# Chapter 2

# The sub-collections

## I. The Gospels

### 1 The Origin

Regarding the origin of the Gospel of Marcion (\*Ev) and the four Gospels known to us, Mk, Mt, Lk and Jn, some considerations were already made in chapter 1 on the basis of the testimonies we have from the 2nd century. According to these, there is much to suggest that during the first 100 years after Jesus's death an oral tradition had developed, namely the "living word" about the events surrounding Jesus, and that a few of his words were also in circulation. Both can already be seen in the letters of Paul, for example, from which it is also recognisable that, even if sparse, information about the person of Jesus and his words also received a written form. However, the existing evidence hardly suggests that a detailed text existed that connected Jesus's words with his deeds, at least we do not have a single testimony for such a text. On the other hand, some witnesses, not least Irenaeus himself, suggest that no gospel existed prior to those he discusses in his Adversus haereses.[[1]](#footnote-1)

It also became clear that Irenaeus, in his argument with the Roman teachers Valentinus and Marcion, made use of information from Papias, from which he then sketched out his constellation according to which Peter and Paul were active in Rome in missionary, church-founding and preaching work, which formed the basis for his contouring and figuration of the evangelists Mark and Luke. It was not a testimony preceding these disciples of the apostles or the apostles and evangelists Matthew and John that provided the prerequisite for the writing of the Gospels, but the living experience that the apostles themselves had had in their dealings with the Lord that constituted the reservoir from which the evangelists drew for their descriptions of Jesus's life.

Even if Irenaeus does not mention it explicitly, the genealogical sequence of apostles (Matthew, John) and disciples of the apostles (Mark, Luke) speaks in favour of his placing the first chronologically ahead of the second. That Irenaeus's position represents a historiographical and above all an apologetically refined construction of the figuration already encountered in Papias, there still somewhat restrained because closer to the events,[[2]](#footnote-2) becomes further clear from Marcion's criticism of the pseudonymy of the names of these four Gospels. Most contemporary scholars also consider these four Gospels to be pseudonymous works.[[3]](#footnote-3)

But how this attribution came about, when these works were brought together, will first be examined here.[[4]](#footnote-4) The conformity of the title of the four later canonical Gospels ("Gospel according to …") speaks for a deliberate editorial decision at the time,[[5]](#footnote-5) or could also derive from a common template on which the four Gospels thus described depended and which they imitated partly in agreement, partly diverging from one another.

Should Origen in the 3rd century have seen correctly,[[6]](#footnote-6) that Marcion follows the terminology of Paul, who says in Rom 2:16: "the gospel according to me" (κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου),[[7]](#footnote-7) then Marcion had not given his gospel a title, but had implicitly understood it as "a gospel according to Paul". The formulation "Gospel according to ..." (Mark, Matthew ...) is of course different from "according to my gospel" as Paul formulated it, and has been described in research as a highly unusual turn of phrase that did not conform to the conventions for authorial attributions of the time.[[8]](#footnote-8) From the odditiy of the expression onw has inferred that the Gospels may have been retitled en bloc as εὐαγγέλιόν κατὰ ("Gospel according to …") Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Marcion himself may have been influenced by the language use of the work associated with the other Sinope scholar, his Jewish contemporary Aquila. For the Greek translation of the Jewish Bible by Aquila is more often referred to by the Greek Fathers as the Bible "according to Aquila", whereby in this prepositional phrase Aquila is named precisely as the person responsible for his literary product of the Bible translation.[[10]](#footnote-10) The choice of this phrase for the designation of the Gospels that later became canonical would consequently be less unusual if it was chosen either by editorial decision or in adaptation of Marcion's description of the Gospel as the titulature en bloc of the four Gospels gathered together. Papias, at any rate, was unaware of the expression - which rather suggests that it goes back to the description and editing of Irenaeus, especially since it is used by him for all four Gospels, and precisely in the context of Marcion's refutation of heretics:

"For the Ebionites, who use the *Gospel according to Matthew* only, are confuted out of this very same, making false suppositions with regard to the Lord. But Marcion, mutilating the *Gospel according to Luke*, is proved to be a blasphemer of the only existing God, from those [passages] which he still retains. Those, again, who separate Jesus from Christ, alleging that Christ remained impassible, but that it was Jesus who suffered, preferring the *Gospel according to Mark*, if they read it with a love of truth, may have their errors rectified. Those, moreover, who follow Valentinus, make copious use of *that according to John*, to illustrate their conjunctions."[[11]](#footnote-11)

