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THE STATE OF PLAY

The present state of research into 'Q' varies from the chaotic to the bureaucratic. At the chaotic end of the spectrum, there is no agreement as to whether Q existed, nor as to what it was, if it did. At the bureaucratic end of the spectrum, an amorphous group of scholars have agreed that it was a Greek document. It was produced by a Q community, whose concerns can be worked out from it. Some of these scholars suppose that we can work out what this Q community did *not* believe from what was not in Q, to the point that the Q community did not have an atonement theology because Q has no passion narrative. Most scholars who believe this also believe that Q was the first Gospel, and that its picture of Jesus was that of some kind of Cynic philosopher. As we narrow down the group of scholars to more detailed agreements, so we see an increase in the number of common judgements made in the interests of a consensus of the group, with quite inadequate attention to evidence or argument. We also see the large-scale omission of Aramaic, the language in which Jesus taught.

The purpose of this book is to suggest that the use of Aramaic has something to contribute to the study of Q. In a previous book, I suggested that the Gospel of Mark consists partly of Aramaic sources which have been literally translated into Greek. Consequently, they can be partly reconstructed. In the light of recent research, including that stemming from the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls, I sought to lay down the most fruitful way of doing this, and I exemplified this with reconstructions of Mark 9.11–13, 2.23–3.6, 10.35–45 and 14.12–26.[1] In this book, I propose to see what we can do for Q. After discussing the history of research, I consider again the most appropriate methodology for this kind of work. I then reconstruct and discuss the sources of Matt. 23.23–36//Luke 11.39–51 and Matt. 11.2–19//Luke 7.18–35. I turn finally to one of the 'overlaps' between Mark and Q, and discuss the recoverable Aramaic sources of Mark 3.20–30, Matt. 12.22–32, and Luke 11.14–23; 12.10. Throughout

[1] P. M. Casey, *Aramaic Sources of Mark's Gospel* (SNTS.MS 102. Cambridge, 1998).

these discussions, I continue the work of my previous book in that I seek to contribute not only to our understanding of Q, but also to the recovery of the Jesus of history.

We must begin with a critical history of scholarship. Here I do not seek to catalogue all previous work, but to select from the history of scholarship significant advances and mistakes, so that we can see more clearly how to proceed, and what pitfalls to avoid. One of the pitfalls lies in different definitions of what Q was, or is. For clarity's sake, I therefore anticipate one outcome of this book by giving the definition which I use when I conduct my own discussion of Q: Q is a convenient label for the sources of passages which are found in both the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke, and which have not been taken from Mark's Gospel. It will be clear that this entails some controversial conclusions, and that we must be careful to note that it does not entail others. It implies that Q was not a single document, and that Luke did not take all his Q material from Matthew; I shall argue for both of these hypotheses in detail. It means that we can meaningfully discuss whether a passage such as Matt. 11.28–30 is to be described as part of Q; it is not found in Luke, but we could discuss whether it was in the same documentary source as Matt. 11.25–27//Luke 10.21–2, whether Matthew added it, whether Luke knew it or whether Luke left it out. It also means that our evidence for Q is found in Greek; it does not specify that this is, or is not, how it reached the evangelists. I shall argue that some parts of Q reached both evangelists in the same Greek translation, and that other parts are due to two different translations being made, whether by the evangelists, their assistants or by more distant sources.

From Holtzmann to Tödt

Serious modern research into Q effectively began with Holtzmann, though this is not what he called it. In a book published in 1863, he suggested that there was one source A behind the Triple Tradition of the synoptic Gospels, and a second major source behind the Double Tradition. This source he called Λ, which stood for λόγια.[2] At this stage, however, the priority of Mark had still not been established, nor had anyone shown

[2] H. J. Holtzmann, *Die synoptischen Evangelien: Ihr Ursprung und geschichtlicher Charakter* (Leipzig, 1863). For predecessors, cf. J. G. Eichhorn, 'Über die drey ersten Evangelien. Einige Beyträge zu ihrer künftigen kritischen Behandlung', in *Allgemeine Bibliothek der biblischen Literatur* 5 (Leipzig, 1794), pp. 761–996; F. D. E. Schleiermacher, 'Über die Zeugnisse des Papias von unseren beiden ersten Evangelien', *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 5, 1832, 735–68; C. H. Weiße, *Die evangelische Geschichte kritisch und philosophisch bearbeitet* (2 vols., Leipzig, 1838), vol. I, ch. 1, esp. pp. 83–6.

what could be done with Aramaic. Meyer made the first major advance in our understanding of the Aramaic background to the synoptic Gospels in 1896. For example, he offered this reconstruction of Matt. 12.32:[3]

כל דיימר מלא על ברנש ישתביק לה וכל דיימר על רוחא דקודשא לא ישתביק לה.

