting his own account. The criteria that Livy considered in identifying which of his sources gave the best account included the general credibility, fame and reputation of the writer, how close the author was to the events he recorded, and how much potential the account had for literary adaptation. The most

¹⁵Pelling, "Plutarch's Method," 92; quoted in Downing, "Compositional Conventions," 156-57.

¹⁶Luce, *Livy*, 144.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 145.

important criterion, however, was the fullness of the account.¹⁸

From this brief survey, it appears that classical writers did indeed combine or “conflate” different written sources. Such conflation, however, was achieved by the interweaving of different episodes, what we may call “block-by-block” or “macro” conflation, rather than close conflation of different accounts of the same episode, which we may call “close” or “word-by-word” or “micro” conflation.¹⁹ The usual procedure of a classical author with more than one source was to choose one source as the basis for his account for any single episode. Writers usually wrote with only one source – at most – in view at any one time. Downing himself observes:

present-day classical scholars seem unanimous in agreeing that any conflation, if done at all, would most often have been done simply, using just one author at a time in blocks. Any close conflation of, say, two parallel accounts of the same event would be very uncommon.²⁰

He restates this conclusion later in the same work:

Livy, Polybius, Dionysius, Josephus, and Plutarch, and the rest just go ahead and write, mostly on the basis of a single prior text in front of them, paraphrasing, précising, expanding, omitting, while relying otherwise for the most part only on unchecked memories of other sources and even the one in front of them.²¹

¹⁸Ibid., 147.

¹⁹The distinction and much of the terminology follows that suggested in Mattila, “Question.”

²⁰Downing, “Paradigm Perplex,” 176.

²¹Ibid., 182.

On one point, Downing challenges the common opinion of classical scholarship. He notes that classical scholars are, in general, very skeptical of theories that posit that ancient authors ever wrote with their eyes on two texts at the same time. They tend to prefer theories that posit lost common sources over those that posit conflation of two or more sources.²² Against this consensus, Downing undertakes to show that there is at least one case of “genuine conflation” in Plutarch. Downing argues that Plutarch, in writing his account of the Siege of Veii, took elements from both Dionysius’ *Roman Antiquities* and Livy’s *History*. For our immediate purposes, it is not necessary to determine whether Downing’s argument is successful or not. What is important for our purposes is that Downing contends that even if Plutarch is using two sources as he is composing, he is doing so “simply and quite arbitrarily, without much close attention to the texts,” and shows “no sign of having laid them at all closely side by side.”²³

The theory that classical authors composed their accounts using only one source at a time (*Einquellentheorie*) is neither new nor uncontested. The theory got its impetus from H. Nissen’s investigation of Livy, *Kritische Untersuchungen über die Quellen der IV und V Dekade des Livius*, published in 1863. Nissen argued that for extensive sections of his work, Livy used no source other than Polybius and that the differences between Livy’s account and Polybius’ were due to Livy’s own recasting of his source. The “one-source theory” of classical composition was subsequently applied to other authors. Some have found the theory overly rigid or at least argued against rigid interpretations of the

²²Downing, “Compositional Conventions,” 162.

²³Ibid., 166.

theory. Mattila paraphrases a T. D. Barnes as saying “it is not realistic to argue for ‘standard’ procedure followed by all classical authors and compositional methods must have varied, within certain parameters, from author to author.”²⁴ While this is very true, it still leaves us with the question of what those “certain parameters” are.

Tacitean scholars, for example, have shown that Tacitus employed a wide range of written sources. In 1893, Philippe Fabia applied a fairly rigid form of the one-source theory to Tacitus’ works in his *Les Sources de Tacite dans les “Histoires” et les “Annales”*, and his views have met with substantial criticism. Ronald Syme has shown that Tacitus made substantial use of official documents, and Clarence Mendell points out, against Fabia, that Tacitus not only claims to have compared various accounts, but acknowledges specific sources 49 times and makes more than 150 general references to his sources.²⁵

The evidence Mendell offers may be less telling than it seems against the one-source theory. Ronald Martin notes that many of these examples occur at the climax of Tacitus’ account of a particular event, where Tacitus notes divergent opinions among the authorities he knows. In other cases, parallels found in Suetonius and Plutarch lead us to suspect that Tacitus’ citations of authorities were already found in his sources, and in most of his accounts Tacitus does not refer to his sources at all. Martin concludes that these considerations raise doubts about the degree of independence with which Tacitus

²⁴ Mattila, *Question*, 212.

²⁵ Ronald Syme, *Tacitus* (2 vols.; London: Oxford University Press, 1958) 1.258; Clarence W. Mendell, *Tacitus: The Man And His Work* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957) 211.

composed his accounts of individual episodes after evaluating his sources.²⁶

Similarly, in his investigation of Josephus' sources, Shaye Cohen argues against rigid application of the "one-source theory." Nevertheless, he finds the basic theory intrinsically plausible because of the difficulty involved in inspecting several papyrus scrolls at once. He rejects Jonathan Goldstein's analysis of Josephus' use of sources in his account of the Maccabean period for two reasons. First, Goldstein underestimates the extent to which Josephus is willing to depart from his source even where he has no other source and therefore hypothesizes multiple written sources whose existence was previously unsuspected and remains undemonstrated. Secondly, Cohen argues that Goldstein's hypothesis of Josephus composition is too complex:

[T]hat Josephus... compared these accounts one with another, analysed their motives, and assessed their veracity; carefully transposed columns of text in order to solve various difficulties (Goldstein 382-383 and 562-566); and made certain that his final account would not contradict the consensus of Graeco-Roman historians (Goldstein 56 and 424)—all this is unbelievable.²⁷

Many would agree with Cohen that the technology available to the ancient writer would tend to count in favour of the "one-source theory." Scrolls were difficult and unwieldy and desks or writing tables were non-existent.²⁸ The modern picture of a

²⁶ Ronald Martin, *Tacitus* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981) 189-190.

²⁷ Shaye Cohen, *Josephus in Galilee and Rome: His Vita and Development as an Historian* (Leiden: Brill, 1979) 44 n. 71, citing Jonathan Goldstein, *I Maccabees* (New York: Doubleday, 1976).

²⁸ Jocelyn Penny Small, *Wax Tablets of the Mind: Cognitive Studies Of Memory*

scholar writing with all of his sources spread out in front of him is anachronistic. Ancient writers usually wrote in a sitting position with their writing surface on their knees.²⁹

Their source would be on reading stand in front of them or held by an assistant.

Alternately, an author could dictate his work to a scribe while holding his source or having it held for him on a stand or by an assistant. None of these methods made it easy to move from one source to another.

Within New Testament scholarship, serious opposition to the “one-source theory” has come from scholars who favour the Griesbach Hypothesis as a solution to the Synoptic problem. This hypothesis holds that Mark composed his Gospel by closely comparing passages in Matthew and Luke and extracting their common wording to form the basis of his own work. The vast majority of exegetes have found the compositional method proposed by the Griesbachians both difficult and unprecedented.³⁰

Thomas Longstaff, an advocate of the Griesbach Hypothesis, has drawn attention to Tatian’s Diatesseron as an example of ancient conflation.³¹ Tatian, writing in the late second century, combined the texts of all four of the canonical gospels in his work. His intention seems to have been not to omit any event or saying found in any of his sources. In most cases, Tatian seems to have followed one source for at least a few verses

And Literacy In Classical Antiquity (London and New York: Routledge, 1997) 155-159.

²⁹ G. M. Parassoglou, “A Roll Upon His Knees,” *Yale Classical Studies* 28 (1985) 273-275.

³⁰ See the quotation from E. A. Abbott below, p. 50.

³¹ T. R. W. Longstaff, *Evidence of Conflation in Mark? A Study of the Synoptic Problem* (Missoula, Montana: Scholars’ Press, 1977) 10-42.

at a time before switching to another source. Longstaff, however, produces a few examples in which our texts of Tatian show the influence of more than one gospel within a single verse. This would seem to show that Tatian at least occasionally engaged in close conflation in detail.

Longstaff's examples have been severely criticised by C. M. Tuckett.³² Tuckett points out that Longstaff used an English translation based on a group of medieval Arabic manuscripts of the Diatesseron for his analysis. These manuscripts are known to have been assimilated to the Peshitta version of the gospels. In fact, the group of manuscripts upon which Longstaff's analysis are based exhibit greater assimilation than other extant Arabic manuscripts. In the case of at least two of the examples Longstaff gives in which a single verse of Tatian shows the influence of two or more gospels, the reading is that of the Peshitta version of Matthew. This calls into question whether it can be established that Tatian himself engaged in close conflation of texts at the time he was composing his gospel, or whether apparent cases of conflation are the results of later assimilation of Tatian's text.

