

## INTRODUCTION

RESEARCH into the earliest use of Christological titles of majesty goes back to work that was done preparatory to a presentation of the theology of the Gospel of Mark. Since in Mark—the situation is different in Matthew and Luke—there is no fixed starting-point, and a basis of comparison needed for a critical examination of this redactional work must first be determined, two tasks in particular present themselves: on the one hand, if the determination of the redactional elements is not to remain more or less arbitrary, clear principles which hold good in all parts of the Second Gospel have to be obtained, according to which the redactional framework may be detached; on the other hand, to grasp the evangelist's thought we have to enter the field of Christology<sup>1</sup> and, in doing so, to inquire what were the Christological traditions that have been worked up.

We have here taken in hand the last-named task. It was obvious that in attempting it we would have to get acquainted with the Christological titles which occur in the Gospel of Mark.<sup>2</sup> Assuredly it ought not to be overlooked that other material of tradition which is not connected with a designation of majesty can be Christologically significant; but the Christological ideas of the earliest church have nevertheless obtained far-reaching expression in the strata of tradition which are stamped with a definite title of majesty. Since a tradition-historical classification of the material that lay before the evangelist can be arrived at only if we do not confine ourselves to the Gospel of Mark—the pieces of evidence for the early period are as it is scanty enough—the constructive method of proceeding has led to the problem of the beginnings of the formation of Christological tradition in general.<sup>3</sup>

The titles of majesty have been dealt with independently of one another so far as overlappings and contacts have not emerged in the history of the tradition itself. A convergence of results has been asked for only in conclusion. It has seemed advisable to distinguish as carefully as possible from one another the different Christological conceptions, as also the stages of

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tradition within the several views, in order that peculiarities may not be overlooked. In the treatment of the five titles of majesty much could only be sketched, and all the problems could not be taken into account in an equally detailed way. Where a question arises that is essential for a judgment of the whole, an attempt has been made to give a closer argument.

Some definitions are necessary. In the New Testament research of recent decades it has been customary to use the designation "late Judaism" for the Judaism of the period from the Maccabean struggles to the composition of the Mishna. This assumes that the post-exilic period of the Old Testament is characterized as "Judaism", a thing that was generally spread abroad half a century ago in Old Testament research, but today obtains more rarely.<sup>4</sup> Instead of this, in view of the more Talmudic and post-Talmudic stamp of the Judaism of the period from c. 200 B.C. to A.D. 200, the designation "early Judaism" has occasionally been chosen in recent times.<sup>5</sup> It is not to be disputed that this name has various excellent points, nevertheless we have kept to the current term.

For the New Testament age, in place of the old distinction between the Palestinian primitive church and Pauline Christianity, the distinction between the Palestinian primitive church, pre-Pauline Hellenistic Christianity and the Pauline tradition proper has already prevailed for long.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless the question has to be asked whether this differentiation suffices. Consideration has already been rightly given to the question whether or not a Hellenistic Christianity of a specifically Jewish stamp must be separated from Gentile Christianity.<sup>7</sup> In what follows "Hellenistic Jewish Christianity" is spoken about where the Hellenistic derivation is certainly clearly in evidence, but so firm an adhesion to early Jewish conceptions is still recognizable that this cannot simply be co-ordinated to "Hellenistic Christianity", by which is understood as a rule the early Christianity that was largely severed from Judaism and determined by a Gentile provenance.<sup>8</sup> In more recent times a Christianity in the Palestinian-Syrian outskirts has also been spoken of occasionally.<sup>9</sup> But such localizations of traditions, which are necessary and possible for the student of patristics, prove almost altogether unworkable in the New Testament and rest for the most part on vague conjectures. Consequently it is sounder to do without local

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fixations, to inquire into the portion of Jewish inheritance and according to that to determine whether the tradition of the Hellenistic church has a Jewish Christian or a Gentile Christian stamp.<sup>10</sup> Hellenistic Jewish Christianity merits careful consideration as an essential link especially in Christology and on some occasions can be dealt with as a quite independent stratum of tradition.<sup>11</sup>

## NOTES

1. William Wrede, *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien. Zugleich ein Beitrag zum Verständnis des Markusevangeliums*, 1901, has clearly recognized this. In more recent works it has strange to say not been sufficiently observed; that holds good, in spite of many valuable single findings, of James M. Robinson, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Markusevangeliums* (AThANT 30), 1956, and above all of Willi Marxsen, *Der Evangelist Markus, Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Evangeliums* (FRLANT NF 49), 1959<sup>2</sup>, cf. only p. 66 n. 2: "In our context discussion of the question of Christology can be left out"; in that statement there lies a decisive error.