The fourfold formulation is also found shortly afterwards in the description of the fourfold Gospel, whereby Irenaeus interprets this "according to" (*secundum*, κατά) specifically as a description of the essence of effectiveness and purpose.[[12]](#footnote-12) The Gospel headings were thus not used without editorial reflection. However, even if they are first attested here by Irenaeus, Marcion's critique of the Gospels as those of two apostles and two disciples of the apostles shows that these attributions, together with the Gospel headings, cannot be traced back to Irenaeus first, but rather to Marcion and his preface to his New Testament and his critique of these made-up works, which he regarded as plagiarisms of his own Gospel.[[13]](#footnote-13) That the usage is indeed still related to the reference back to Marcion is shown by the further passage where Irenaeus uses this phrase "Gospel according to ...", reporting about Marcion accusing the apostles that they

"preached the Gospel still somewhat under the influence of Jewish opinions, but that Marcion thought of himself being purer [in doctrine], and more intelligent, than the apostles. Wherefore also Marcion and his followers have betaken themselves to mutilating the Scriptures, not acknowledging some books at all; and, curtailing the *Gospel according to Luke* and the Epistles of Paul, they assert that these are alone authentic, which they have themselves thus shortened. In another work, however, I shall, God granting [me strength], refute them out of these which they still retain."[[14]](#footnote-14)

If one reads Irenaeus's polemical attack against him, one first recognises that he is aware of Marcion's criticism of the pseudonymous products, whose editors he accuses of a lack of transparency or seriousness as well as a lack of prudence, but above all that Marcion saw them caught up in their Jewish view. Against this background, the plagiarists and editors had expanded Marcion's Gospel that they used as their own template. The same was done with those letters of Paul that Marcion had gathered in his New Testament. On the basis of Marcion’s template redactors in the environment of Irenaeus had created a counterportfolio of writings that Marcion had rejected and to which they added texts which apparently were still unknown to Marcion. The Gospel closest to Marcion's Gospel text was called "the Gospel according to Luke".

Unfortunately, the book announced here by Irenaeus, in which he wanted to refute Marcion from his own writings, has not come down to us, as has already been said above. Perhaps Irenaeus did not even get around to writing it.

The use of the formula "Gospel according to ..." by Irenaeus, which only occurs in the context of the collection of four Gospels, and always in connection with Marcion - in his catechetical work, the *Demonstratio*, for example, it is completely absent, and also in his other books of *Adversus haereses* one looks for it in vain - speaks for the fact that Irenaeus took over this phrase from Marcion and transferred it to the four Gospels in the sub-collection of his counterportfolio. That this was done consciously in editorial interest is supported by his argumentation on the interpretation of this formula.

Let us take a look at the title "Gospel" itself. According to Irenaeus

"The Gospel according to Mark, on the other hand, commences with [a reference to] the prophetical spirit coming down from on high to men, saying, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ”, as it is written in Esaias the prophet, - pointing to the winged aspect of the Gospel; and on this account he made a compendious and cursory narrative, for such is the prophetical character.”[[15]](#footnote-15)

Irenaeus combines three things here:[[16]](#footnote-16)

First, he takes up his previous argumentation according to which David had already prayed for the arrival of the four Gospels when he called on him who “sittest between the cherubim", "for the cherubim, too, were four-faced, and their faces were images of the dispensation of the Son of God". The four Gospels are therefore already foreshadowed by the Jewish scriptures, especially by the prophetic voice of David.

Secondly, due to the four-foldness of the Cherubim, it becomes clear that the Gospels, too, in the majority, represent only four economic transfigurations of a single, four-fold Gospel.

Thirdly, the Gospels, especially Mk, resemble a "flying eagle".[[17]](#footnote-17) This equation is not plucked out of thin air, but is derived from the semantics of the word "Gospel". The adoption of the Greek foreign word into English makes the etymological meaning of the word fade. For in the Greek prefix "eu" is the meaning "good, well", in "angelium" is the designation "angel" or "angelic". When Mk - by the way, the only one of the four Gospels - calls his text a "Gospel", the idea that this is the good news of an angel still resonates in Irenaeus and others. This can be seen in his further elaboration and interpretation when he then speaks of the "wings and feathers" and the "short and hasty" proclamation of Mark’s Gospel. Tertullian, too, knows of this etymological reading of the term, as will be shown in short.