In his recent dissertation on ancient compositional methods and the synoptic problem, Robert L. Derrenbacker surveys passages from Josephus, Diodorus of Sicily, Strabo and Arrian. He concludes that all of these authors tend to follow one source at a time. This is most apparent in Josephus' adaptation of Deuteronomy and Chronicles. In their respective accounts of the caste system in India, Diodorus, Strabo, and Arrian, all take Megasthenes' account as their main source. They briefly refer to other sources only

³² C. M. Tuckett, *The Revival of the Griesbach Hypothesis: An Analysis and Appraisal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) 42-43.

in the conclusions of their accounts. They do not “micro-conflate” by moving back and forth between sources *within* episodes. This probably has to do with the mechanical difficulties of conflating two or more sources. With both their sources and their writing surface in the form of troublesome rolls, and lacking desks or writing tables, these authors probably found it expedient to avoid trying to follow more than one source at a time.³³

In summary, Downing’s conclusion that the consensus of modern scholars is that classical authors generally composed following one source at a time is broadly correct. It is, of course, not possible to say that no ancient author ever engaged in word-by-word conflation, but such a procedure seems to have been rare at best. We certainly should not begin our analysis of the gospels with the presupposition that the authors of the gospels would have written with two or more documents in view at one time and closely conflated them. Unless there is a preponderance of evidence to the contrary, a theory of composition that holds that the author wrote following one source at a time is to be preferred to a theory that he wrote by closely conflating his sources.

³³ Robert L. Derrenbacker, “Ancient Compositional Practices and the Synoptic Problem,” (Ph.D. Dissertation; Toronto: University of St. Michael’s College, 2001) 141.

Common Witness And Unpicking

Downing finds a problem for the Farrer theory in Luke's failure to reproduce the "common witness" of his sources. He finds it striking that Luke rarely copies Mark precisely where Matthew chooses to copy Mark.³⁴ He observes that Luke rarely reproduces any passage where Matthew and Mark are word-for-word the same, and reproduces none where they are in agreement for more than 20 words in sequence.³⁵ Indeed, he suggests that if Luke knew Mark and Matthew (as the Farrer theory holds he did) he must have searched through them looking for "common witness" and then deliberately removed or "unpicked" it.³⁶

It is not immediately clear what Downing means when he says that Luke has omitted the common witness of Mark and Matthew. At first glance, Downing might appear to be claiming that Luke's use of Mark is *inversely correlated* to Matthew's use of Mark. Luke fails to follow Mark *especially* where Matthew has followed Mark closely. If this were so, it would be a problem for the Two-Document Hypothesis as much or more as it would be for the Farrer theory. How could Luke, if he did not know Matthew's gospel, have chosen not to follow Mark especially where Matthew does follow Mark?

On closer examination, Downing does not appear to be arguing that Luke's use of

³⁴Downing, "Paradigm Perplex," 189.

³⁵ "Luke hardly reproduces any passage where Matthew and Mark are word for word the same, and none where they are in agreement for more than 20 words at a stretch," (Ibid., 188).

³⁶Ibid.

Mark is inversely correlated with Matthew's use of Mark. His observation that Luke never reproduces any passage where Matthew and Mark agree for 20 or more words in sequence is a bit misleading. By my count, there are six such passages and Luke has parallels to five of them.³⁷ The remaining passage, Mark 7.6-8 (=Matt 15.8-9), occurs in the middle of Luke's "great omission," where Luke fails to use the entire block of material from Mark 6.45-8.26. In the other five cases, Luke has parallels to at least much of the material that Mark has in common with Matthew. When Downing claims that Luke never reproduces any passage where Matthew and Mark agree for 20 words or more, what he appears to mean is that Luke does not reproduce the common *wording* of Matthew and Mark, not that Luke has no parallel *passage*.

This is not difficult to explain on either the Farrer theory or the Two-Document Hypothesis. As Downing notes elsewhere, Luke rarely quotes Mark exactly, so there is very little chance of his exact quotations of Mark coinciding with Matthew's.³⁸ By my count, Luke and Mark share only two sequences of 20 or more words in verbatim agreement.³⁹ Neither Luke nor Matthew is in the habit of following Mark exactly for long sequences. While they take over a good bit of Mark's material, they normally recast

³⁷These are: Matt 10.21-22// Mark 13.12-16// Luke 21.16-21, 17.31; Matt 15.8-9// Mark 7.6-8; Matt 16.24-25// Mark 8.34-35// Luke 9.23-24; Matt 21.42// Mark 12.10-11// Luke 20.17; Matt 24.18-20// Mark 13.16-18// Luke 21.23, 17.31; Matt 26.24// Mark 14.21// Luke 22.22. I am indebted to John Poirier for pointing these out to me.

³⁸Downing, "Redaction Criticism," part 2, 45.

³⁹These are: Mark 10.14-15// Luke 18.16-17 and Mark 1.24// Luke 4.34-35. The next longest sequences of verbatim agreements between Mark and Luke are Mark 12.38// Luke 10.46 (14 words), and Mark 8.35// Luke 9.24 (10 words).

it by altering the wording and sequence to some extent. It is not at all improbable that Luke, if he is composing with Mark's text in front of him, would fail to reproduce Mark's exact words in sequences where Matthew has reproduced Mark's exact words. Again, this is common ground to the Farrer theory and the Two-Document Hypothesis. Thus, there is no compelling reason to accept Downing's contention that on the Farrer theory Luke would have to have deliberately "unpicked" the common witness of Mark and Matthew.

As an example, here is one of the six passages where Matthew and Mark agree for 20 words or more (in the Greek text) in sequence, but Luke does not "reproduce" their "common witness":

Mt. 26.24	Mk. 14.21	Lk. 22.22
The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to the one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.	For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to the one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.	For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to the one by whom he is betrayed!

Here is more extended example:

Mt. 16.24-27	Mk. 8.34-37	Lk. 9.23-25
<p>²⁴ Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.</p> <p>²⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.</p> <p>²⁶ For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?</p>	<p>³⁴ He called the crowd with his disciples and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.</p> <p>³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and the sake of the gospel, will save it.</p> <p>³⁶ For what will it profit them to gain the world and forfeit their life?</p> <p>³⁷ Indeed, what can they give in return for their life?</p>	<p>²³ Then he said to them all, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.</p> <p>²⁴ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it.</p> <p>²⁵ What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves?</p>

In both these cases it would seem apparent that Luke is not taking pains either to include or to exclude all of Mark’s close agreements with Matthew. He has parallels to many of them and lacks parallels to others. On the Two-Document Hypothesis, this is because is following Mark’s versions of these passages and rewriting them according to his own preferences. Downing seems to be rejecting the idea that Farrer’s Luke, who knows both Mark and Matthew, might be doing the same thing. But what forbids us from thinking that Luke has noticed that his two sources both have versions of these passages and that he has chosen to follow Mark’s versions rather than Matthew’s?

This is where Downing’s understanding of what Luke ought to have done if he knew both Mark and Matthew comes into play. He thinks that Luke might recast what he found in a single source, but is not likely to have gone against the “common witness” of

both his sources.⁴⁰ He starts with the assumption that Luke ought to have written with both his sources in front of him (or, rather, that this is what the Farrer theory has to suppose that Luke did), and that he ought to have intended to include the “common witness” of his sources. When Downing finds cases where Luke has not included the “common witness,” he arrives at the conclusion that Farrer’s Luke would have to have rejected it *because* it was “common witness.”

Thus, Downing’s argument against the Farrer theory appears not to be that Luke is especially unlikely to follow Mark closely where Matthew follows Mark closely, which would be a problem for the Two-Document Hypothesis as much or more than for the Farrer theory, but that Luke ought to be making a special effort to include the “common witness” of his two sources in his own account. Downing’s contention is that a Luke who knew Mark alone might very well have rewritten Mark in the way that appears in our texts of Luke’s gospel, but a Luke who knew Matthew as well would have to have been heavily influenced in his use of Markan material by his knowledge of Matthew.