It is a great advantage that the complete sentence has been reconstructed, for this ensures that ברנש emerges as a normal term for man. It is also good that, even in an era long before the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls, there are no problems with the late date of the Aramaic used. Moreover, the proposed reconstruction permits the understanding of Luke 12.10 as an alternative version of the same Aramaic. This might have led to important advances in our understanding of Q. Also helpful was Meyer's reference to Mark 3.28. This was, however, as far as Meyer went, even in the best book then written on the Aramaic background of the Gospels, and the best for another fifty years.[4] The important advances which might have flowed from this work were simply not made.

The massive variety of other comments from the same period of scholarship included some brief but useful points. It was at about this time that this source was called Q. This has been noted in the works of Simons in 1880 and Weiß in 1890, and became popular partly because of the work of Wernle in a notable book published in 1899.[5] Thus Wellhausen could describe it simply as a 'zusammenhangenden Quelle, die man mit Q bezeichnet'.[6] Among Wellhausen's own more enduring suggestions was that at Matt. 23.26 καθάρισον correctly represents the Aramaic *dakkau* (reinigt), whereas at Luke 11.41 τὰ ἐνόντα δότε ἐλεημοσύνην represents a misreading of the same word as *zakkau* (gebt Almosen).[7] This is plausible, and a useful contribution to the whole question of the relationship between

[3] A. Meyer, *Jesu Muttersprache. Das galiläische Aramäisch in seiner Bedeutung für die Erklärung der Reden Jesu und der Evangelien überhaupt* (Freiburg i.B. and Leipzig, 1896), p. 94.

[4] For further discussion of Meyer, and a critical *Forschungsberichte* of the whole Aramaic question, see Casey, *Aramaic Sources of Mark's Gospel*, ch. 1.

[5] E. Simons, *Hat der dritte Evangelist den kanonischen Matthäus benuzt?* (Bonn, 1880); J. Weiß, 'Die Verteidigung Jesu gegen den Vorwurf des Bündnisses mit Beelzebul', *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 63, 1890, 555–69; P. Wernle, *Die synoptische Frage* (Freiburg i.B., Leipzig and Tübingen, 1899). Simons uses 'der apostolischen Quelle' in reference to the work of B. Weiss, abbreviates it to 'Q.', defined carefully as 'Die apostolische Quelle nach W.' (p. 22), and proceeds to use 'Q.', almost always with a full stop, as an abbreviation of this. Weiß uses 'Quelle' in its normal sense, meaning 'source', introduces Q in brackets for the Redenquelle (p. 557), and then simply proceeds to use Q as a symbol for the sayings source lying behind Matthew and Luke.

[6] J. Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien* (2nd edn, Berlin, 1911), p. 58.

[7] *Ibid*., p. 27.

the different forms of Q material.[8] At the same time, however, the fact that Wellhausen normally confined himself to single words meant that this was a very conjectural process, which could never lead either to a complete understanding of Gospel sources or to a proper understanding of translators. Wellhausen also commented on the possible language of Q. He noted that verbal agreement is sometimes so high as to require a Greek Q, whereas in other passages there are variants which may be explained as resulting from two translations of an Aramaic source.[9] It is the problems posed by this facet of the evidence that still require resolution.

A comprehensive attempt to reconstruct Q in Greek was made by Harnack.[10] Harnack began with those passages of Matthew and Luke which have the highest level of verbal agreement. This enabled him to argue that Q was a Greek document, and the argument from this first set of passages is very strong indeed. The similar argument for the next set of passages, in which the level of verbal agreement is lower, is more of a *tour de force*. Harnack argues that a single Greek translation was used by both of the evangelists, and that this was translated from Aramaic. He did not, however, supply the detailed argumentation which would be necessary to establish this position; indeed he has no detailed argumentation on the Aramaic question at all. This has been a constant defect of Q research ever since.