Yet another nuance of meaning of "gospel" is usually not conscious in modern reading, for the title also has a reference to various prophetic passages. In antiquity and also for Jews, "gospel" as a message of joy, often delivered by messengers of triumph, were, among other things, the glad tidings following a warlike conflict. Especially after the "catastrophic destruction" of Jerusalem by the Neo-Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, the people were encouraged by the glad tidings (בְּשֹׂרָה bəśorāh; בשׂר bśr = εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, to proclaim glad tidings) especially of Isaiah (cf. Isa 41:27; 44:26, 28; 51:17; 52:1f.9 ; 62:7; 65:18f; 66:10-13).[[18]](#footnote-18) A not insignificant exemplary passage is presented by Isa 52:7-10:

"How beautiful on the mountains

are the feet of those who bring good news,

who proclaim peace,

who bring good tidings,

who proclaim salvation,

who say to Zion,

“Your God reigns!”

8 Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices;

together they shout for joy.

When the Lord returns to Zion,

they will see it with their own eyes.

9 Burst into songs of joy together,

you ruins of Jerusalem,

for the Lord has comforted his people,

he has redeemed Jerusalem.

10 The Lord will lay bare his holy arm

in the sight of all the nations,

and all the ends of the earth will see

the salvation of our God."

Closer in time to early Christianity, this passage was read to refer to Melchisedec, as we learn in a scripture found at Qumran that has abundant echoes of the Book of Daniel (11QMelch). In this scripture, Melchisedec is explicitly drawn as a special heavenly figure, specifically the one who "will execute God's vengeance of divine judgement" and deliver the people. The deliverance occurs after 490 years or ten Jubilees through this Messiah, indeed Melchisedec even occupies the place in the quoted Isaiah verse that the Lord possesses there.[[19]](#footnote-19) Whereas Jerusalem is portrayed earlier (Isa 52:1-2) as a woman who had fallen into captivity, her deliverance seems imminent. "Your God reigns", "that all the ends of the earth may see salvation through our God", is the final goal in the Hebrew Masoretic text of Isa 52:7. The messenger of peace here is the Messiah, whereas in the Greek version of the Septuagint (LXX) the message is delivered by the prophet Isaiah.

Strikingly, in the 4th century both the Syriac Ephrem and the 5th century Armenian Eznik of Kolb report that Marcion used the Jewish Scriptures according to the Hebrew version,[[20]](#footnote-20) so he understood "Gospel" also as the message of a bringer of joy at the end of the 10th Jubilee. But he did so in stark contrast to the Qumran text. While the latter identified the mountains with the prophets, the messenger with the one anointed by the Spirit, Zion as the assembly of the sons of righteousness, and "your God" with Melchisedec (translated: the righteous king),[[21]](#footnote-21) for Marcion the Gospel forms the exact contrast: no prophet knew this message except the Messiah of the completely transcendent God. The angelic, heavenly figure of the Messiah himself delivers the good news, and God gathers through him not sons of righteousness but those who are full of goodness. Therefore, God is not a righteous or avenging king, but the hitherto unknown benevolent Father alone.[[22]](#footnote-22)

These considerations are confirmed by Tertullian at the beginning of the 3rd century.[[23]](#footnote-23) He reports that Marcion understood the title "Gospel" very literally. Indeed, through this title he wanted to emphasise the contrast between the "best God" and the "God of judgement".[[24]](#footnote-24) By his Gospel he meant "the good news of an angel", because in Christ he did not only mean the "Holy One of God" (\*Ev 3:24), the "Prophet" (\*Ev 4:24), the "Son of God" (\*Ev 4:41; 8:28), the "Lord", "Jesus" (\*Ev 5:12), the "Son of Man" (\*Ev 5:24) and "Physician" (\*Ev 5:31), but also presented him as an angelic appearance (\*Ev 24:36-53).

When the author of Mk takes up this title “Gospel” as the only evangelist for his narrative, links it to the prophetic tradition of Isaiah (and Malachi) and introduces John as a forerunner, he picks up Marcion's designation, but at the same time counteracts Marcion’s intention associated with it to read the verse as a demarcation of the Gospel from Jewish tradition and especially Jewish prophecy.