Downing’s contention is very questionable. The suggestion that ancient authors combed their sources looking for “common witness” to include in their accounts appears to contradict the consensus of classical scholars that ancient authors wrote with only one source at a time in view for any given episode and were perhaps occasionally influenced by memory of other sources. None of the classicists cited in Downing’s study describe any procedure resembling the one Downing suggests of going through two or more

⁴⁰ “A less than convincing story in a single witness may well be ‘improved’, that we allow, but joint witness we would expect to be afforded more respect” (Downing, “Paradigm Perplex,” 189).

sources looking for “common witness” to include, and Luce argues against it when he says that Livy typically used other sources to supplement his main source, not to correct or verify it. On the Farrer theory, Luke follows one of his sources at a time without keeping an eye on his other source to see what it has in the parallel passage.⁴¹ Downing seems to be criticizing the Farrer theory for contending that Luke did not do something that classical writers rarely or never did. Contra Downing, Farrer’s Luke appears to be behaving in a manner similar that of the other ancient authors that Downing surveyed. Like Livy, Dionysius, Josephus, and Plutarch, Luke just goes ahead and writes, mostly on the basis of a single prior text in front of him, rather than attempting to locate and reproduce the “common witness” of his sources.

We may feel justified in asking, then, what evidence Downing produces that ancient authors sought to reproduce the “common witness” of their sources. Downing points to his analysis of Plutarch previously mentioned, his earlier work on Josephus, and a quotation from Tacitus’ *Annales* as establishing the point.⁴²

The quotation from Tacitus, “For myself, where the authorities are unanimous, I

⁴¹Downing (“Paradigm Perplex,” 175) makes a great deal of Goulder’s description of Luke as “reconciling” Mark and Matthew, but Downing seems to be forcing his own interpretation on the word. Any author who combines material from two different source accounts into a single narrative may be said to be “reconciling” them. The word need hardly imply an effort to maximize all existing agreements and to minimize all disagreements between the sources.

⁴²Downing, “Compositional Conventions,” 169. Downing (“Paradigm Perplex,” 182 n. 27) also cites Mattila’s discussion of Arrian’s preface to the *Anabasis Alexandri* in support of his contention that ancient authors sought to follow the “common witness” of their sources. Mattila (“Question,” 211-13), however, suggests that Arrian’s remarks do not imply that Arrian intended to conflate his sources closely, but to indicate where they conflict. This is Tacitus’ aim as well.

shall follow them; if their versions disagree, I shall record them under the name of their sponsors,”⁴³ (*Annales* 13.20; LCL), will not bear the interpretation that Downing puts on it. What Tacitus is saying here is that he generally does not name the source he is following when its testimony is not directly contradicted by other sources, but that he has specified the different authorities he knows in this specific case because their testimony is mutually contradictory. There is little to suggest that Tacitus meant that he compared his sources looking for verbal agreements or common details among them to use as the basis for his own account, which is what Downing appears to think Luke ought to have done if he were using Mark and Matthew.

Nor does Downing’s analysis of Plutarch much help his case. If, as Downing claims, Plutarch conflated Dionysius’ *Roman Antiquities* and Livy’s *History* in creating his own account of the siege of Veii, his sources were in different languages, so he certainly was not looking for verbatim agreements between them. Downing believes that the theory that Plutarch conflated Livy and Dionysius is preferable to the theory that all three are based on a common source because, on the latter theory:

One has to accept a lot of coincidences – not least that Dionysius and Livy never seem to agree together against Plutarch in their use of the common source, save where Plutarch judges its narrative weak: he has otherwise never happened to go his own way where they agree. And if... all the details Plutarch is supposed to have reproduced from the lost source made the coherent story we seem to find in

⁴³ *Nos consensum auctorum secuturi, quae diversa prodiderent sub nominibus ipsorum trademus.*

his [Camillus], it is again hard to imagine why the other two should have made such unsatisfactory selections where they fail to agree.⁴⁴

Downing does not seem to have made a particularly convincing case against a common source here. That a writer might follow his source closely except where he judges its narrative weak is almost a tautology. Livy and Dionysius must have had a common source, whether Plutarch knew it or not, and the fact that they disagree with each other, and with Plutarch, about how best to make selections from it is precisely what we should expect them to do if they all used it independently. There are several places where Livy and Dionysius do agree against Plutarch,⁴⁵ and this undermines Downing's argument that they could not have all used a common source, even if Downing judges Plutarch's changes to be improvements to the narrative. Plutarch could have made improvements to the common source just as well as he could have made improvements to the narratives of Livy and Dionysius. Finally, even if Downing turns out to be correct in believing that Plutarch conflated Livy and Dionysius in detail, their agreement against him shows that Plutarch did not feel bound to include the "common witness" of his sources. Plutarch, on Downing's hypothesis, was concerned with creating a strong narrative, not with

⁴⁴Downing, "Compositional Conventions" 168.

⁴⁵These include, e.g., the anger of the gods and the need to propitiate them (Livy, *Hist.* 5.14.4; Dionysius, *Ant. rom.* 12.10.2); the initial sending of envoys to Delphi (Livy, *Hist.* 5.15.4; Dionysius, *Ant. rom.* 12.10.2); the placement of the episode in which the Romans learn of the prophecy that Veii can not fall as long as the waters of the Alban Lake reach the sea (Livy, *Hist.* 5.14.4; Dionysius, *Ant. rom.* 12.11.2); and the statement that the Senators did not trust the old man from whom they learned the prophecy (Livy, *Hist.* 5.15.12; Dionysius, *Ant. rom.* 12.12.1).

preserving accounts of multiply attested details. In Downing's conception, Plutarch was willing to go against the witness of both his sources where he thought he could improve the story by doing so.

Downing's analysis of Josephus is especially pertinent to the study of the synoptic problem and requires careful consideration. In the biblical narratives in Samuel-Kings and Chronicles, Josephus had two parallel accounts he could draw on as sources for books 7-10 of the *Antiquities*. It is generally accepted that the author of Chronicles used Samuel-Kings as a source, and that Josephus used both. This makes Josephus a good analogy for Luke on the Farrer theory, which holds that Matthew used Mark and that Luke used both Mark and Matthew.⁴⁶

Downing contends that Josephus followed the "common witness" of his sources, but does not explicitly define what he means by this.⁴⁷ It could mean that Josephus compared his sources looking for verbatim agreements to include in his work, or that within individual pericopes he was careful to reproduce all the details of the story that were found in both his sources, or that he was especially careful to include pericopes that were found in both sources. From the evidence given in Downing's examination,

⁴⁶Of course, no analogy is perfect. As Goulder ("Luke's Compositional Options," 151) remarks, "great care needs to be taken over comparisons with other contemporary authors. Luke is engaged in a different endeavour from Josephus... and he is an individual in an individual situation." Additionally, although Josephus probably had access to versions of both the Hebrew MT and the Greek LXX, and possibly Aramaic Targums as well, we do not know precisely what form of these texts he used.

⁴⁷In his review of Downing's work, Derrenbacker comments, "While Downing's cataloguing of Josephus' 'redactional' techniques is helpful and unique in Synoptic Problem discussion, the comments are made generally and with little detailed examples given in support of the assertions," ("Ancient Compositional Practices," 124).

however, it does not appear that Josephus was particularly concerned with doing any of these things.

First, Downing is quite clear that Josephus does not intend to quote his sources exactly, but to paraphrase whatever he can. He rarely preserves an unbroken sequence of more than a few words taken from his source, let alone examining his two sources in order to use their common wording.⁴⁸ This is typical of classical authors. As Downing himself emphasizes, the amount of verbatim agreement we find among the synoptic gospels is unusual in Hellenistic literature; classical authors usually made it a point to recast their sources in their own words.⁴⁹

Second, it appears that Josephus does not try to get all the details common to his two sources. The only detailed example Downing gives of Josephus' alleged conflation of his two sources is the Death of Saul story in *Ant.* 6.368-77, about which Downing says:

For instance, I Chronicles 10 1-12 gives us almost word-for-word I Samuel 31.1-13, and Josephus renders almost every phrase, adding only a note on the valour of Saul and his sons, and a massacre when the heroes fall. However, at II Samuel 1 6 he has a second account of Saul's death; and although this may

⁴⁸Downing, "Redaction Criticism," Part 1, 48.

⁴⁹Downing, "Redaction Criticism," Part 2, 33. Many critics have seen the close verbal similarity between the synoptic gospels as more similar to that which exists between Chronicles and Samuel-Kings than to anything found in Greek historiography. Henry J. Cadbury discusses the question as it pertains to Luke-Acts in "The Greek and Jewish Traditions of Writing History," in *The Beginnings of Christianity, Part I: The Acts of the Apostles*, edited by F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake (London: MacMillan and Co., 1922) 2.7-29.

represent a deliberate deception by the Amalekite, Josephus conflates both versions. He follows I Samuel 31 7 where it differs from I Chronicles 10 7; but uses the more plausible order of I Chronicles 10 8-9 for what ensues. He returns again to I Samuel, save for the unlikely ‘burnt’ in v. 12, to which he prefers the Chronicler’s ‘buried’. I Chronicles 10 13 is noted, but a rather different epitaph is written, on the basis of tradition and in light of Josephus own soft spot for the ‘ventriloquist’ of Endor (*Ant.* V 340).⁵⁰

Downing notes several changes that Josephus made to the story in 1 Sam 31.1-13. The major change is that Josephus has introduced the episode about the Amalekite from 2 Sam 1.6 -10 into the account of Saul’s death. Two things should be noted here. First, the episode is brought forward from slightly later in the text of Samuel, not taken from Chronicles. Second, the episode is inserted as a block between 1 Sam 31.4 and 1 Sam 31.5. While this is conflation of a sort, it is not an example of close conflation in detail. It might more precisely be called a reordering of the account in Samuel.

