his move to 'canon', in order to set limits to the Christian *instrumentum* and to undo the *concorporatio* of an expanded one that included Jewish scripture, by delimiting and closing the set of accepted charter documents. His opponents, meanwhile, allowed the concept of 'scripture' carried by the Jewish Tanakh to gradually but substantially alter their relationship to text, and their view of gospels and epistles, to the one that is assumed today both in the practice of Christianity and in the modern academic study of the Bible.

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'The name of Marcion therefore signifies, so configured, nothing other than a specific epoch in the history of the canon.'[29] These words of F. C. Baur are a reminder of the long history of this topic as of so many topics that still occupy New Testament study. Here, and for much recent debate, Marcion's Gospel does not signify a specific facet of the enigma of Marcion but a specific facet of the problem of, and also of the solution to the enigma of, the emergence of the fourfold gospel as decisively championed by Irenaeus — an enigma that embraces both the diversity inherent in 'four' and the unity which could be claimed on the basis of the overlaps between them. Within this framework it has been argued that it is not only possible but also proper to examine Marcion's Gospel independently of Marcion himself.[30]

The advantage of so doing is that it avoids drawing conclusions about the contents of Marcion's Gospel based on assumptions about what, according to any specific interpretation of his theological priorities, he was likely to do. (Although, as shall be seen, this should not prevent analysis of how his reading may have intersected with his theological views, in much the same way as is assumed by redactional study of the gospels). The difficulty is that almost all of the supposed primary evidence for Marcion's Gospel comes from early church authors whose only interest was to hold up to ridicule their selective reading of

29 F. C. Baur, *Untersuchungen über die kanonischen Evangelien, ihr Verhältnis zu einander, ihren Charakter und Ursprung* (Tübingen: Fuer, 1847) 425.

30 BeDuhn, *The First New Testament*, 11–23 in a brief account pays little attention to Marcion's views about God and creation; Klinghardt, *Das älteste Evangelium* is similarly only interested in the reports about Marcion's textual activities.

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Marcion's Gospel as demonstrating his theologically or heretically driven perversity, as they represented it.

It is, therefore, misleading to suppose that Marcion's Gospel has survived and is available for comparative analysis, as one might with the canonical gospels. Although attempts to reconstruct Marcion's Gospel multiply, claims to achieve any precision must be treated with considerable scepticism.[31] In dealing with the primary sources for the supposed text of Marcion's scriptural writings, Tertullian and Epiphanius, there are multiple levels to navigate: the textual transmission of their writings – Epiphanius' *Panarion* gives two lists of scholia from Marcion, which differ from each other and within the manuscript transmission; their obvious selectivity – Epiphanius omits from his scholia passages which he elsewhere indicates have been appealed to by Marcion; their questionable accuracy in citing the texts they do like, and even more those they reject – there is a long debate over 'Mattheanisms' in passages claimed for Luke or for Marcion; the origins of Tertullian's own Latin scriptural text and of his Latin text of Marcion's Gospel remain a matter of debate; neither of them describes the origins and provenance of his text as they cite it, and there is no way of determining the degree of variation within the text as used and transmitted by Marcionite communities, if this is what happened.[32] Further, both polemicists are driven by personal rhetorical agenda and techniques – Tertullian on occasion credits Marcion with the flights of his own fancy, while Epiphanius focuses particularly on the question of resurrection and issues provoked by the Origenist controversy. Finally, Tertullian and Epiphanius themselves work with different prior understandings of the status of the scriptural text, and hence the issues they identify are different. In sum, as Dieter Roth has demonstrated, while meticulous analysis can produce an account of the contents and some of the wording of Marcion's Gospel as attested in the sources, this will only be with varying degrees of confidence and with numerous lacunae.[33]

Matthias Klinghardt seeks to address this insofar as he starts from these sources but also critiques them within the framework of his overarching hypothesis; hence, on occasion he supplies the text of 'Mcn' where there is a lacuna or contradictory evidence in our sources. For example, at Luke 11.3 Origen expressly says that the Marcionites read τὸν ἄρτον σου τὸν ἐπιούσιον δίδου ἡμῖν τὸ καθ᾽ ἡμέραν, and Tertullian offers some support.[34] Klinghardt accepts that Mcn read σου (which is not otherwise attested) but concludes that, rather than the present δίδου and τὸ καθ᾽ ἡμέραν reported by Origen, it must have read

31 On what follows see D. T. Roth, *The Text of Marcion's Gospel* (NTTSD 49; Leiden: Brill, 2015) 46–83; Lieu, *Marcion*, 183–96.

32 BeDuhn, *The First New Testament*, recognising these issues, gives only an English translation, allowing for indeterminacy regarding the Greek.