Irenaeus is obviously still aware of this context of controversy when he takes up the name "Gospel" and relates it to the literary composition of Mk. From this title, Irenaeus reads the self-understanding of Mark, whose anti-Marcion orientation is immediately clarified and supported by the fact that Irenaeus tries to distance Mark's "Gospel" from Marcion's interpretation of “Gospel” by referring to God's covenant of salvation, instead. The good news of which Mark writes is that of a Messiah who stands in continuity, not in break with Jewish tradition.

However, Mk not only shares the name "Gospel" but also literary characteristics with \*Ev, since like the latter Mark does not tell the story of Jesus's childhood. Yet, Mk also distances itself from \*Ev not only right at the beginning offering quotations from Jewish prophets, Malachi and Isaiah, but also introducing John the Baptist, who speaks prophetically (Mk 1:1-11). With this opening of Mk, which makes John the bridge between the prophet Isaiah announcing him and Jesus,[[25]](#footnote-25) there is a further correction not only to Marcion's interpretation of the title "Gospel", which is already understood prophetically in Mk, but also to his critical attitude towards Jewish prophecy and John the Baptist. For \*Ev, John was not the bridge but, on the contrary, formed the border between the Jewish and Christian worlds: "The law and the prophets were prophesied until John. Since then the kingdom of God is being proclaimed" (\*Ev 16:16). According to \*Ev, John stands for the demarcation between Judaism and Christianity, between on the one hand the Old Testament law and the prophets, to which John is still counted, and on the other hand the rejected prophet Jesus (\*Ev 4:24 -30). The Baptist indicates the break between law and gospel, between justice and goodness.[[26]](#footnote-26)

Irenaeus, who has already noticed the reaction to Marcion and the changes made to his Gospel opening by the very openings of the four Gospels,[[27]](#footnote-27) again provides the substantive justification for such a revision vis-à-vis \*Ev and the position represented by that revision:

"The Word of God Himself used to converse with the ante-Mosaic patriarchs, in accordance with His divinity and glory; but for those under the law he instituted a sacerdotal and liturgical service. Afterwards, being made man for us, He sent the gift of the celestial Spirit over all the earth, protecting us with His wings. Such, then, as was the course followed by the Son of God, so was also the form of the living creatures; and such as was the form of the living creatures, so was also the character of the Gospel. For the living creatures are quadriform, and the Gospel is quadriform, as is also the course followed by the Lord. For this reason were four principal covenants given to the human race: one, prior to the deluge, under Adam; the second, that after the deluge, under Noah; the third, the giving of the law, under Moses; the fourth, that which renovates man, and sums up all things in itself by means of the Gospel, raising and bearing men upon heavenly kingdom, is the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."[[28]](#footnote-28)

Irenaeus thus deduces from the prophetic-angelic character of Mk that the Word of God[[29]](#footnote-29) already had divine dealings with the patriarchs before Moses, priestly dealings with those under the Law - there was no mention of Moses and the Law before, but the fact that Irenaeus takes up both here is explained by his anti-Marcionite stance - and that there were four covenants, beginning with Noah, continuing with Abraham with "the sign of circumcision", "the lawgiving through Moses" and the renewal of men through the Gospel. This last covenant, for which "the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" stands, is finally what "sums up all things in itself".

The editor of the larger collection that later became the canonical New Testament could not have described his work better, because this collection of Christian writings was put together with the Jewish writings dealing with the patriarchs and the law of Moses, that is, with the books of the Torah and with the prophetic books as their culminating summary.

### 2. The four Gospels as a sub-collection

I have already dealt with the compilation and arrangement of the sub-collection of the Gospels according to Irenaeus in a previous study, but without having read the testimonies of Irenaeus at that time as information from the actual editor of this and in general of the larger collection later known as the New Testament.[[30]](#footnote-30)

As made clear in the previous section, Irenaeus places the four Gospels in the following order in the passage quoted here: Jn, Lk, Mt and Mk. In this he follows his stated salvation-economic view of the fourfold covenant that God has made with mankind. But for Irenaeus this is not the only sequence of the Gospels that he knows. At the beginning of Book III, and only at this point,[[31]](#footnote-31) he begins with Mt, which he follows with Mk as the publication of Peter's preaching, then comes Lk, which he follows with Paul's preaching. In last place is Jn, which contains the message of the one familiar with the Lord.[[32]](#footnote-32) In this order, Irenaeus is recognisably concerned with the origin of the contents and thus with the authority of the four Gospels. In doing so, Irenaeus obviously follows his model Papias, whereby, as shown above, Irenaeus reverses the order of the two Gospel writers mentioned by Papias because of their different weighting of authority (at least compared to the order in which Eusebius offers us the Papian fragments). Lk follows afterwards because of the connection to the previously mentioned Paul, John is at the end, even though he is attested the immediate closeness to the Lord.