Downing also sees three of the changes Josephus makes to the story in Samuel as due to the influence of Chronicles. The first concerns the despoiling of the bodies of Saul and his sons. Samuel says, “they cut off his head, stripped off his armour” (1 Sam 31.9, NRSV), Chronicles that “they stripped him and took his head and his armour” (1 Chr 10.9), and Josephus that they, “stripped them and cut off their heads” (*Ant.* 6.374, LCL).

⁵⁰Downing, “Redaction Criticism,” Part 1, 61; “Compositional Considerations,” 160.

Downing apparently sees an agreement in order between Chronicles and Josephus here because the head is mentioned after the stripping in both cases. However, the changes Josephus makes do not bring him into line with the account in Chronicles. Josephus goes against both sources in failing to mention the armour, and he is describing what happened to Saul and his sons, rather than Saul alone. Second, Downing sees an agreement between Josephus and Chronicles in having Saul's body buried instead of burned. The agreement is one of omission only, for Samuel also records the burial. Third, Downing notes that both the Chronicler and Josephus add an epitaph for Saul. The contents of the epitaphs differ greatly, however; the Chronicler reports that Saul was punished for consulting a medium rather than the Lord, while Josephus says Saul was punished for disobeying God's commandments concerning the Amalekites and for destroying Abimelech and his family. In none of the three cases Downing mentions does Josephus insert details taken from Chronicles into the story. The Chronicler has had, at best, a very minor influence on Josephus' narrative, and possibly none at all. Certainly there is nothing to require us to believe that Josephus consulted the text of Chronicles while he was rewriting the story from Samuel.

A close comparison of Josephus' account of the Death of Saul with those of Samuel and Chronicles reveals that Josephus is probably following Samuel alone here. In 1 Chr 10.1-7, the Chronicler follows the account in 1 Samuel so closely that it is difficult to discern which narrative Josephus is following. But in 1 Chr 10.8-13, the Chronicler differs from 1 Sam 31.8-13 in some details, and Josephus consistently follows Samuel. Josephus omits some details common to Samuel and Chronicles, including the specific

mentions of the Mount Gilboa, of the land of the Philistines, and of their idols. He includes several details that are found in Samuel alone, including the number of Saul's sons, the specification of the temple in which Saul's armour is placed as that of Astarte, the fact that Saul's body was displayed on the walls of Beth-shan, the fact that the men of Jabesh-gilead journeyed all night, and the fact that they came to the walls of Beth-shan.

It appears that Josephus' method of composition in the Death of Saul pericope is even simpler than the one described by Downing. Where the material in Samuel-Kings is also found in Chronicles, Josephus follows the account in Samuel-Kings, and where it is not also found in Chronicles, Josephus still follows the account in Samuel-Kings. The alternative account in Chronicles seems to have had very little, if any, influence on Josephus' use of the Samuel-Kings story.

Third, while Downing does seem to think that Josephus attempted to follow the "common witness" of his sources by including pericopes that are attested in both Samuel-Kings and Chronicles, he does not attempt a systematic demonstration of this claim and the evidence he produces can be explained equally well without resort to his hypothesis.⁵¹ Downing observes: "It is immediately clear that where the Chronicler keeps closely to his source, Josephus happily follows."⁵² This would appear to support Downing's contention that Josephus is trying to follow the "common witness" of Samuel-Kings and Chronicles, except that Downing then notes, "Where the Chronicler

⁵¹Derrenbacker ("Ancient Compositional Practices," 126 n. 85) notes that while Josephus generally includes events that are attested by both Samuel-Kings and Chronicles, there are also several examples of doubly attested material that he does not include.

⁵²Downing, "Redaction Criticism," Part 1, 61.

omits a narrative from his source, Josephus is still sure that those events are true and worth relating.”⁵³ It would appear again that Josephus is simply following the material in Samuel-Kings closely, without regard to whether it is also found in Chronicles or not. Josephus includes most of the material that Samuel-Kings and Chronicles have in common simply because he includes most of the material from Samuel-Kings. The additional theory that Josephus used Chronicles to “check” the material in Samuel-Kings is unproven and appears to be unnecessary.

The main use of Josephus made of the alternative account in Chronicles was to supplement the narrative of Samuel-Kings, as Downing notes when he says, “When, however, the Chronicler has some additional (but not directly conflicting) material... Josephus includes it in the Samuel-Kings narrative that he is mainly following.”⁵⁴ Thus, Josephus’ use of Chronicles to supplement Samuel-Kings would appear to be similar to the way Luce believes Livy to have used other sources to supplement, rather than to verify, the narrative he was mainly following.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid. Similarly, in his study of the eighth book of Josephus’ *Antiquities*, Christopher Begg (*Josephus’ Account of the Early Divided Monarchy (AJ 8,212-420): Rewriting the Bible* [Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1993] 270-71, 278) concludes that that Josephus, wishing to make the fullest possible use of the material in both his sources, inserted material from Chronicles into a basic sequence taken from Kings.

None of this shows that the way Luke is held to have treated his sources on the Farrer theory is outside the bounds of ancient compositional practice. Downing is quite ready to believe that, if Luke did not know Matthew, his failure to use much of the “common witness” of Mark and Matthew might be a coincidental result of Luke’s rewriting of Mark. He assumes, however, that if Luke did know Matthew, the same changes must be a deliberate excision of the “common witness.” Downing seems to think that, if Luke knew Matthew, Matthew must have exerted considerable influence on Luke’s use of Mark. This opinion is not supported by Downing’s examination of ancient compositional procedures, which shows that for any given episode an ancient writer wrote with only one source in view. Reminiscence of other sources the writer knew may have influenced his narrative in minor ways, but there is little or no evidence to suggest that ancient authors wrote with two or more source texts in front of them and tried to reproduce the “common witness” of their sources.

The way Luke used Mark and Matthew on the Farrer theory’ appears to be broadly similar to the way Josephus used Samuel-Kings and Chronicles. Both Luke and Josephus chose one of their two main written sources as the basis for their own accounts and added supplementary material from the other source. They chose to follow one source at a time for any given episode, but were occasionally influenced by reminiscence of other sources. In fact, all of the classicists Downing cites suggest that ancient authors based their accounts of single episodes on a single source and rarely or never closely conflated two or more written sources. Downing is faulting the Farrer theory for postulating that Luke was following a single source for each episode in his text and not closely conflating Mark and

Matthew.

Four Passages Where Luke Has Unpicked Mark From Matthew

Downing's argument that Luke could not have been using Matthew's gospel because he fails to reproduce the "common witness" of Matthew and Mark is augmented by a further argument. In four passages, the Beelzebul Controversy (Matt 12.22-45; Mark 3.20-29; Luke 11.14-26 with 12.10 and 6.43-45), the Baptism and Temptation (Matt 3.1-4.11; Mark 1.1-13; Luke 3.1-22; 4.1-13), the Sending Out of the Twelve (Matt 9.35-10.16; Mark 6.13-19 with 6.6, 7, 8-11, 34; Luke 10.1-12), and some of the apocalyptic material (Matt 24.4-26; Mark 13.5-37; Luke 21.8-36, etc.), where on the Farrer theory Luke is using Matthew as his main source, Luke has "unpicked" Matthew's Markan material from his use of Matthew.⁵⁵ This means, according to Downing, that if Luke is following Matthew here, he is not following Matthew throughout, but only for the material Matthew has added to Mark. It is far more likely, Downing argues, that Luke knows this additional material that Matthew has added to Mark from a separate source, than that Luke has "unpicked" the Markan parallels from Matthew.

The question here is whether it can be established that Luke has, in fact, "unpicked" Mark from Matthew. Unless we accept Downing's assertion that a writer with two sources will make a special effort to preserve their common wording, and we have seen reason not to accept this, there is no reason that Luke should not have omitted

⁵⁵The most detailed exposition of this argument is in Downing, "Rehabilitation." Downing recapitulates the argument made there in "Redaction Criticism," part 2, 43-45; "Compositional Conventions," 168-172; and "Paradigm Perplex," 194.

or altered some or even much of the Markan material in Matthew if he was using Matthew. Has Luke, in fact, omitted Matthew's Markan material with such consistency that we must accept Downing's claim that Farrer's Luke must be deliberately "unpicking" Mark from Matthew?

