THE PROPER METHODOLOGY FOR ASCERTAINING
A MARKAN REDACTION HISTORY

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During the past two decades two new emphases have dominated the investigation of the gospel materials. One of these is the “new” quest of the historical Jesus. Receiving its initial impetus from the now famous lecture of Käsemann 1), investigators have sought to establish some sort of continuity between the historical Jesus and the Christ of the kerygma. In so doing the “new” quest hopes that it possesses certain bulwarks 2) which will protect it from the errors of the nineteenth century quests. The second new emphasis in gospel studies is the “redaktionsgeschichtlich” 3) investigation of the gospels. Whereas form criticism generally thought of the Evangelists as collectors and scissors and paste men, Bornkamm 4), Conzelmann 5), and Marxsen 6) demonstrated that they were more than this. Each Evangelist was a theologian in his own right and possessed a theological purpose for writing his gospel. As a result there has been much investigation of the particular theologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Although there has been a great deal of “redaktionsgeschichtlich” investigation, the question of methodology has frequently been glossed over. Yet a proper methodology is necessary. This is especially true with regard to “redaktionsgeschichtlich” investigation of Mark. The purpose of this article is to list some of the means by which we can ascertain a Markan redaction history.

It is evident from the start that the investigation of a Markan

2) See Joachim Jeremias, The Problem of the Historical Jesus, pp. 15 f.
3) See the author’s article, “What is Redaktionsgeschichte?”, JBL, 88 (1969), pp. 45-56, for a definition of this term.
4) Bornkamm’s work is contained in Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew which he co-authored with G. Barth and H. J. Held.
6) Mark the Evangelist.
redaction history is much more difficult than the investigation of a Matthean or Lukan one 1). The reason for this is twofold. First of all Mark nowhere expressly states his purpose for writing his gospel 2). Secondly, we do not possess any of the sources which Mark used, whereas for Matthew and Luke we possess Mark, their main source 3), and we can construct, to a certain extent, the "Q" source which they used. In the case of Mark, however, we lack any such source which will serve as a standard for comparison. Yet such a standard is necessary. We must be able to ascertain what the sources of Mark were like or else our ability to ascertain a Markan redaction history will be severely limited, for before we proceed to the latter investigation, we must ascertain the Markan redaction and this can only be done by comparing Mark with the sources he used. How then are we to determine what the sources which were available to Mark were like? If we could go back in time and look over the shoulder of the Evangelist to see what his sources were like (let us assume for the sake of our illustration that the sources of Mark were all written), our task would be considerably easier. Unfortunately no such possibility exists. Nevertheless it is possible, although difficult, by means of form-critical investigation to reconstruct to a certain extent the pre-Markan tradition. Having done this, we then can see how Mark joined, arranged, modified, selected, etc. the traditions available to him. Mark has made our task more complicated, however, because he has "markanized" the traditions, both oral and written, which were available to him. He has done this by retelling the traditions in his own words and in his own style. This is unfortunate because it makes the separation of the Markan redaction from the pre-Markan tradition all the more difficult.

The primary purpose of this article is to list the various ways in which Mark has edited the materials available to him. By the investigation of this editorial redaction we can then ascertain a Markan redaction history. We cannot, of course, describe in detail the various areas of redaction, so that we shall have to content ourselves with simply listing them. Up to the present time this has not been done, and it is a pressing need 4).

1) This was clearly seen and stated already in 1908 by Firmin Nicolardot in his Les procédés de rédaction des trois premiers évangélistes, p. 215.
3) The present writer believes that Matthew and Luke used a copy of Mark very much like the one we possess.
4) Georg Strecker in his article, "The Passion- and Resurrection