

Arguments Against Form Criticism

Remarkable agreement in the narratives of Jesus

No divisions in doctrine or theology

The early church did not change the message

Subjective nature of their criticism – the critics do not agree

It is based on the assumption that the accounts are not true

The Jesus Seminar

The Jesus Seminar was a group of about 150 critical scholars and laymen founded in 1985 by Robert Funk under the auspices of the Westar Institute.[1][2] The seminar was active in the 1980s and 1990s. It preceded the short-lived Jesus Project, which was active 2008 to 2009.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_Seminar

The Jesus Seminar

Assumptions

Jesus was not the Son of God

Only a historical figure

Gospels were written “late”

Q, Gospel of Thomas, Gospel of the Hebrews are just as reliable as the canonical gospels

Oral tradition prior to the written accounts

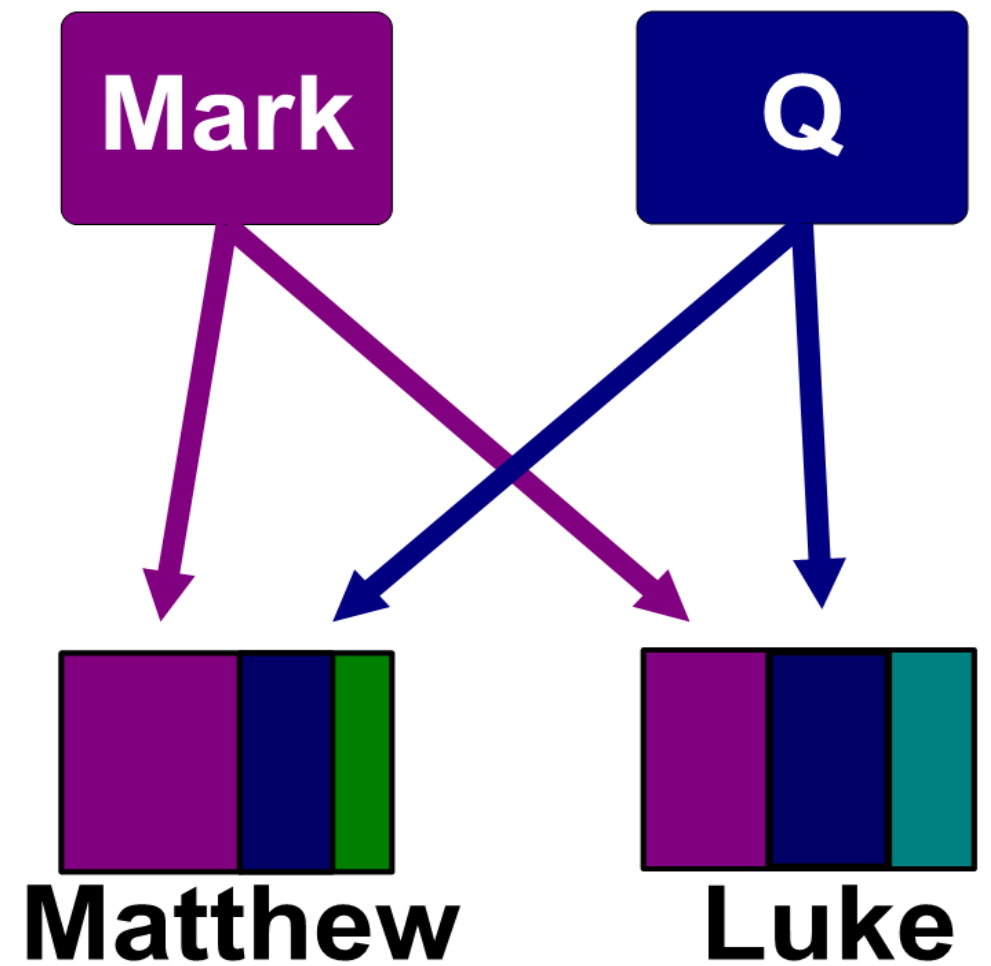
By combining the canonical gospels and other gospels we can get a better idea of what Jesus actually said.