For his first test case, Downing provides a synopsis of the Beelzebul pericope that includes Mark 3.20-30; Matt 12.22-32, 43; and Luke 11.14-24, 12.10. He divides Matthew's text into A material, where Matthew is very like Mark; B material, where Matthew is fairly similar, and C material, where Matthew is quite different from Mark. He then observes that Luke has no significant independent parallels with Mark; so if, as Farrer hypothesizes, Luke has both Mark and Matthew as sources, Luke is using only Matthew here.⁵⁶

The Beelzebul Pericope

Mt. 12.25-32	Mk. 3.22-30	Lk. 11.14-23; 12.10
<p>²² Then they brought to him a demoniac who was blind and mute; and he cured him, so that the one who had been mute could speak and see.</p> <p>²³ All the crowds were amazed and said, "Can this be the Son of David?"</p> <p>²⁴ But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons."</p> <p>²⁵ He knew what they were thinking, and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and</p>	<p>²² And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of demons he casts out demons."</p> <p>²³ And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan?"</p>	<p>¹⁴ Now he was casting out a demon that was mute; when the demon had gone out, the one who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were amazed.</p> <p>¹⁵ But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of demons."</p> <p>¹⁶ Others, to test him, kept demanding a sign from heaven.</p> <p>¹⁷ But he knew what they were thinking and said to them,</p>

⁵⁶Downing, "Rehabilitation," 272-278.

<p>no city or house divided against itself will stand.</p> <p>²⁶ If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand?</p> <p>²⁷ If I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own exorcists cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges.</p> <p>²⁸ But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you.</p> <p>²⁹ Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his property, without first tying up the strong man? Then indeed the house can be plundered.</p> <p>³⁰ Whoever is not with me against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.</p> <p>³¹ Therefore I tell you, people will be forgiven every sin and blasphemy, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.</p> <p>³² Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or the age to come.</p>	<p>²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.</p> <p>²⁵ And if a house is divided against itself, the house will not be able to stand.</p> <p>²⁶ And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come.</p> <p>²⁷ But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.</p> <p>²⁸ Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter;</p> <p>²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"—</p> <p>³⁰ for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit."</p>	<p>"Every kingdom divided against itself becomes a desert, and house falls on house.</p> <p>¹⁸ If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand?—for you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul.</p> <p>¹⁹ Now if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your exorcists cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges.</p> <p>²⁰ But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you.</p> <p>²¹ When a strong man, fully armed, guards his castle, his property is safe.</p> <p>²² But when one stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his plunder.</p> <p>²³ Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.</p> <p>^{12.10} And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.</p>
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Downing then questions whether it is plausible to believe that Luke is using Matthew here. Luke uses none of the A material, where Matthew's text is very like Mark's; a lot of the B material, where Matthew is fairly similar to Mark, and reproduces almost all the C material, where Matthew has material not paralleled in Mark. It would seem, Downing argues, that if Luke is using Matthew's text here, he has chosen not to follow Matthew where Matthew is close to Mark, but to use Matthew only where Matthew has altered Mark or has added material to Mark. This would require us to believe that Luke has closely compared his two sources and then disentangled from Matthew's text all the material in which Matthew paralleled Mark closely and reproduced only the material in which Matthew was not parallel to Mark.⁵⁷

Such a procedure, Downing argues, would not only have been extremely difficult, but is unparalleled in antiquity. It is far more likely that Luke was not using Matthew at all, but that he and Matthew shared a common source (i.e., Q). Luke followed Q alone, while Matthew combined Q with material from Mark. It is more plausible that Matthew added Markan material to Q than that Luke removed Markan material from Matthew.⁵⁸

Downing's analysis is questionable on several counts. First, Matt 12.29 and 12.31a are the only verses in Matthew's version of the Beelzebul pericope that Downing identifies as A material. This is a very small sample on which to base a generalization as

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Downing, "Compositional Considerations," 169-171.

to how Luke treats A material.⁵⁹ Downing is well aware of this objection, which is why he provides examples from three other pericopes, to which we shall come shortly.

Second, Downing’s synopsis shows Matt 12.22-24 as the parallel text to Luke 11.14. The closest parallel, however, is the doublet at Matt 9.32-34. If, as the Farrer theory holds, Luke is using Matthew, he is following Matt 9.32-34’s version of the miracle story and subsequent accusation in preference to Matt 12.22-24’s version, which he has omitted. Matt 9.34b contains the saying, “By the ruler of demons he casts out demons”. In the Greek text there are seven consecutive words of verbatim agreement between Mark and Matthew here. This is a longer sequence of unbroken verbatim agreement between Mark and Matthew than is found in either of Downing’s two examples of A material, so Matt 9.34b itself clearly should be classified as A material. This means that if Matthew is Luke’s source here, Luke has not omitted all of the A material in which Matthew closely parallels Mark, because Luke 11.15 has all seven words in complete agreement with Mark and Matthew in both wording and sequence:

Matt 9.34	Mark 3.22	Luke 11.15
οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι ἔλεγον, Ἐν τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια.	καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς οἱ ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων καταβάντες ἔλεγον ὅτι Βεελζεβούλ ἔχει, καὶ ὅτι ἐν τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια.	τινὲς δὲ ἐξ αὐτῶν εἶπαν, Ἐν Βεελζεβούλ τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια

⁵⁹J. B. Tyson, “The Two-Source Hypothesis: A Critical Appraisal,” in Bellinzoni, *The Two-Source Hypothesis*, 446-47.

Third, if Matthew is Luke's source here, Luke's alteration or omission of the A material in Matt 12.29 and 12.31a may easily be explained in terms of Luke's own redaction, so there is no need to suggest that Luke would have to have consulted Mark's text at all. With regard to Matt 12.29, there is a difference of opinion among scholars who accept the Two Document Hypothesis on whether any version of the saying about the Strong Man (Matt 12.29// Mark 3.27// Luke 11.21-22) stood in Q.⁶⁰ One school of thought holds that the lack of agreement between Matthew and Luke here gives us little reason to suggest that the saying stood in Q. On this theory, Luke 11.21-22 is Luke's reformulation of Mark 3.27.⁶¹ Another school believes that Q must have had a version of the Strong Man saying because it is unlikely that Matthew and Luke would independently have placed a Markan saying between two Q sayings. Among those who think the saying stood in Q, many think that Luke has reformulated it extensively. John Nolland argues that Luke is solely dependent on the non-Markan source he shares with Matthew for these two verses,⁶² but the fact that the language of Luke 11.21-22 is so thoroughly Lukan suggests that Luke has extensively reformulated the source.⁶³ The point here is that

⁶⁰For a breakdown of scholars holding the different opinions, see John S. Kloppenborg, *Q Parallels: Synopsis, Critical Notes and Concordance* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1988) 92.

⁶¹So, e.g., Arland D Jacobson, *The First Gospel: An Introduction to Q* (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1992) 154-55; Frans Neirynck, *Assessment to Mark and Q: A Study of the Overlap Texts* by Harry T. Fleddermann (Leuven: University Press, 1995) 263-307, at 271-73.

⁶²John Nolland, *Luke* (WBC 35b; Dallas, Texas: Word, 1993) 2.634.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 2.641. Similarly, Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8-20* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001) 200.

many scholars working on the assumption of the Two-Document Hypothesis think that Luke 11.21-22 is substantially Luke's own rewriting of the version of the Strong Man saying found in Mark 3.27// Matt 12.29. The fact that Luke chooses to differ at a point where Mark and Matthew agree is, apparently, entirely coincidental. This explanation ought to serve the Farrer theory as well.