33 Roth, *Text*, 410–36.

34 Origen, *Hom. Luc.*, fr. 75.

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'today' (σήμερον), and probably also the aorist δός, in both cases following the text of Bezae (D). These two are found also in Matthew, which, for Klinghardt, followed Marcion's Gospel, but changed the pronoun to refer to *our* bread, thus shifting the reference from eucharistic to quotidianal. The witness of Origen and of Tertullian for Marcion, he concludes, is secondary and has been cross-contaminated by the form taken by subsequent redaction in canonical Luke, in which the quotidianal meaning had been reinforced.[35]

In this example Klinghardt reflects the long-established consensus that many of what Marcion's opponents identified as his wilful alterations to the text are known textual variants current in the second century, especially in parts of the so-called Western tradition.[36] His conclusion, or consequent methodological principle, is that that tradition may be used to fill lacunae in the sources, or to correct them. An alternative response would be to question whether the increasing awareness of the textual fluidity endemic in the second century, which has persuaded many to reject the notion of a unitary Ur-text, renders no longer viable the conventional literary theories of the inter-relationship between the canonical gospels, and of hypothetical literary texts behind them. Marcion is just one voice within wider evidence of continuing textual instability in Luke in the second century, particularly in the Passion Narrative.[37] Alongside his voice should be considered the harmonising tendencies of Justin Martyr's text, whose relationship with the canonical gospels as subsequently transmitted remains opaque. Connections have been observed also between the text of Marcion's Gospel and the *Gospel of Thomas* or *Diatessaron*, and need to be brought into the picture.[38] It may be happenchance that quotations from Marcion's Gospel were preserved, but far fewer from other contemporary non-canonical gospels.[39]

During the second century gospel traditions moved between oral and written and back to oral, and there are but occasional icebergs to testify to the hidden underlying activity. Here, the scissors-and-paste models conventionally applied to the Synoptic problem and its solution are no longer appropriate. Such models presuppose stable texts and the sort of activities that could only be

35 Klinghardt, *Das älteste Evangelium*, II.725–6, 731–6.

36 The discussion of Marcion's Pauline text by U. Schmid, *Marcion und sein Apostolos* (ANT; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1996) 270–81 demonstrates the complexity of the issue while acknowledging the antiquity of Marcion's text.

37 D. C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 172.

38 See T. Baarda, 'ΔΙΑΦΩΝΙΑ – ΣΥΜΦΩΝΙΑ: Factors in the Harmonization of the Gospels, Especially in the Diatessaron of Tatian', *Gospel Traditions in the Second Century: Origins, Recensions, Text and Transmisson* (ed. W. L. Petersen; Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1989) 133–54.

39 Some non-canonical readings do overlap with key Marcionite passages: Lieu, *Marcion*, 198, 223 (Luke 8.19–21), 207–8 (Luke 18.18–19).

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undertaken in a scriptorium – although this has been advocated by some of the recent reconstructions.[40] New analysis of Marcion's Gospel should however not lead to a new version of an old solution to an old problem, but should rather stimulate a reconsideration of the whole model of comparison, combination and editing of recoverable written texts on which the Synoptic hypothesis is built. The editorial practices conventionally identified through redaction criticism are part of a much wider continuous activity encompassing both Marcion and Luke and different textual trajectories. On this model, the hypothesis that Marcion received, and probably edited, a predecessor of canonical Luke seems most likely.

As polemics against Marcion develop through time, his supposed excisions become ever more extensive, to the supposed removal of Acts, of the Pastorals, of Revelation ... The reverse of that model, popular in recent scholarship, is that Acts and the Pastorals were targeted against Marcion, although in both cases the argument relies on over-simple preconceptions about what were his primary emphases, and even so produces a remarkably opaque polemic against those emphases. To this picture some would add the Catholic Epistles, or the three major ones, supposedly intended to balance Marcion's Paul by the voices of the apostles he allegedly denigrated and set against Paul, i.e. James, Peter and John. This is the classic model for the theme of this debate — Marcion as reacting to the 'canonical process' or as the catalyst for it. A further case for him as catalyst would appeal to his apparent combination of gospel and apostle, as the model for the Christian New Testament: according to some he coined that label in contrast to the 'Old Testament'. Contrary to such views, it is not at all evident that his gospel and 'apostolikon' formed a single corpus any more than they do in Irenaeus; their status in relation to each other remains problematic, as too does the so-called 'Antitheses', a work to which only Tertullian explicitly attests. At the same time the 'Jewish' scriptures continued to be necessary for his system, inasmuch as they demonstrated the multiple deficiencies of the Creator/ Demiurge. It is anachronistic to speak of 'Marcion's Bible' or 'canon'.