The variant of the order, however, which is found in books III 9-IV, is more important to Irenaeus. Here the Gospels are found in the following order: Mt, Lk, Mk and Jn. I have already referred to the researchers Hoh and Zahn,[[33]](#footnote-33) who could not make sense of this order:

"This series is very noticeable; first, because it recurs in exactly the same way in three places [in Irenaeus], next, because it cannot be proved through these that he was dependent on some external motives (as in the case of the animals of Rev 4:7, o in the historical order of the Irenaean dating of the Gospels) … Rather, *Adversus haereses* III 9:1ff offers detailed scriptural evidence that he starts with Mt, in III 10.1-5, continues with Lk, in III 10.6, follows with Mk, in III 11.1-6, and ends with John … (see also *Adversus haereses* III 11.7 and IV 6,6) again when looking over the Gospel texts while discussing a certain passage, Irenaeus mentions all four Gospels, as the names of the evangelists apparently go through his head in the sequence Mt, Lk, Mk, Jn."[[34]](#footnote-34)

As shown in the previous chapter, this series Mt, Lk, Mk, Joh represents the sequence of the Gospels as Irenaeus probably had it in mind in the collection he conceptualised.

With it, however, the editor also shifted the weight of the Marcionite original, to which Lk is closest. This Gospel was indeed traced back to Paul, but as Tertullian had already pointed out in his anti-Marcionite polemic, this Gospel was regarded as the one with the least apostolic authority. For it came neither from an apostle nor from a disciple of one of the twelve apostles - Paul, after all, did not appear in any of the lists of apostles chosen by the Lord - but was the one based on the last-called apostle.[[35]](#footnote-35) Precisely because this criticism by Tertullian can only be understood against the background of Irenaeus's cliché, it nevertheless shows that Lk had suffered within the early reception because of its great closeness to its model \*Ev. We will be able to see more details of this below on Lk.

But Mk also had a suspicious closeness to \*Ev not only because of Mark's apostleship alone - he was not an apostle himself - but also textually because of the absence of the childhood story[[36]](#footnote-36) and the abbreviated ending with the appearance reports and narration of the ascension missing.[[37]](#footnote-37) All of these certainly hindered the wider early reception of Mk. We will also give further details on this Gospel below.

In any case, Irenaeus places one of the two Gospels of the Apostles at the beginning and at the end of the collection in this sequence Mt, Lk, Mk, Jn, followed by Lk and Mk. Furthermore, Mt (similar to the subsequent Lk) leans with its childhood story of Jesus on the historicising tendency of the opening of \*Ev, but takes this historical narrative back to the birth of Jesus, whose arrival did not represent a revelation of the adult Jesus "from above" as in \*Ev[[38]](#footnote-38) but, as manifested by the first two Gospels, his physical origin from Mary. This, however, underlined both the connection to the Davidic lineage and to the priestly tradition, which Irenaeus himself pointed out with Matthew's identification with "man" and Luke's with "priest", as read above. Moreover, with Mark the prophetic element and with John that of the patriarchs and the lawgiver Moses was preserved.

So while scholarship could hardly explain this order of Irenaeus, it becomes immediately understandable as an anti-Marcion response. Von Campenhausen had already correctly recognised this historical situation: "It was necessary to take account of Marcion's more rigorous requirements of authenticity and originality … it was in this situation, and against this enemy, that the set of four Church gospels must have been consolidated."[[39]](#footnote-39) Von Campenhausen also correctly saw - as we have already taken from Irenaeus - that \*Ev did not offer the only opposing profile, but that one wanted to distance oneself from this and also from other Gospels, when he adds that the fourfold Gospel, which was produced as “a defence against the Marcionite” gospel, also turned against “othe heretical gospels”.[[40]](#footnote-40)