In the case of Luke's omission of Matt 12.31a on the theory that he was using Matthew, it should be noted that Matt 12.31 and Matt 12.32 form a doublet, and it is a widely recognized characteristic of Luke to avoid repetition by eliminating one of the versions of doublets in his sources.⁶⁴ The question is which version of the saying on the Unforgivable Sin Luke would be more likely to use and which he would be more likely to drop. If we had reason to believe that Luke wrote with both his sources in front of him and went through them looking for verbatim agreements, we might expect him to retain Matt 12.31 and omit 12.32, though elements of both could show up in his version if he knows both of them. As we have seen, however, it is very unlikely that an ancient author would have read two texts side by side looking for verbal agreements. If Luke is instead following a single source (on this hypothesis, Matthew) for this episode, as we would expect an ancient author to do, we should also expect him to use whichever version of the saying best suits his purposes. Matt 12.32 has "the Son of Man" (i.e., Jesus) and "the Holy Spirit" where Matt 12.31 has "people" and "the Spirit" (NRSV). It seems unlikely that Luke would discard the version of the saying that speaks of Jesus and the Holy Spirit

⁶⁴So, e.g., Henry J. Cadbury, *The Style and Literary Method of Luke* (repr. ed.; Eugene, Ore.: Wipf and Stock, 2001) 83-90; Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (2 vols.; AB 28-28a; Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1981) 1.81-82.

in favor of the one that does not, particularly if he is arranging his material topically. The Unforgivable Sin is found at Luke 12.10, sandwiched between a saying about the Son of Man and one about the Holy Spirit.

Thus, Downing's assertion that if Luke was using Matthew in the Beelzebul pericope, he must have gone through and removed all of Matthew's Markan or A material is unfounded. On a more evenhanded examination of the theory under consideration, Luke may be seen to have dealt with Matthew's Markan or A material in a variety of ways. Luke has kept very close to Matt 9.34b, rewritten Matt 12.29 in his own idiom, and dropped the version of the Unforgivable Sin in Matt 12.31 in favor of the more appropriate one at Matt 12.32.

Still, it might be argued that the fact that Luke has a higher proportion of the C material, which he shares with Matthew alone, than he does of the A material which he shares with Matthew and Mark, renders the Farrer theory implausible. If Luke is following Matthew alone in this pericope, and thus does not know precisely where Matthew and Mark have similar material and where they do not, how might this be explained?

On the Farrer theory, it would be very odd indeed if Luke did not use at least much of Matthew's non-Markan material when he is following Matthew. Saying that a writer with more than one source will generally follow only one source for any given episode is not the same as saying he would not first read all the versions of that episode in his sources prior to choosing which one he will follow. As we saw in Luce's analysis above, Livy compared the different parts of the sources available to him in order to decide

which of them had the best overall version. This is what we should expect Luke to have done. The question we have to ask is why, in the Beelzebul pericope and the other three pericopes Downing examines, Luke might have thought that Matthew and not Mark had the best overall version.

Matthew and Mark have a great deal of material in common. If Luke knew both Matthew and Mark, he has clearly chosen to follow Mark rather than Matthew for most of the episodes they share. The Beelzebul pericope and the other three episodes Downing examines are exceptions where Luke has chosen to follow Matthew instead. Why would Luke have left off his usual policy of following Mark and instead followed Matthew in these particular episodes? Presumably, it was not for the material that Mark and Matthew have in common. If that had been what Luke was interested in, he could have stuck to following Mark. If Luke preferred Matthew's version of an episode to Mark's, it was likely because he saw material in Matthew that he wished to include in his own gospel which he could not get from Mark. It is Matthew's additional material that attracted Luke to use Matthew's version.

Thus, if Luke is writing his own version of an episode using Matthew's version as a source, he might very well use a higher proportion of Matthew's non-Markan material than of Matthew's Markan material. It is, after all, the non-Markan material that inspired Luke to use Matthew's version in the first place. We should not expect him to systematically exclude all Matthew's Markan material and include all Matthew's non-Markan material, and we do not find that he does. In the case of both the A material and the C material, some is kept nearly as it stands, some is rewritten more extensively,

and some is omitted.

It remains to examine the other three test cases Downing provides to support his claim that if Luke was using Matthew, he must have compared Matthew with Mark and removed Matthew's Mark-like material. Downing deals with these cases more briefly. Downing's second example is the baptism narrative (Matt 3.1 ff.; Mark 1.1 ff.; Luke 4.1ff.). Downing again divides Matthew's text into A material (3.3b; 4-5a; 6), B material (1.1-3a, 5b, 11, 16-17, 4.1-2, 11) and C material (3.7-10, 12-14, 3-10). Here, Downing allows that Luke does retain the A material found in Mt. 3.3b, the quotation of Isaiah 40.3, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight'" (Mt. 3.3b//Mk. 1.3//Lk. 3.4b) including Matthew's correction of the misattribution found in Mark. Downing thinks this is not a problem for his hypothesis because "the correction is obvious, and the remaining quotation is essential to the Markan context that remains." He also notes that Luke reproduces most of the C material, except for verses 14-15. Luke reproduces verses 3.7-10 very faithfully, verses 4.3-10 less so.⁶⁵

Again, Downing's detailed analysis falls short of supporting his claim. In the case of the A material, Luke has a close parallel to Matt 3.3b//Mk. 1.3. Downing's claim is that if Luke knew Matthew, he must have intentionally removed Matthew's close parallels to Mark, and here he has not. Downing may be able to explain the verse on a theory other than Luke's use of Matthew, but the counterexample still counts against his generalization that, on the Farrer theory, we would have to accept that Luke has deliberately removed the Markan parallels from his use of Matthew. In the case of the C

⁶⁵Downing, "Rehabilitation," 279.

material, Luke has reproduced 3.7-10 closely, omitted 3.13-14, and recast 4.3-10. In short, this pericope does not show that Luke's gospel omits all the close Mark-Matthew agreements and reproduces all of Matthew's non-Markan material closely. There is A material that Luke has retained and C material that he has omitted or recast. Downing acknowledges that it might be argued that Luke did not use the Markan or A material in Matt 3.4-5a in order to avoid making John the Baptist look like Elijah, but notes that "there are further instances still" of Luke's avoidance of Matthew's Markan material.⁶⁶

Downing's third example is drawn from the missionary discourses. He divides Matt 9.37-10.16, the Sending Out of the Twelve, into A material (Matt 9.36, which follows Mark 6.34 closely), B material (Matt 9.35a, 10.1a, 2-4, 9-11, and possibly 14a) and C material (9.35b, 37-38; 10.1b, 5-8, 12-13, most of 14, 15-16). Then he notes that in the nearest Lukan parallel, the Sending Out of the Seventy (Luke 10.1-16), Luke reproduces a lot of the C material almost verbatim while he has no parallel to the single verse of A material in Matt 9.36. Once again, Downing concludes that it is far more likely that Luke found the B and C material in a separate source than that he omitted the A material from Matthew. Downing contends that it is especially unlikely that Luke would have omitted any equivalent of the A material in Matt 9.36 as it appears to be very congenial to Luke's interests.⁶⁷

Downing's analysis fails to take into account several factors that weigh against his thesis. First, Luke's treatment of the C material is far more varied than might appear

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid., 280.

from Downing's description of it. Verses 9.37b-38 and 10.15-16 are closely parallel to Luke in wording, though the order of the latter is altered. Verses 9.35b and 10.5-6 have no equivalent in Luke, while the remainder of the C material is recast in both wording and order.

Second, the omitted A material in Matt 9.36 amounts to a single verse. Downing fails to note that Luke has no parallel to any of the material in Matthew's introduction, omitting the B and C material in verse 35 along with verse 36. This is not unusual in Luke, who shows great independence from his sources especially in his introductions to new sections. He is inclined to elaborate new settings and to create new audiences for sayings.⁶⁸ On the theory that Luke is following Matthew for this episode, he has rewritten the entire introduction rather than specifically targeting the A material. Additionally, Downing fails to note that in Luke 9.10-17, where Luke is following Mark 6.30-44, Luke omits any equivalent to the first part of Mark 6.34⁶⁹ (i.e., the Markan parallel to Matt 9.36), "As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had a compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd." One might be tempted to ask why, on Downing's own source theory, Luke should have omitted this verse if the material in it were so congenial to him.

Downing's fourth and final example is drawn from the apocalyptic material in Matt 24-25, Mark 13, and Luke 12, 17, 19, and 21. Once again, he divides Matthew's text into A material (Matt 24.4-9, 13, 15-25, 31-36), B material (Matt 24.29-30, 42;

⁶⁸Cadbury, *Style*, 105-6, 119-26. Compare Mark 1.40// Luke 5.12; Mark 2.1// Luke 5.17; Mark 8.27// Luke 9.18.

⁶⁹Noted by Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1.766.

