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Christoph Heil

Das Spruchevangelium Q und der historische Jesus

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The author is Professor of New Testament in Graz, Austria. Of the thirteen essays in this volume, two are previously unpublished; the rest have been published between 1997 and 2013. One article is in French, the rest in German. The pages of the original publications are clearly marked, and the bibliography has been updated in an appendix after each essay. The title covers the contents of the collection well, although this is less an analysis of Q's relation to the historical Jesus than it is about Q and Jesus as two separate yet connected foci. The collection, dedicated to Heil's teacher Paul Hoffmann, is divided into three parts: "Rekonstruktion und Gattung von Q"; "Transformationen der Jesusüberlieferung in Q,"; and "Historische Rückfragen nach Jesus."

Since 1996 Heil has served as coeditor of the series Documenta Q and been active in SBL's Q Section. It is thus logical that the first article in part 1 is "Die Rekonstruktion des Internationalen Q-Projekts: Einführung in Methodik und Resultate" (*NovT*, 2001). Here and throughout the book, Heil defends firmly the two-source theory, the possibility of reconstructing the original contents and wording of Q, and historical-critical exegesis in general. He also praises the benefits of team work and scholarly networks.

The second article concerns "Antike Textverarbeitung," a huge subject but in the subtitle narrowed down to a discussion of orality and textuality in Homeric poetry and Q. The thesis of Werner Kelber's *The Oral and the Written Gospel* is rejected, while the concept

of secondary orality as introduced by Walter J. Ong is found more useful. Ancient texts, including Q and the Gospel of Thomas, were usually performed orally. Many variants were thus not results of intentional redaction or scribal errors, but oral developments.

Part 1's final essay discusses "Evangelium als Gattung: Erzähl- und Spruchevangelium." This is a useful exposition of different conceptions of the gospel genre. It also discusses arguments against and for regarding Q as a gospel. Heil contends that Q is surely a gospel, more exactly in the subgenre *Spruchevangelium*. At the same time, he notes that the composition of the final Q was on the way of becoming a narrative gospel: "Die biographisch-narrativen Elemente in Q gehören eigentlich nicht zu einem Spruchevangelium, sondern zeigen, dass Q gattungsgeschichtlich auf dem Weg zu einem Erzähl-evangelium war, was u.a. die Rezeption im Matthäus- und Lukasevangelium erklären kann" (61).

The first essay in the central part of the collection asks, "Was ist 'Nachfolge Jesu'?" On the basis of a reconstruction of Q 14:26–27 and 17:33, the idea of following Jesus is studied in Q, Matthew, and Luke. Matthew has preserved better Q's ethos and the setting of wandering preachers. "Nachfolge und Tora in Q 9,57–60" is a thorough discussion of Q and the torah. Originally published in 2013 and presenting a wealth of literature, it provides a useful entry into recent study on the subject. According to Heil, Jesus did not in principle reject the torah but interpreted it freely with a sovereign authority. The late Q redaction has domesticated Jesus's radical stance by inserting a saying that stresses the validity of the law (Q 16:17). There are few historical parallels to Q's and Jesus's attitude to the law, yet a similar outlook is found in the Apocalypse of Weeks in 1 Enoch. In this marginal strand of Judaism, the law belongs to the history of Israel and is still in force, but it does not guarantee salvation, and Israel is not called back to the old Mosaic law. Rather, the elect of Israel will live by God's new end-time revelation. The radical ethos of Q 9:60 would reflect this new revelation.

"Die Missionsinstruktion in Q 10,2–16" reconstructs Q's mission speech and observes new adaptations of the Jesus tradition in Q redaction, Matthew, and Luke. Heil emphasizes the creative pluralism in early Christianity. Modifying Ernst Käsemann's famous dictum, he concludes, "Eine Kontinuität des Evangeliums gibt es nur in der Diskontinuität der Zeiten und in der Variation des Kerygmas" (145).