2. So also Ernst Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Markus* (Krit.-exeg. Komm. üb. d. NT 1/2), 1959,<sup>15</sup> pp. 1ff. A presentation of the earliest Christology which starts from the titles of majesty is given by F. J. Foakes Jackson-Kirsopp Lake, *The Beginnings of Christianity* (Part 1), vol. i, 1920, pp. 345ff.; Henry J. Cadbury, *ibid.* vol. v, 1933, pp. 354ff.; Martin Dibelius, *Christologie des Urchristentums*, RGG<sup>2</sup> i, 1927, cols. 1592-1607; Vincent Taylor, *The Names of Jesus*, 1953; Reginald H. Fuller, *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus* (StudBiblTheol 12), 1954, pp. 79ff.; R. P. Casey, "The Earliest Christologies", *JThSt* NS 9 (1958), pp. 253-277; and above all by Oscar Cullmann, *Die Christologie des Neuen Testaments*, 1957.

3. Cf. now Werner Kramer, *Christos, Kyrios, Gottessohn* (appears in AThANT 44), 1963 and the new edition, of Eduard Schweizer's book, *Erniedrigung und Erhöhung bei Jesus und seinen Nachfolgern* (AThANT 28), 1962<sup>2</sup>.

4. Cf. only *Die Schriften des Alten Testaments in Auswahl neu übersetzt und für die Gegenwart erklärt* II/3: Max Haller, *Das Judentum. Geschichtsschreibung, Prophetie und Gesetzgebung nach dem Exil*, 1925<sup>2</sup>.

5. Cf., e.g., Otto Plöger, *Prophetisches Erbe in den Sekten des frühen Judentums*, *ThLZ* 79 (1954), cols. 291-296; Georg Fohrer, *Messiasfrage und Bibelverständnis* (Samml. gemeinverständl. Vorträge 213/24), 1957, p. 23.

6. Of fundamental importance is Wilhelm Heitmüller, *Zum Problem Paulus und Jesus*, *ZNW* 13 (1912), pp. 320-337; on the carrying out of

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this cf. Wilhelm Bousset, *Kyrios Christos, Geschichte des Christusglaubens von den Anfängen des Christentums bis Irenäus* (FRLANT NF 4), 1921<sup>2</sup>, pp. 1ff. 75ff.; Rudolf Bultmann, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, 1958<sup>3</sup>, pp. 34ff., 66ff.

7. Cf. Rudolf Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (FRLANT NF 12), 1958<sup>4</sup>, pp. 33of.; for a laborious working out of a Hellenistic Jewish Christian tradition see above all Martin Dibelius, *Jungfrauensohn und Krippenkind* (1932), in *Botschaft und Geschichte* (Ges. Aufsätze) i, 1953, pp. 1-78. Rather differently Cullmann, *Christologie*, pp. 332f.

8. Cf. further Chapter 5, p. 299.

9. So, e.g., G. D. Kilpatrick, *The Origins of the Gospel according to St. Matthew*, 1946, pp. 124ff. for the community of Matthew.

10. Naturally the question also arises how far Palestinian Judaism threw itself open to the influence of Hellenism. In this regard notice will doubtless be taken of the large collection of material made by E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* i-viii, 1953-58, above all vols. i and iii; cf. also Jean-Baptiste Frey, *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum* ii, 1952, pp. 113ff., 163ff. Unambiguous literary documents from Palestinian Judaism which reflect syncretism are certainly lacking. Also it may not be overlooked that precisely in New Testament times there were movements which vindicated the exclusiveness of Judaism and very much guarded themselves against all foreign influences. The situation was different in the Judaism of the Diaspora, although there also orthodox circles will not have been lacking; unhappily we cannot make for ourselves any fairly satisfactory picture because only a quite fragmentary tradition remains preserved to us, and this comes largely from the Egyptian-Alexandrian area. For the present nothing more can be secured than a distinction between the Palestinian primitive Christianity, which developed in the area in which Hebrew-Aramaic was spoken, and an early Hellenistic Jewish Christianity to which, with all its adhesion to the tradition it had received, the speech and thought of Hellenism were familiar.

11. The tradition of Hellenistic Jewish Christianity stands out most distinctly in the Kyrios title, in the Son of David tradition and the Son of God conception.