A major contribution to the study of Q was made by B. H. Streeter, most notably in *The Four Gospels* (1924).[11] One reason why this became a standard work is that it offered a complete solution to the synoptic problem, including decisive arguments for the priority of Mark. Streeter said very little about Aramaic, however. He treated Q as a document written in Greek, and discussed whether passages where there was considerable variation in wording between the Matthean and Lucan versions belonged to it. A most inadequate treatment of Aramaic is just squeezed into the discussion of the 'minor agreements'.[12] Here the changes which Matthew and Luke made to Mark's excessive use of καί, and to his equally excessive use of the historic present, are correctly seen as the reactions of

[8] See further pp. 23–4, 82 below. [9] Wellhausen, *Einleitung*, pp. 59–60.

[10] A. von Harnack, *Sprüche und Reden Jesu. Die zweite Quelle des Matthäus und Lukas* (Leipzig, 1907); ET *New Testament Studies*, vol. II: *The Sayings of Jesus. The Second Source of St Matthew and St Luke* (London, 1908).

[11] B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels. A Study of Origins* (London, 1924). See earlier B. H. Streeter, 'On the Original Order of Q', in W. Sanday (ed.), *Studies in the Synoptic Problem by Members of the University of Oxford* (Oxford, 1911), pp. 141–64: 'St Mark's Knowledge and Use of Q', in Sanday (ed.), *Studies*, pp. 165–83: 'The Original Extent of Q', in Sanday (ed.), *Studies*, pp. 185–208.

[12] Streeter, *Four Gospels*, pp. 296–8.

two Greek writers to one whose Greek has been influenced by Aramaic. Moreover, this is correctly seen as the reason for those minor agreements which consist of them both doing so in the same passages. Streeter did not, however, offer any reasonable demonstration that Aramaic was really the cause of unusual features in Mark's Greek, still less of his bald assertion that 'Mark's Greek is that of a person who had been brought up to think in Aramaic.'[13] More centrally, he offered no proper discussion of the possibility of Aramaic sources of Q at all. He did not even consider the possibility that some passages might be the result of two translations of Aramaic source material.

Streeter also stored up future trouble by arguing that very little was omitted from Q by Matthew and Luke.[14] His arguments for this position carry no weight at all. His first is that Matthew omitted very little from Mark. This, however, demonstrates nothing, since Matthew might have preferred Mark because it gave a coherent outline for the ministry, but felt that it needed expanding with some more of Jesus' teaching. He could have selected from a massive Q what he needed for this purpose, making a somewhat longer Gospel, and leaving most of Q out. The mere fact that he edits most of Mark does not tell us the size of his Q nor how much of it he used.

Moreover, Luke did leave out a lot of Mark. Streeter's second argument is that Luke used a mutilated copy of Mark.[15] This omitted most of the 'great omission', going straight from Mark 6.47 αὐτὸς μόνος to Mark 8.27 καὶ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ. Streeter's arguments for this view are absolutely arbitrary. For example, he suggests that it would explain Luke's omission of the place-name Caesarea Philippi as the scene of Peter's confession (Luke 9.18). But this is the only mention of Caesarea Philippi in the Gospels, and it is a long way north of Galilee in an area which Jesus is not otherwise known to have visited. Luke may therefore have omitted it because he thought it must be a mistake. In short, Streeter's argument assumes his result: he regards this view as probable only because he thinks sources are more likely causes of changes than editorial alterations. It is, however, most unlikely that a copy of Mark would be mutilated in this way, and that so assiduous a collector of information as Luke would be unable to obtain an unmutilated copy. We would therefore require strong evidence to believe this, and we have none at all. Streeter adds special explanations of Luke's omission of other pieces of Mark, such as that the pith of the long discussion of divorce (Mark 10.1–12) is given in the last two verses,

[13] *Ibid*., p. 297. [14] *Ibid*., pp. 289–91.
[15] *Ibid*., p. 290, picking up on pp. 175–8.

for which Luke has an equivalent in another context (Luke 16.18).[16] This is quite misleading, for it still shows that Luke left out pieces of Mark. He is equally liable to have left out pieces of Q.

