

This introduction to the synoptic Gospels is really “new”. It is not limited, as some authors do, of the general presentations of each of the first three Gospels. It intends to *introduce to the reading* of the Gospels. Like other introductions it provides analysis of some selected texts, but it does it in a new way. Instead of being contented in analysing some isolated individual pericopes, it studies them also in their immediate and remote context. Its presupposition is that the individual pericopes are not unlinked, as it could seem at the first sight; they form integral part of a highly structured whole, of real and proper “discourses”, in which every pericopes receives its real significance.

The first chapter presents the analysis of two pericopes, “The healing of the blind or two blinds of Jericho” and “The call of the rich”. The synoptic confrontation among the three recensions of the same event is profoundly renewed: in fact, it does not intend of listing only the similarities and differences in details, but it compares the specific composition of each recension. This type of analysis represents a decisive leap from the traditional “history of the forms” and “history of redaction”.

In the second chapter, each of the two accounts is situated in its immediate context (“subsequence”) and in the third chapter in its remote context (“sequence”). Forty-three pericopes studied form four long sequences (Mt 19–20; Mk 10; Lk 17:11–18:30; 18:31–19:46). Besides the analysis of each passage, synoptic confrontation consists in comparing the mode with which each evangelist articulated a certain number of pericopes in a whole architecture. The Gospels in fact are not the fruit of popular folklore, but works of highest literary quality, composed by real and proper authors. The interpretation of the texts that springs from this type of study is therefore notably profound.

Three chapters are preceded by a long “Presentation” of the Bible, of the different operations of exegetical work, articulated in three divisions: text, pretext, context and of the role of the reader.

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