25.13-15b), and C material (Matt 24.10-12, 14, 26-28, 30a; 24.37-25.46). As Downing notes, Luke's treatment of the apocalyptic material differs from his treatment of the material in the other three pericopes considered. Luke 21 follows the version of the Little Apocalypse in Mark 13 fairly closely, while Luke's parallels to the additional material that Matthew places in his version of the Apocalypse in Matt 24-25 are found distributed through Luke 12, 17, and 19.⁷⁰

Downing attaches a great deal of importance to the fact that where Luke has parallels to Matthew's apocalyptic material in Luke 12, 17, and 19, the parallels frequently extend only to Matthew's non-Markan additions, not to the material Matthew has taken from Mark. This, he contends, shows that if Luke is following Matthew for this material, Luke must be removing Matthew's Markan material in order to reproduce Matthew's additions to Mark alone. Downing argues, once again, that it is far more likely that Luke is not using Matthew at all, but that Luke and Matthew found this material in another source and that Matthew combined it with the apocalyptic material he took from Mark 13, while Luke reproduced it nearly as it stood.

⁷⁰Downing, "Rehabilitation," 280-283.

There is a problem with the generalization that if Luke is using Matthew's apocalyptic material, he must be removing Matthew's Markan material from it. In the course of his analysis of the material in Luke 17 that has parallels in Matthew, Downing notes, "part of it has similarities with material from Mark that he had repeated almost immediately before (Luke 17.31 and 34; cf. Matt 24.17-18 = Mark 13.15-16)."⁷¹ Downing acknowledges that Luke 17.31 is the Lukan parallel to Matt 24.17-18, and he has previously identified Matt 24.17-18 as A material. There are 9 words that occur in identical form and in the same sequence in all three gospels, as well as several more near-parallels:

Matt 24.17-18

17 ὁ ἐπὶ τοῦ δώματος
 μὴ καταβάτω
 ἄραι τὰ ἐκ τῆς
 οἰκίας αὐτοῦ, 18 καὶ ὁ ἐν
 τῷ ἀγρῷ μὴ
 ἐπιστρεψάτω
 ὀπίσω ἄραι το
 ἱμάτιον αὐτοῦ.

Mark 13.15-16

15 ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ δώματος
 μὴ καταβάτω μηδὲ
 εἰσελθάτω ἄραί τι ἐκ τῆς
 οἰκίας αὐτοῦ, 16 καὶ ὁ εἰς
 τὸν ἀγρὸν μὴ
 ἐπιστρεψάτω εἰς τὰ
 ὀπίσω ἄραι το
 ἱμάτιον αὐτοῦ.

Luke 17.31

31 ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ὅς
 ἔσται ἐπὶ τοῦ δώματος
 καὶ τὰ σκεύη αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ
 οἰκίᾳ, μὴ καταβάτω
 ἄραι αὐτά,
 καὶ ὁ ἐν
 ἀγρῷ ὁμοίως μὴ
 ἐπιστρεψάτω εἰς τὰ
 ὀπίσω.

This means that if Luke is following Matthew here, he has not unpicked all of Matthew's

⁷¹Ibid., 282.

Markan material, though he has recast it a bit. Here again is a counterexample that counts against Downing's generalization.

Downing notes that there are a few places in the apocalyptic material where Matthew has expanded Mark and Luke has parallels to Matthew's additions to Mark, but without Matthew's Markan material. Despite the fact that Luke has not used the Markan material elsewhere, he fails to include any parallel to the Markan version of this material in Luke 21 where he is dependent on Mark 13. For example, Luke has no parallel to Mark 13.21-23, the saying on false messiahs, in his own version of the apocalypse in Luke 21. Luke 17.21-24, 37 does, however, have parallels to Matthew's expansion of Mark in Matt 24.23-28. Downing acknowledges that Luke's omission of any equivalent of Mark 13.21-23 in Luke 21 suggests that Luke recognized these verses as "roughly equivalent" to his own material in Luke 17.21, 23-24. Downing, of course, sees this as a problem for the Farrer theory.⁷²

In fact, this phenomenon may be accounted for on the Farrer theory on the assumption that Luke used compositional methods similar to those that Luce attributes to Livi above. Before beginning composition, Luke read through his sources with an eye to selecting the one whose version would form the basis of his account.⁷³ In this case, Luke

⁷²Ibid., 281-82.

⁷³Indeed, this procedure is not dissimilar to the one that Streeter suggests that Luke used when confronted with overlapping accounts in his sources. Streeter consistently says that Luke chose to follow one account or the other rather than attempting to combine two accounts (*Four Gospels*, 186-187, 210-211, 246). Streeter does not, however, offer an opinion on whether Luke's decisions about which of his sources he would follow for any particular pericope were made prior to the time he began to write or during the writing process.

chose to follow Matthew's version of the False Messiahs saying instead of Mark's. When he came to write his own version of the saying, he had Matthew's text alone in front of him and perhaps an unchecked recollection of Mark's. He did not go back and check his copy of Mark or lay Mark and Matthew side by side to make sure that he included the common wording of both gospels.

We may conclude that Downing's assertion that if Luke used Matthew, he must have gone through the Matthean texts he wanted to use and unpicked and removed the "pure Markan" material from them is not borne out by examination of the texts he gives as examples. It is true that in each of these test cases there is Markan material in Matthew that Luke does not use. This is, after all, why Downing selected these particular pericopes to make his point.⁷⁴ However, in three of the four test cases (i.e., Beelzebul, Baptism, and the Apocalypse), Luke does retain material in which Matthew follows Mark closely. In the fourth case (the Sending) the omitted material consists of a single verse. Downing is quite aware that Luke does not eliminate all the "pure Mark in Matthew" and that other explanations for the material that Luke does omit are possible:

It is possible, as has been said, to find piece-meal reasons for each change of

⁷⁴Downing notably does not include the Lawyer's Question pericope (Matt 22.34-40// Mark 12.28-31// Luke 10.25-28) in his examination. On the Farrer theory, Luke has followed Matthew closely here, where Matthew has followed Mark closely. It is, of course, possible to give different accounts of this pericope on other source theories.

Matthew's close quotation of Mark as it occurs. But it is still strange to find that Luke ends up with 'pure Mark in Matthew' almost totally rejected; revised Mark in Matthew further revised; yet 'new' Matthew accepted, often as it stands.⁷⁵

But Downing's claim that Matthew's Markan material is "almost totally rejected" is, as we have seen above, an exaggeration. Luke is not removing all, or even nearly all, of the Markan material from his use of Matthew, and other explanations of why he might alter or omit the Markan material he did are readily available. We have no reason to accept Downing's assertion that if Luke was using Matthew, he must have been purposely "unpicking" Markan material from his use of Matthew. Indeed, with regard both to this assertion and to his assertion that ancient authors followed the "common witness" of their sources, it is Downing who is in the position of offering piece-meal reasons for the many exceptions to what he believes the rules to have been. It seems that the most likely explanation for this is that Downing has proposed the wrong rules.

⁷⁵Downing, "Redaction Criticism," Part 2, 44.

Conflating Mark And Q On The Two-Document Hypothesis

Finally, we have to ask whether Downing's account of how Matthew proceeded on the Two-Document Hypothesis is, in fact, in keeping with the compositional methods used by ancient writers. Downing, following Streeterian orthodoxy, proposes that Matthew conflated Mark and Q in certain passages. As we have seen, however, classical scholars tend to favour the theory that ancient authors usually wrote with only a single source text in front of them at one time and rarely attempted conflation in detail.

Most of the so-called "Mark-Q" overlap passages are not particularly problematic for the Two-Document Hypothesis in this regard. While an ancient author may have written with only one source text open in front of him at any one time, he might also at the same time have been influenced by the memory of other texts he had read. The theory that Matthew had either Mark or Q front of him at any one time, but was influenced by reminiscence of the other can be used to explain most of the cases of Matthew's apparent conflation of Mark and Q.

An exception is the Beelzebul pericope already discussed (Matt 12.22-45; Mark 3.20-29; Luke 11.14-26 with 12.10 and 6.43-45). Here, Downing notes, "(Luke) has no significant independent parallels with Mark."⁷⁶ This is a problem for the Two Document Hypothesis.⁷⁷ Matthew has two sources with considerable verbal overlap between them,

⁷⁶Downing, "Rehabilitation," 277. In point of fact, Luke does have "Minor Agreements" with Mark against Matthew in two places; Luke 11.17/Mark 3.25 have ἐπί + accusative against Matt 12.25's κατά + genitive; and Luke 12.10/Mark 3.29 have εἰς + accusative against Matt 12.32's κατά + genitive.

⁷⁷Derrenbacker ("Ancient Compositional Practices," 303-04) has noted that this

and he has combined them in such a way that they have no significant agreements against him. This cannot readily be explained by appealing to Matthew's good memory.

There are two ways this can occur. The first is for Matthew to lay his two sources side by side, carefully compare them, note the words they have in common, and use these as the basis for his own version. He will include very nearly every word his two sources have in common and some, but not all, of the words that are peculiar to each. This is, apparently, what Downing thinks Matthew did; he based his own version on the "common witness" of his sources.