Most of Streeter's arguments that very little was omitted from Q by Matthew and Luke are of no weight for reasons of this kind. They also *presuppose*, rather than demonstrate, that Q was a single document. If it were several documents, Matthew and Luke might have included material from some documents and not from others because they either knew only some of them, or knew only Greek and not Aramaic, or because they selected some rather than others until they had sufficient material, or because they found some documents which fitted their purposes and others which did not. It follows that the treatment of Q in this standard and influential work is seriously defective. It omits any serious discussion of possible source material in Aramaic, and puts forward entirely spurious reasons both for considering it one unified document, and for imagining it as source material from which Matthew and Luke did not omit anything very much.

Burney included Q in his attempts to uncover Jesus' poetry.[17] For example, he devoted a whole chapter to 'The Use of Parallelism by Our Lord'.[18] Having first noted this as a formal characteristic of Hebrew poetry,[19] he set out many Gospel sayings in such a way as to draw attention to this feature of them. Burney also offered complete Aramaic reconstructions of several passages, including for example Matt. 8.20//Luke 9.58.[20]

Burney's work was, however, vitiated by errors of method. Even the chapter on parallelism sets out Gospel passages in English, which underlines the fact that Burney never demonstrated the existence of Aramaic sources of Q. He has no detailed discussion of passages where the Matthean and Lucan versions are seriously different, so he never tackles the implications of Aramaic phenomena for our model of Q. For example, he notes that Luke 11.47 is different from Matt. 23.29. Having set out most of the Matthean version in parallel lines in *English*, all he does about the differences is to set out the Lucan version, also in parallelism in English too, and he simply declares that 'the second stichos' summarizes Matt. 23.30–1.[21] This is not sufficient to demonstrate anything. Some of the chapter on rhythm conducts the discussion in English too, which

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 178.
[17] C. F. Burney, *The Poetry of Our Lord* (Oxford, 1925). For a more general assessment of Burney's work on the Aramaic background to the Gospels, see Casey, *Aramaic Sources of Mark's Gospel*, pp. 19–22.
[18] Burney, *Poetry*, ch. II. [19] *Ibid.*, pp. 15–22.
[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 132, 169. [21] *Ibid.*, p. 68, with n. 3.

is methodologically quite inadequate. The brief discussion of rhythm in Aramaic poetry includes for example Dan. 4.24, but apart from the rather arbitrary way in which Burney set it out in lines,[22] there is nothing to suggest that this is really poetry at all.

Burney uses the Matthean version of the Lord's prayer for a reconstruction which is supposed to consist of two four-beat tristichs; the formula may be said to be two (stanzas) × three (stichoi) × four (beats). This is said to have been an aid to memory. Burney then declares the Lucan version mutilated, and suggests that we can hardly hesitate as to which is the more original. Finally, he suggests that it has features of rhyme.[23] This hypothesis, which never receives properly detailed discussion, runs from the improbable to the impossible. It is surely improbable that we have two stanzas, in an orally transmitted poem with no break in the sense, from a culture not known to have had poems in two four-beat tristichs. Luke's opening πάτερ must surely go back to Jesus' rather distinctive אבא, whereas the Matthean version is more conventional. It is surely at least as probable that Luke's version is original, which upsets Burney's formula drastically, and underlines the fact that it is *Burney's* formula, not something which has arisen naturally from the culture under study. Consequently, the arrangement of the supposed reconstruction of the Matthean version is not a satisfactory criterion for determining authenticity.