Lets take a vote

The “Lost Gospels”

The Q document – from German “Quelle” or source

Two-source Hypothesis



Q

While the two-source hypothesis remains the most popular explanation for the synoptic gospels' origins, the existence of the "minor agreements" has raised serious concerns. These minor agreements are those points where Matthew and Luke agree against or beyond Mark precisely within their Markan verses. The "minor agreements" call into question the proposition that Matthew and Luke knew Mark but not each other, e.g. Luke might have indeed been following Matthew, or at least a Matthew-like source. Peabody and McNicol argue that until a reasonable explanation is found the two-source hypothesis is not viable.

Secondly, how could a major and respected source, used in two canonical gospels, disappear? If Q did exist, it would have been highly treasured in the early Church. It remains a mystery how such an important document, which was the foundation for two canonical Gospels, could be lost. An even greater mystery is why the extensive Church catalogs compiled by Eusebius and Nicephorus would omit such an important work yet include such non-canonical accounts as the Gospel of Peter and the Gospel of Thomas. The existence of a treasured sayings document in circulation going unmentioned by early Church Fathers remains one of the great conundrums of modern Biblical scholarship. Pier Franco Beatrice argues that until these issues are resolved, Q will remain in doubt.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Q_source

The Synoptic Problem

The "synoptic problem" is the question of the specific literary relationship among the three synoptic gospels—that is, the question as to the source upon which gospel depended when it was written.

The texts of the three synoptic gospels often agree very closely in wording and order, both in quotations and in narration. Most scholars ascribe this to documentary dependence, direct or indirect, meaning the close agreements among synoptic gospels are due to one gospel's drawing from the text of another, or from some written source that gospel also drew from.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Synoptic_Gospels#The_synoptic_problem

The Gospel of Thomas

The Gospel According to Thomas is an early Christian non-canonical sayings-gospel that many scholars believe provides insight into the oral gospel traditions. It was discovered near Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in December 1945 among a group of books known as the Nag Hammadi library. Scholars speculate that the works were buried in response to a letter from Bishop Athanasius declaring a strict canon of Christian scripture

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gospel_of_Thomas

The Gospel of Thomas

(114)

- (1) Simon Peter said to them: “Let Mary go away from us, for women are not worthy of life.”
- (2) Jesus said: “Look, I will draw her in so as to make her male, so that she too may become a living male spirit, similar to you.”
- (3) (But I say to you): “Every woman who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Criticisms

- 1) We do not have the right books - Canonicity
- 2) The canonical books are not reliable – Form Criticism
- 3) The canonical gospels were not written by their named authors
- 4) The Gnostic gospels are just as legitimate as the canonical ones

Who wrote the Gospels?

Arguments for the traditional authors:

Tertullian of Carthage(~207)

Clement of Alexandria(~180)

Irenaeus of Lyons(~180)

Muratorian Fragment(~170)