The problem is that the method Downing proposes is both difficult and unprecedented. While Downing seems to imply that ancient authors tried to follow the "common witness" of their sources, he is not able to produce any examples of an ancient author reproducing the verbatim agreements between his sources in a single passage while at the same time rewriting the material peculiar to each. If Matthew has conflated Mark and Q in the way Downing hypothesizes, he seems to have invented a new method of composition otherwise unattested in classical literature. The objection against Downing here is essentially the same one that has been brought by E. A. Abbott against Mark's conflation of Matthew and Luke on the Griesbach Hypothesis:

In the case of three narratives A, B, and C (e.g., Mark, Matthew, and Luke), if A contains much that is common to A and B alone, and much that is common to A and C alone, and all that is common to B and C, it follows generally that A

pericope is an anomaly for the Two-Document Hypothesis.

contains the whole of some narrative from which B and C have borrowed parts.

The important clause in this proposition is that “A contains all that is common to B and C,” in other words, that Mark contains (as happens in some passages) *all that is common to Matthew and Luke*. For how could this happen (to the extent to which it occasionally happens, not amounting to a word or phrase or two, but to a considerable part of the whole) on the supposition that Mark borrowed from Matthew and Luke? Mark could only have achieved such a result *by carefully underlining all the words common to Matthew’s and Luke’s narratives*, and by then writing a narrative of his own, which should include all these words and yet preserve the natural style of an original composition. “The difficulty of doing this is enormous, and will be patent to any one who will try to perform a similar literary feat himself. To embody the whole of even one document in a narrative of one’s own without copying it verbatim, and to do this in a free and natural manner, requires no little care, but to take two documents, to put them side by side and analyse their common matter, and then to write a narrative, graphic, abrupt, and in all respects the opposite of artificial, which shall contain every word that is common to both--this would be a tour de force even for a skillful literary forger of these days, and may be dismissed as an impossibility for the writer of the Second Gospel.”⁷⁸

While Abbott’s objection was directed against the hypothesis that Mark conflated

⁷⁸E. A. Abbott and Edwin Rushbrooke, *The Common Tradition of the Synoptic Gospels* (London, MacMillan, 1884) vii. Abbott is quoting his own earlier article, “Gospels,” in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica: A Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, and General Literature*, vol. X (9th ed.; Edinburgh, 1879) 789-843, at 791.

Matthew and Luke on the Griesbach Hypothesis, his description of the procedure involved in conflating two sources that diverge from each other is equally applicable to Matthew's alleged conflation of Mark and Q. If Matthew combined Mark and Q without copying either verbatim and in such a manner that they did not agree against him, he seems not to have been following any known method of ancient composition, but to have invented a new and complex procedure.

The second method Matthew could have used is simply to copy out one of his sources verbatim or nearly verbatim. If Matthew took over nearly all the wording from one of his sources, he would necessarily take over nearly all the wording in which that source agrees with his other source. If this is the method Matthew followed, it is clear that Mark is not the source Matthew is copying. Matthew departs considerably from Mark's wording in much of the Beelzebul pericope, but still manages to get very nearly all the words that Mark has in common with Luke. This leaves the possibility that Matthew is copying Q closely.

On the one hand, the theory that Matthew has simply copied Q verbatim solves the problem for the Two-Document Hypothesis. It explains how Matthew can get nearly everything Mark and Luke have in common without hypothesizing that he used the difficult and anachronistic method of laying his two sources alongside each other, carefully taking over nearly all of their verbatim agreements, and using these agreements as the basis for writing his own version. Rather than hypothesizing that Matthew invented such a difficult new procedure, it would be easier to accept that he just copied Q and that the differences between Matthew and Luke here are due to Luke's rewriting of

the original Q/Matthew version.

On the other hand, the theory that Matthew has simply copied Q verbatim creates another problem for the Two-Document Hypothesis. If Matthew has copied Q here, then the Matthew and Q versions of the Beelzebul pericope are the same or at least very similar. This once again raises the question of whether Luke's non-Markan source "Q" can be distinguished from Matthew. At least as far as this particular pericope is concerned, we might well be able to dispense with Q.

Conclusions

Downing's initial insight that we can compare the accepted compositional methods of classical authors to the methods assumed by the various proposed solutions to the synoptic problem is a good one. In theory, we can help to solve the synoptic problem by comparing the methods used by "Streeter's Matthew" or "Farrer's Luke" and weighing their relative merits by comparing them to accepted standards derived from study of their contemporaries. Downing notes that he has attempted to criticize the works of other within their own terms of reference.⁷⁹ In this instance, he has attempted to demonstrate that Farrer's Luke is not a credible first-century author by working through the Farrer theory and showing that it requires us to believe that Luke employed complex methods of "unpicking" and recombining his sources that are unparalleled in other authors of his time. The Two-Document Hypothesis, by contrast, postulates that Matthew and Luke combined Mark and Q using simple methods common to first-century authors and not involving any prior "unpicking."

It seems, however, that something has gone astray between the theory and the application. In his review of known ancient compositional methods, Downing finds that modern classicists generally believe that ancient authors composed with only one written source—at most—in view at any one time. Strangely, Downing appears to have interpreted

⁷⁹ Downing, Concluding Unscientific Postscript to *Doing Things with Words*, 234-35.

this to mean that classical authors searched their written sources looking for “common witness” to reproduce closely. Downing criticizes the Farrer theory on the grounds that Farrer’s Luke ought to have done this but did not. He also believes that the Two-Document Hypothesis’ Matthew did reproduce the “common witness” of Mark and Q. Contra Downing, it would appear that Farrer’s Luke is behaving like an ancient author in choosing only one source as the basis of any episode and Streeter’s Matthew has invented a new and difficult procedure that requires him to have closely conflated two written sources.

It should also be noted that “unpicking” sources is not as uncommon as Downing believes. An author who knows versions of the same episode in two or more sources has the option of retelling all the versions, or attempting to conflate them into a single narrative, or choosing one of them as the basis for his own account. Ancient authors typically chose the last option. If an author has overlapping sources and uses some material from one account and some from another, he has in a sense “unpicked” at least one of his sources. If Josephus chiefly follows the narrative of Kings, but supplements it with the Chronicler’s additional material, has he not “unpicked” Chronicles? And if Streeter’s Luke chooses to follow Q instead of Mark where they overlap, has he not “unpicked” and omitted the Markan version of each overlap?

It would appear that Farrer’s Luke is behaving in a manner not dissimilar to that of Josephus, Livy, and other classical authors. In fact, the method Farrer’s Luke uses when confronted with different versions of the same episode or saying is not greatly dissimilar to that which Streeter proposes for Luke on the Two-Document Hypothesis.

When Luke finds versions of the same episode in both his Markan and his non-Markan source (whether we choose to call that “Q” or “Matthew”), he chooses to follow one and sets aside the other. His knowledge of the source he is not following manifests itself in the form of an occasional word or phrase in which he agrees with the source he is not currently following against the source he is currently following. Thus we have the so-called “Minor Agreements” of Matthew and Luke against Mark in the passages common to all three as well as the so-called “reminiscences of Mark” that show up where Luke is supposed to be following his non-Markan source.

Additionally, Downing’s “Farrer’s Luke” is not Farrer’s Luke, by which I mean that the assumptions Downing makes about how Farrer’s Luke must have behaved are not the assumptions made by advocates of the Farrer theory. Downing argues that Farrer’s Luke must have deliberately “unpicked” the Markan material from the Matthean passages he used. As this is an implausible procedure, this would mean that Farrer’s Luke (i.e., a Luke that used Mark and Matthew as sources) is an implausible concept. It may be that the procedure Downing describes is implausible. The problem is that Downing has not shown that it would be necessary for Farrer’s Luke to have acted in this implausible manner. There are too many exceptions to Downing’s generalization and too many other, more plausible explanations available for why Farrer’s Luke might have rewritten his Matthean material in the way that he did.

I do not by any means claim either to have proved the Farrer theory or to have disproved the Two-Document Hypothesis. I have examined only one very narrow consideration in solving the synoptic problem. What I hope I have shown is that

Downing's conception of how the Farrer theory must work, though widely accepted by advocates of the Two-Document Hypothesis, is based on an unsympathetic, and in fact mistaken, understanding of how that theory works and how it relates to the methods of composition used by other Hellenistic authors. By choosing to make one or the other of his sources the basis of his own account where they contain different versions of the same episode, rather than attempting to conflate his sources in detail either by extracting their common wording or by inserting details found in one source into the version of the other source, Farrer's Luke is following practices we might expect of a Hellenistic author of his day and age.

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