Burney's discussion of rhyme is entirely spurious. Rhyme should not be regarded as a feature of ancient Semitic verse at all. Burney brought forward no evidence that rhyme was a feature of Aramaic verse. He discussed Hebrew poetry instead, and commented that 'the few occurrences which can be collected seem for the most part to be rather accidental than designed'.[24] His examples are indeed all produced at random by the fact that Hebrew words have a limited number of endings, with the result that similar ones occasionally occur together in groups. Burney produced the same effect with Aramaic versions of selected sayings of Jesus. His first example from the Lord's prayer[25] is supposed to have the ending -ā set in strophe 1a, with *d^{e}bišmayyā́* for ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, rhyming at his strophe 3a with exactly the same form *d^{e}bišmayyā́* for ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ, and rhyming in strophe 3b with *b^{e}ar^{ʿ}ā́*. But the first example of דבשמיא is probably a Matthean addition. Burney does not explain the behaviour of the translator in putting two different Greek expressions for the same Aramaic one, and the whole notion of these words rhyming really only reflects the ending of the Aramaic definite state. Finally, some of the words

[22] *Ibid*., p. 110.
[23] *Ibid*., pp. 112–13, 161–2.
[24] *Ibid*., p. 147.
[25] *Ibid*., pp. 112–13, 161–2.

used by Burney are not correct. So, for example, *dᵉyōmā́* for ἐπιούσιον, supposedly giving the same rhyme with *ā́* in the second stanza, is surely wrong. It is not, however, *randomly* wrong: it is the translation of a late traditional understanding of ἐπιούσιον *into* Aramaic, which illuminates the nature of Burney's supposed reconstructions – they are translations *into* Aramaic, not genuine reconstructions at all.

For these reasons, Burney's work is faulty from beginning to end – he made many mistakes, and demonstrated nothing beyond the already obvious fact that some of Jesus' sayings show signs of parallelism.

The next piece of work on Q to have been considered important was that of Bussmann.[26] Bussmann argued that R, his abbreviation for *Redenquelle*, should be regarded as a composite of two collections. Those passages in which there is close verbal agreement between Matthew and Luke are dependent on a Greek source, which he sometimes labels T for *Täuferquelle*, passages which may have derived from circles close to John the Baptist. Those passages in which there is considerable verbal variation between Matthew and Luke were derived from an Aramaic source, 'nur Reden enthaltende, also wohl das eigentliche R'.[27]

The important point made by Bussmann is his clear recognition of the two different types of source material, and his guess at the cause of this, that Matthew and Luke used one Greek translation for some Q passages, and used or made two Greek translations of Aramaic source material in others. He did not, however, discuss a single Aramaic word. It follows that Bussmann could not possibly *demonstrate* that the variations between Matthew and Luke were due to two translations. While his hypothesis was basically plausible, it could not be defended in this inadequate form against the argument that the variations are due to heavy editing, and that what really happened was that Matthew and/or Luke edited much more vigorously in some passages than in others. Nor did Bussmann offer a sufficient argument for believing that the supposed Aramaic source was a single document.

If Q was a document, it deserves a commentary. The first real attempt to supply one was made by T. W. Manson, who also offered a commentary on the teaching peculiar to each of Matthew and Luke.[28] Manson's Q does not include all the material in which Matthew and Luke overlap. He asserts that translation and even mistranslation account for some variants, but he gives very few examples, at least the majority of which are

[26] W. Bussmann, *Synoptische Studien*, vol. II: *Zur Redenquelle* (Halle, 1929).
[27] *Ibid*., p. 137.
[28] T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus* (1937, as part II of *The Mission and Message of Jesus*, ed. H. D. A. Major et al. Reprinted separately, London, 1949).

taken from earlier scholarship.[29] For example, he repeats from Burney the view that Matt. 6.22–3 is rhythmically superior to the version of Luke, and refers back to Burney for a 'retranslation into Aramaic'.[30] It is not, however, clear that the original saying was verse in any meaningful sense, and Burney's work on rhythm is largely spurious.[31] For reasons of this kind, most of Manson's scattered comments on Aramaic are unhelpful. Manson's Q also includes passages such as Luke 3.7–9, which is almost verbally identical with Matt. 3.7–9 in Greek. This is difficult to reconcile with positing translation variants in other passages. We must conclude that, like Harnack and Streeter, Manson failed to investigate the Aramaic dimension of Q.