This debate similarly highlights the problematic nature of the underlying models. Older studies of the New Testament canon assumed that the language of 'canon' was uncontroversial, whether the preferred model was of a gradually expanding core of 'recognised books', or of the gradual exclusion of writings that had some brief reception – the *Gospel of Peter, Hermas* etc. This is no longer appropriate: on the one hand, 'canons' continued to be fluid, even after Athanasius' 39th Festal Letter, as witnessed by the variation in contemporary lists or the inclusion of *Barnabas* and *Hermas* in Codex Sinaiticus. At the same time, the need to distinguish between concepts such as scripture, sacred writings,

40 So M. Vinzent, *Marcion and the Dating of the Synoptic Gospels* (St.Pat.Supplement 2; Leuven: Peeters, 2014) 281.

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authoritative writings and canon has been more wisely recognised. Neither do any of these various terms reflect a single consensual or conciliar unanimity, but contextualised practices – academic study, doctrinal argument, homiletic appeal, philosophical theology, prayerful application, popular reading – as witnessed by the papyri; such practices operated with different configurations of texts and different understandings of how to read them, among the same or different circles. Each of these contexts demands equal respect without any one being treated as more authoritative, at least from a historical perspective. Marcion's second-century context is increasingly identified as 'the school' with its debates about the form and interpretation of authoritative texts. Yet that does not marginalise his significance, as if only 'ecclesiastical' decisions carried theological freight.

Textual revision may or may not be theologically driven, but textual variation operates in a world where texts are not only being copied but are being used and discussed. It is mistaken to examine texts as if they existed separately from their interpretation. Here the earliest polemicists would agree – Irenaeus and Tertullian are more aware of this than is Epiphanius. Marcion's Gospel, whatever it contained, was only effective among his followers because of how he interpreted it. Unfortunately there is little evidence as to how that interpretation was taught and transmitted; no commentary survives to match Heracleon on John. Some plausible suggestions based on the polemic and on the discomfort of his opponents are possible:[41] Ephraem's express attack and Tertullian's allusions and silences suggest that the transfiguration narrative played a significant role in Marcion's soteriological myth. Undoubtedly his interpretation operated within a particular philosophical framework – as is true of all interpreters. However, one arguably innovative characteristic of his interpretation was the degree to which it was intertextual. Unlike his predecessors who tended to read Paul's letters and perhaps the Jesus tradition primarily as sources for proof-texts, Marcion read them as a corpus, letting different parts cross-reference and cross-illuminate each other. This is evidently true of his reading of Galatians and the Corinthian correspondence; yet if he read Luke 20.35 as assurance that the 'God of that age' thought some 'worthy of inheritance and resurrection from the dead', that is because he also found a reference to 'the God of this age' in 2 Cor. 4.4.

The theme assigned to this discussion might seem dated: the question of catalyst or consequence recalls earlier debates about Marcion's role in supposed major innovations of the second century – the retention of the Old Testament through allegorical interpretation; the formation of a New Testament canon in its various stages; the identification and exclusion of heresy through creeds or the rule of faith; the establishment of institutional structures. That model presupposes a linear development propelled by action and reaction, with conflict serving as the primary agent of change. It is a model that scholarly consensus has come to

41 On what follows see Lieu, *Marcion*, 226–7, 230–1.

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be properly sceptical about; instead, the dominant images are of diversity and chaos, which in turn demand reconsideration of models of the emergence of the third-century patterns.

Finally: the theory of the 'originality' of Marcion's Gospel is not new – it was already explored in detail by F. C. Baur, by his school and by his opponents in the mid-nineteenth century – in exchanges still worthy of study.[42] These exchanges were firmly contextualised in debates about the nature of Paulinism and in theories about the development of the early church mapped onto a binary model into which heresiological accounts of Marcion easily fitted. New Testament scholarship has largely discarded that model, although, for good reason, it continues to cast a shadow. This does not mean that scholars are free of any models of the past, conscious or more often unconscious, models that are deeply imbued with a theological flavour. It should be evident that this paper, like its partners, is built on preconceptions and carries implications not only for our discipline, but also for the hermeneutical and theological framework in which it is undertaken. Thus, recent arguments for the canonical gospels as responses to Marcion's Gospel have been quick to use the language of 'canonical edition', provoking the potential conclusion that only this is the proper goal of text-critical study and theological reflection.[43]

Marcion undoubtedly provides a useful lens through which to consider such questions; elsewhere I have suggested that he was not so much catalyst or consequence as symptom of his age. Yet in the setting of this present set of papers Marcion needs an advocate. In many of the debates to which I have alluded Marcion has become a cypher; he stands for something else – he is not invoked, summoned from the grave for disinterested reasons. Instead, let him be heard for his own sake – Marcion be Marcion!

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42 J. M. Lieu, 'Marcion and the Synoptic Problem', *New Studies in the Synoptic Problem* (ed. P. Foster, A. Gregory, J. S. Kloppenborg and J. Verheyden; BETL 239; Leuven: Peeters, 2011) 731–51, 740–4.

43 Klinghardt, *Das älteste Evangelium*, 346–7; Vinzent, *Marcion*, 281. See above, n. 17.

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