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1. See already H.v. Lips, Der neutestamentliche Kanon seine Geschichte und Bedeutung (2004), 37; S. Petersen, Die Evangelienüberschriften und die Entstehung des neutestamentlichen Kanons (2006), 261. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. "Figures can be conceived neither as mere textual references nor as direct representations of real persons, but quite obviously they have something of both", so on the concept and notion of figuration F. Jannidis, Figur und Person. Beitrag zu einer historischen Narratologie (2004), 172. See the development of these ideas in M. Gerstenbräun, *a fiction is a fiction is fiction?* Metafiktionalität im Werk von Daniel Kehlmann (2012), 70-72. For the term „Figuration“ with its plasticity and elasticity that mediates between reality and fiction, see E. Auerbach, Mimesis. Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur (1988); E. Auerbach, Figura (1967); F. Balke, Mimesis und Figura. Erich Auerbachs Niederer Materialismus (2016); G. Boehm, Die ikonische Figuration (2007), 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. M. Hengel, Studies in the Gospel of Mark (1985), 64-84; S. Petersen, Die Evangelienüberschriften und die Entstehung des neutestamentlichen Kanons (2006); B.D. Ehrman, Forgery and counterforgery. The use of literary deceit in early Christian polemics (2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See D. Trobisch, The First Edition of the New Testament (2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. So already A.v. Harnack, Geschichte der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius 2. Theil Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius 1. Band Die Chronologie der Litteratur bis Irenäus: nebst einleitenden Untersuchungen (1897), 681-682. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See Orig., In Ioh. V 7,1. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. This description is being repeated in the later redactionally added chapter 16 of Rom (Rom 16:25). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. S.J. Gathercole, The Titles of the Gospels in the Earliest New Testament Manuscripts (2013), 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. See ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. So M. Hengel, Studies in the Gospel of Mark (1985), 64-84. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Iren., Adv. haer. III 11,7. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Iren., Adv. haer. III 11,8. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Already Petersen has seen that „the superscriptions of the Gospels might be older than the collection of the four Gospels or even its canonisation“, and that „the phenomenon of the consistency of title“ highlights „the proximity between the different Gospels without limiting the title to a certain number of Gospels nor does it imply a higher ranking of individual texts compared with others“, so S. Petersen, Die Evangelienüberschriften und die Entstehung des neutestamentlichen Kanons (2006), 267. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Iren., Adv. haer. III 12,12. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Iren., Adv. haer. III 11,8. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. See on this passage and Irenaeus’s use of “Gospel” and “Canon” with older lit. A.Y. Reed, ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ: Orality, Textuality, and the Christian Truth in Irenaeus’ Adversus haereses (2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. C. Abart, Freudenbote / Freudenbotschaft (2017). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. See M.W. Bates, Beyond "Stichwort": A narrative approach to Isa 52,7 in Romans 10,15 and 11Q Melchizedek (11Q13) (2009), 397. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. This possibility of interpreting the term „gospel“ was thankfully intimated to me by Stephan Huller ([http://markusvinzent.blogspot.com/2011/05/why-does-marks-gospel-begin-with-john.html](about:blank)) and in an email-exchange in the year 2021. On Ephrem see his Refutatio adversus Marcionem I, C.W. Mitchell, S. Ephraim's prose refutations of Mani, Marcion, and Bardaisan of which the greater part has been transcribed from the palimpsest B.M. add. 14623 (1912), 2.53 (Syriac), 52.xxiv-xxv (English). On Eznik see his work De Deo: M.J. Blanchard and R.D. Young, Eds., Eznik. A treatise on God (1998), 191-192. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. M.W. Bates, Beyond "Stichwort": A narrative approach to Isa 52,7 in Romans 10,15 and 11Q Melchizedek (11Q13) (2009), 400. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. It should only be noted here that the passage missing from Marcion's Apostolos, Rom 10:14 -15, which also cites Isa 52:7, most likely represents a later anti-Marcionite redaction that occurred in the course of the inclusion of Paul's Epistle collection in the collection of Irenaeus (plural of heralds, etc.). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Tert., Adv. Marc. IV 2,3: „Marcion evangelio, scilicet suo, nullum adscribit auctorem, quasi non licuerit illi titulum quoque affingere, cui nefas non fuit ipsum corpus evertere.