A brief article by Barrett is worthy of mention at this point, even though it was too short to deal with Aramaic reconstructions.[32] Barrett pointed out clearly and forcefully that the Q material does *not* have common order in the two Gospels as a whole. The common order at the beginning is partly explained by common use of Mark which has, for example, the temptation of Jesus after his baptism, and this was sufficient to cause Matthew and Luke to put Q material about John the Baptist, and then the temptations of Jesus, in the same order. Barrett also noted that whereas some passages are verbally identical in Greek others were explicable as resulting from two translations of Aramaic source material. The evidence so clearly summarised by Barrett is enough to show that Q was not a single document.

The next noteworthy book was the most important contribution to the study of the Aramaic substratum of the Gospels: M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (1946).[33] In this book, Black gathered together the best of previous work, and added many points of his own. Hence its position as the standard work on its subject. In his review of previous work, Black laid down a number of correct principles. For proposed mistranslations, he laid down that 'the mistranslation must at least be credible; and the conjectured Aramaic must be possible'.[34] This excludes a high proportion of suggestions, and in this matter Black unfailingly observed his own principles. He also followed Driver in calling for

[29] One or two more are given in T. W. Manson, *The Teaching of Jesus* (Cambridge, 1931, 2nd edn, 1935); 'Some Outstanding New Testament Problems. XII. The Problem of Aramaic Sources in the Gospels', *ET* 47, 1935–6, 7–11.
[30] Manson, *Sayings*, p. 93, referring to Burney, *Poetry*, p. 131.
[31] Casey, *Aramaic Sources of Mark's Gospel*, pp. 19–22; pp. 6–7 above.
[32] C. K. Barrett, 'Q: A Re-examination', *ET* 54, 1942–3, 320–3.
[33] M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (Oxford, 1946).
[34] *Ibid*., p. 7.

the presentation of whole sentences.[35] Black also offered a sound overall summary of the range of available Aramaic sources, of Aramaic dialects, and of the languages which Jesus is likely to have known. He concluded that Jesus will have taught almost entirely in Aramaic, and that his task was to determine the extent of Aramaic influence in the Gospels.[36] He discussed whole features of the Aramaic language as well as detailed reconstructions; for example, he has a whole section on asyndeton.[37] This includes discussion of whether the extent of asyndeton in John's Gospel might be due to Jewish or Syrian Greek, rather than actual translation. Black's separation out of these possibilities was much more careful than the work of his predecessors.

It is all the more regrettable that Black was not able to make a significant positive contribution to the study of Q. He did repeat some useful suggestions from earlier work. For example, he repeated Wellhausen's suggestion that at Matt. 23.26 καθάρισον correctly represents the Aramaic *dakkau* (cleanse), whereas at Luke 11.41 τὰ ἐνόντα δότε ἐλεημοσύνην represents a misreading of the same word as *zakkau* (give alms), and he correctly defended this against Dalman's criticism.[38] Such suggestions cannot, however, take us far enough, because they deal only with single words. Black was moreover in no position to produce the much needed revolution in Q studies, not least because scholars who had written extensively on Q had not made significant use of Aramaic. Equally, of those who had written on Aramaic, only Meyer showed first-class ability, and he wrote when the study of Q was still in its infancy.[39] Black's main problem was accordingly that there was no established model of Q, nor any established methodology for studying a possible Aramaic substratum of it. Believing correctly in the historicity of much of the Q material, and knowing that Jesus spoke Aramaic, Black tried to reconstruct as many Aramaic features in the supposed source(s) of Q as he could. Unfortunately, he thereby *produced* Aramaisms rather than reconstructing them, and when they are genuinely to be found in our texts, he moved verses to put them beside each other in a supposedly original source. Too influenced by Burney, he did not always reconstruct the original Aramaic at all.

For example, Black sets out Matt. 3.12//Luke 3.17 in parallel lines in English, without reconstructing the supposed Aramaic.[40] It is, however, simply not obvious that Jesus, Q, Matthew or Luke was aware of this parallelism. Black then suggests that φυγεῖν at Matt. 3.7//Luke 3.7

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 12. [36] *Ibid.*, ch. II. [37] *Ibid.*, pp. 38–43.
[38] *Ibid.*, p. 2, referring to Wellhausen, *Einleitung*, p. 27.
[39] Meyer, *Jesu Muttersprache*: see p. 3 above.
[40] Black, *Aramaic Approach* (1946), p. 106.