"Die Rezeption von Micha 7,6 LXX in Q und Lukas" and "Πάντες ἐγράφαι ἀδικίας' Revisited: The Reception of Ps 6,9a LXX in Q and in Luke" are case studies in the Q's scriptural quotations. "Beobachtungen zur theologischen Dimension der Gleichnisrede Jesu in Q" analyzes the seven similitudes (*Gleichnisse*) and two parables (*Parabeln*) recorded in Q. The parabolic material has no central position in Q but functions as part

of its rhetoric as “Illustrationen, Begründungen und Überleitungen” (187). Interestingly, Heil observes that the kingdom of God is an explicit theme only in Q 13:18–21. “La réception de la Source dans L’évangile de Luc” first recapitulates the basic tenets of the International Q Project (e.g., that Matthew and Luke redacted a similar, written text of Q), then analyzes Luke’s redaction of Q’s inaugural sermon in his Sermon on the Plain (Q/Luke 6:20–49). Sociohistorically, Luke has relocated Q’s rural Galilean villages and (in the Q redaction) southern Syrian setting into the urban context of Pauline gentile mission, perhaps in Ephesus (204). Theologically, Heil sees the term “the Most High” (Luke 6:35) for God as an instance of the evangelist’s *interpretatio graeca*. Luke had mainly a historical interest in Q material. The last pages of essay article stress that there were multiple trajectories in nascent Christianity.

Part 3 includes three articles, of which two were previously unpublished. “Dichtung und Wahrheit: Der historische Jesus und die Geschichtstheorie” is Heil’s inaugural lecture at Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz from 2004. Here at last there is a firm touch of continental *Lokalkolorit*. The title borrows from Goethe’s autobiography *Aus meinem Leben: Dichtung und Wahrheit*, where he described his presentation as half-poetic, half-historical. These two aspects are central in the search for the historical Jesus. By citing the old German icon, Heil shows that the ancients were by no means unaware that history is not just bare facts; it was always *interpreted* history. Thus the proponents of (post)modern *Konstruktivismus* are wrong in suggesting that their idea is something new; in reality, it is “ein ‘alter Hut’” (222–24). Several historical examples (Cicero, Droysen, Troeltsch, von Ranke) are marshaled to make the point. At times the critique of constructionism, deconstruction, and postmodernism—all these are under fire!—is more ad hominem (Derrida and de Man, 228) than is necessary. Even canonical criticism and synchronic approaches are targeted (232), which makes Heil’s concept of *Konstruktivismus* rather fluid. In Jesus research, Heil detects an apologetic tendency at work when the only Jesus to be studied is claimed to be the remembered Jesus; this approach leads to a “history of winners” (231). Another apologetic tendency is to harmonize the many forms of early Christianity into a unity. Already in Paul’s Galatia there were other gospels (Gal 1:8–9)! Käsemann saw it right: “Die Pluralität der späteren ‘Christentümer’ wird hier schon im Neuen Testament festgestellt” (231).

The earlier published article, “Jesus aus Nazaret oder Betlehem?” focuses on the Fourth Gospel, as the subtitle informs: “Historische Tradition und ironischer Stil im Johannes-evangelium.” John knew very well, Heil argues, that Jesus was born in Nazareth. The evangelist also knew Mic 5:1 and was aware of the Jewish-Christian Bethlehem tradition. John 7:41–42 includes double irony. John knew that the Bethlehem tradition is historically false and christologically inadequate. Since the Fourth Gospel is well informed

about Jesus's birthplace, Heil suggests that it might after all contain some further useful historical details about Jesus.

Lastly, "Analphabet oder Rabbi? Zum Bildungsniveau Jesu" discusses a much-debated issue from several angles and with full references. Heil concludes that it is unlikely that Jesus could read and write; nevertheless, in his world he could be accepted as a teacher.

This book can be recommended for those interested in Q and the methodology of Jesus research. Scholars who prefer a strictly traditional historical-critical approach might appreciate the book as an antidote to postmodernity.