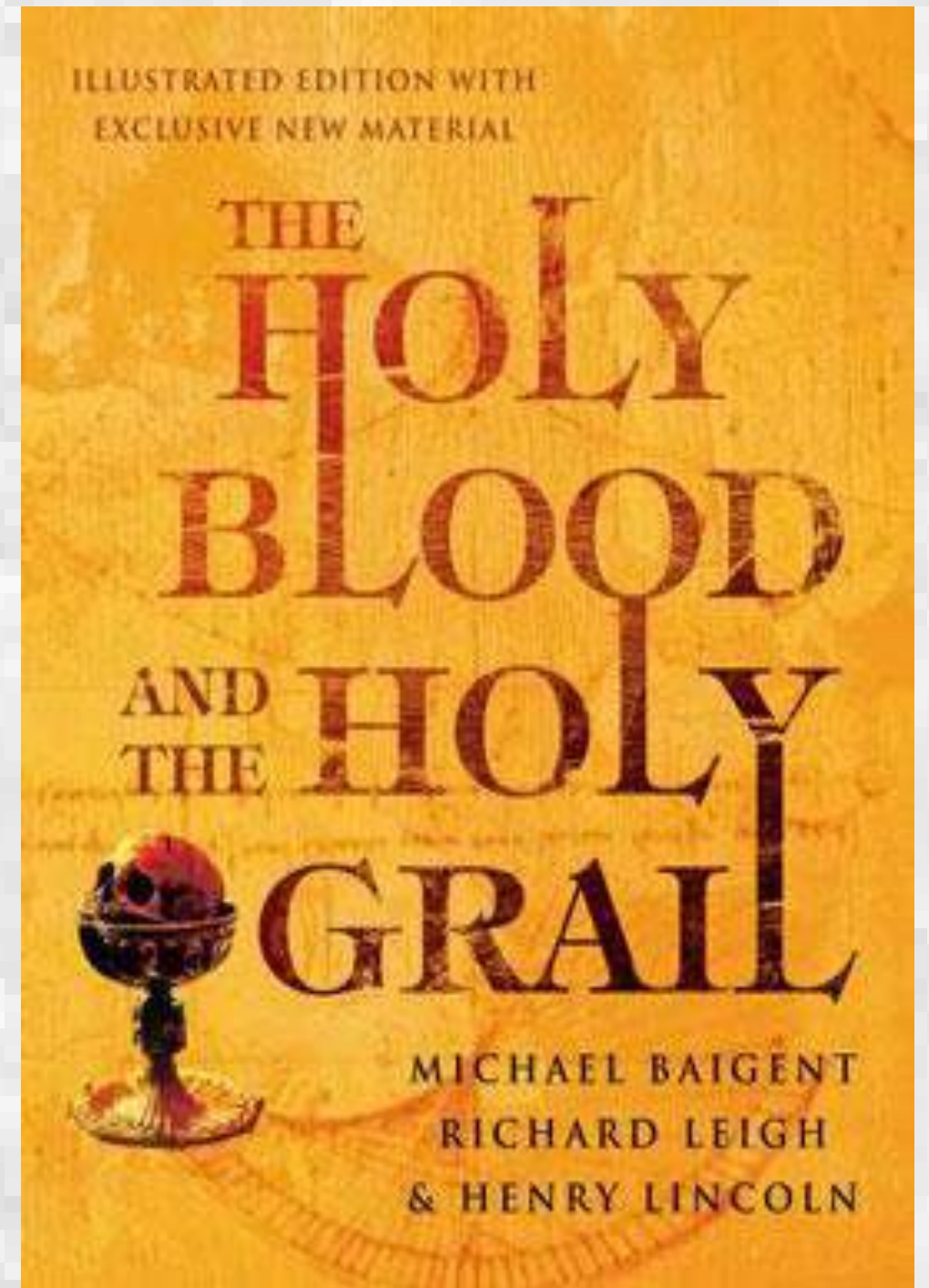
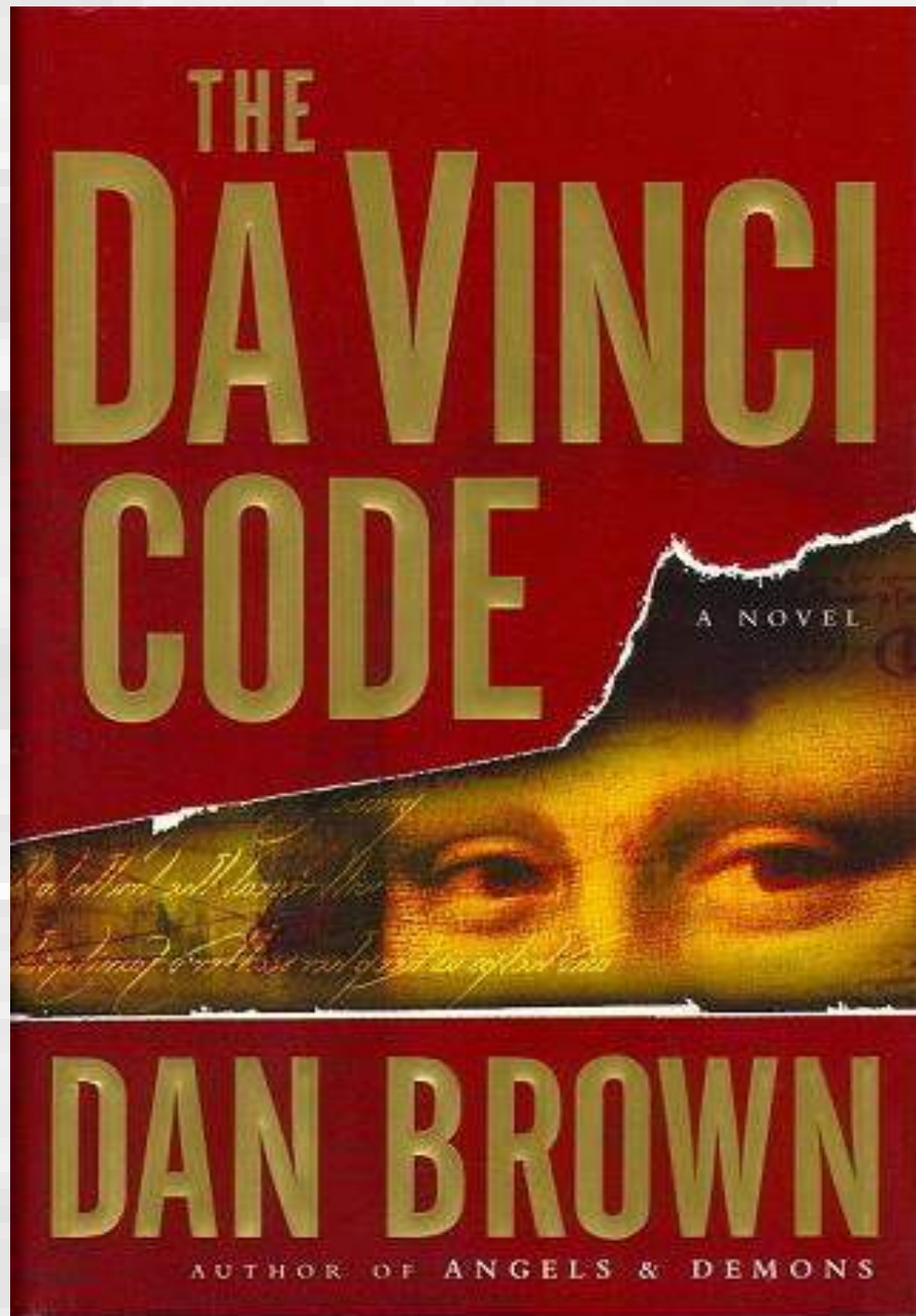
Justin Martyr(~150)