“ [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. So Tert., Adv. Marc. II 29,2: „Aufer titulum Marcionis et intentionem atque propositum operis ipsius, et nihil aliud praestaret quam demonstrationem eiusdem dei optimi et iudicis, quia haec duo in solum deum competunt.“ [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. The similar view is held by Tertullian. To him „John is the forerunner who has to prepare the paths of the Lord who is going to bring the Gospel (*evangelium superducturi*) and proclaim the kingdom of God“, hence, John the Baptist is the bridge between old and new in Tertullian: Tert., Adv. Marc. IV 33,8. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Tert., Adv. Marc. IV 6,1.3: „Certe enim totum quod elaboravit etiam Antitheses praestruendo in hoc cogit, ut veteris et novi testamenti diversitatem constituat, proinde Christum suum a creatore separatum, ut dei alterius, ut alienum legis et prophetarum … Constituit Marcion alium esse Christum qui Tiberianis temporibus a deo quondam ignoto revelatus sit in salutem omnium gentium, alium qui a deo creatore in restitutionem Iudaici status sit destinatus quandoque venturus. Inter hos magnam et omnemdifferentiam scindit, quantam inter iustum et bonum, quantam inter legem et evangelium, quantam inter Iudaismum et Christianismum.“ [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. See the note by G.N. Stanton, The Fourfold Gospel (1997), 319-320. The *Canon Muratori*, too, points out the different beginnings of the openings of the various Gospels. Stanton, however, concludes ibid. 322, that the fourfold Gospel was already an established fact which Irenaeus only had to defend, not as an innovation, he makes use of the *Canon Muratori*, even though the latter just like Irenaeus had to fight for the fourfold Gospel. Stanton’s additional reference to the presence of a fourfold Gospel in papyri depends on the Man bemerke den Unterschied zwischen „Wort Gottes“ und den zuvor genannten Schriften, die von Menschen, wenn auch Aposteln, verfasst wurden, vgl. zu dieser Differenz: M. Vinzent, Offener Anfang. Die Entstehung des Christentums im 2. Jahrhundert (2019), 154.dating of these papyri (P45, P75, P64, P67, P4). Only the most evangelical scholars date those prior to Marcion, whereas critical scholarship has become highly sceptical of their early dating, see on this question M. Vinzent, Marcion and the Dating of the Synoptic Gospels (2014), 215-227. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Iren., Adv. haer. III 11,8. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Note the difference that is made between the „Word of God“ and the aforementioned writings that were written by men, though apostles, see on this difference M. Vinzent, Resetting the Origins of Christianity. A New Theory of Sources and Beginnings (2023), 168; M. Vinzent, Offener Anfang. Die Entstehung des Christentums im 2. Jahrhundert (2019), 154. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. M. Vinzent, Resetting the Origins of Christianity. A New Theory of Sources and Beginnings (2023), 167-176; M. Vinzent, Offener Anfang. Die Entstehung des Christentums im 2. Jahrhundert (2019), 154-161. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. See J. Hoh, Die Lehre des hl. Irenäus über das Neue Testament (gekrönte Preisschrift) (1919), 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Iren., Adv. haer. III 1,1. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. M. Vinzent, Resetting the Origins of Christianity. A New Theory of Sources and Beginnings (2023), 171; M. Vinzent, Offener Anfang. Die Entstehung des Christentums im 2. Jahrhundert (2019), 156-157. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. J. Hoh, Die Lehre des hl. Irenäus über das Neue Testament (gekrönte Preisschrift) (1919), 16-17. See M. Vinzent, Resetting the Origins of Christianity. A New Theory of Sources and Beginnings (2023), 170-171; M. Vinzent, Offener Anfang. Die Entstehung des Christentums im 2. Jahrhundert (2019), 156. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Vgl. Tert., De praescr. 23,1-5; see on this M. Vinzent, Tertullian's Preface to Marcion's Gospel (2016), 116-125. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. How important the childhood story of Jesus became and how varied it could have been unfolded, not just in the canonical Gospels, but in the later Christian tradition, can be seen from the Austrian Bible translator, see G. Dicke, Jesu erstes Wunder? (2021-2022). [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. See for a survey of the witnesses to the short and the long ending of Mk with a commentary D.A. Black, Ed. Perspectives on the Ending of Mark. 4 Views (2008); P.L. Danove, The end of Mark's story. A Methodological Study (1993). [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. See Tert., Adv. Marc. I 19,2: „Anno xv Tiberii Christus Iesus de caelo manare dignatus est, spiritus salutaris“; Hippol., Ref. VII 31,5. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. H.f.v. Campenhausen, The Formation of the Christian Bible (1972), 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Ibid. 174. He agrees in principle with older scholarship that the fourfold gospel is an answer to Marcion, so K.L. Carroll, The Creation of the Fourfold Gospel (1954-1955); J. Knox, Marcion and the New Testament. An Essay in the Early History of the Canon (1942), 152. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)