Papias of Hierapolis(~125)

Early use of the Gospels and Acts

	<u>Ig</u>	<u>Po</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Va</u>	<u>JM</u>	<u>Ir</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>MC</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>CS</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>V</u>
<u>Matthew</u>	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<u>Mark</u>	·	✓	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<u>Luke</u>	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<u>John</u>	✓	·	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<u>Acts</u>	✓	✓	✗	·	·	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<u>Gospel of Thomas</u>	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	✗	✗	·	·	·	·	·
<u>Gospel of Truth</u>	·	·	·	✓	·	✗	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·
<u>Gospel of the Twelve</u>	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	✗	·	·	·	·	·	·
<u>Gospel of Peter</u>	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	?	✗	·	·	·	·	·
<u>Gospel of Basilides</u>	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	✗	✗	·	·	·	·	·	·
<u>Gospel of the Egyptians</u>	·	·	·	·	·	·	✓	·	·	✗	·	·	·	·	·	·
<u>Gospel of the Hebrews</u>	·	·	·	·	·	·	✓	·	·	?	✗	·	·	·	·	·
<u>Gospel of Matthias</u>	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	·	✗	✗	·	·	·	·	·
	<u>Ig</u>	<u>Po</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>Va</u>	<u>JM</u>	<u>Ir</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>MC</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>CS</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>V</u>

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"Because Constantine upgraded Jesus' status almost four centuries after Jesus' death, thousands of documents already existed chronicling His life as a mortal man. To rewrite the history books, Constantine knew he would need a bold stroke...Constantine commissioned and financed a new Bible, which omitted those gospels that spoke of Christ's human traits and embellished those gospels that made Him godlike. The earlier gospels were outlawed, gathered up, and burned."

- Leigh Teabing - The Davinci Code

In Summary

Natural Theology – Establishing our world view

Science and the Bible

Biblical evidences