SECOND EDITION

Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels

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For over a century "Q" has been used to refer to the 230 or so sayings of Jesus that Matthew and Luke share but are not found in Mark (*see* Synoptic Problem). In 1861 H. J. Holtzmann built on earlier discussion of the sources of the Gospels and claimed that Matthew and Luke had drawn on two main sources: Mark's Gospel and a collection of the sayings of Jesus. (Later Holtzmann would modify his position by positing that Luke also knew and used Matthew.) The latter soon came to be referred to by German scholars as *Quelle* ("source"). In 1890 J. Weiss abbreviated *Quelle* to "Q," and this quickly gained wide acceptance.

In the twentieth century the Q hypothesis has been the basis of nearly all study of the origin and development of the Gospel traditions. This article sets out both the strengths and weaknesses of the Q hypothesis. The final section sketches the different ways the theological perspective of Q has been understood.

1. Terminology and Importance of the Q Hypothesis
2. The Case for the Q Hypothesis
3. The Nature and Extent of Q
4. Questioning the Q Hypothesis
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1. Terminology and Importance of the Q Hypothesis.

1.1. *Terminology.* Over the course of the past century the term "Q" has been used in several ways. Although formerly "Q" often served as a shorthand way of referring to non-Markan traditions shared by Matthew and Luke, the more precise term for this is in fact "double tradition." Whereas "double tradition" can technically apply to any analysis of shared material between two Gospels, scholars who use the phrase without explicit definition invariably have Matthew and Luke in view. Today most employ "Q" to refer to a reconstructed text and/or body of oral tradition(s), whether composite or unitary. Whatever its precise character, Q is regarded as largely coterminous with the scope of traditions shared by Matthew and Luke and established in a fairly fixed order. Scholars accept that with few exceptions Luke has preserved the original order of the Q traditions, though not necessarily the original wording. Hence, it has become customary to refer to Q passages with the Lukan chapter and verse numbers. For example, Q 7:22 is a reference to the Q tradition that lies behind Luke 7:22. Such practice has become codified in what is now often considered the definitive reconstruction of the sayings collection, *The Critical Edition of Q* (2000), the culminating results of a years-long project undertaken by over three dozen scholars under the leadership of J. Robinson, P. Hoffmann and J. Kloppenborg.

1.2. *Importance.* The Q hypothesis is important in current study of the Gospels for two reasons.

1.2.1. Q as Authentic Jesus Tradition. Many early supporters of the Q hypothesis believed that Q provided direct access to the authentic teaching of Jesus. Typically, the criterion of "multiple attestation" has attracted wide support in discussions of the authenticity of the Gospel traditions (*see* Criteria of Authenticity). Thus, traditions found in several strands of the Gospel tradition (Mark, Q, traditions found only in Matthew [M] or only in Luke [L], traditions underlying the Fourth Gospel) are more likely to be authentic than traditions less widely attested. Moreover, the apparently primitive cast of Q and its formal similarity to another sayings collection, the *Gospel of Thomas*, have led some scholars (e.g., Crossan; Borg) to ascribe even more weight to Q as a witness to the historical Jesus. However, others (e.g., Schröter; Perrin) have questioned the heuristic value of comparing Q to the *Gospel of Thomas*, just as still others (Kloppenborg Verbin) object that even when the theorized redactional layers are taken into account,

there are inadequate grounds for drawing a straight line from the earliest layer of Q to the historical Jesus.

1.2.2. Q as Representative of Diversity in Early Christianity. Following seminal studies by H. Koester and J. Robinson, some have claimed that the existence of Q underlines the diversity of earliest Christianity. Since Q did not contain *passion or *resurrection traditions (although it presupposes both), the Q "community's" understanding of the Christian faith differed markedly from Paul's or Mark's strong emphasis on the centrality of the cross (*see* Death of Jesus) and resurrection. Q is alleged to represent a very early form of Christianity in which, for example, Jesus was understood to be God's *Wisdom, or Wisdom's representative, or in which expectations of the imminent return of Jesus as an *apocalyptic *"Son of man" figure were dominant. Wisdom and apocalyptic strains concurrent within Q have been separated out and have served as a basis for hypothesizing successive layers of redaction, which in turn have been utilized to reconstruct a socioreligious history of the Q "community."

2. The Case for the Q Hypothesis.

Four main arguments have been advanced in support of the view that both Matthew and Luke used Q as a primary source as well as Mark. Although some are stronger than others, taken cumulatively, these arguments are confirmation for many that there are good grounds for accepting that both Matthew and Luke used Q.

2.1. Verbal Agreement. There is often very close verbal agreement between Matthew and Luke that extends over several verses. As examples, the following four passages should be compared carefully: (1) Matthew 3:7-12 // Luke 3:7-9, 16-17; (2) Matthew 4:1-11 // Luke 4:1-13; (3) Matthew 11:2-11, 16-19 // Luke 7:18-28, 31-35; (4) Matthew 23:37-39 // Luke 13:34-35. In line after line of the Greek text (and even in an English translation) there is such close verbal correspondence that it is quite arguable that Matthew and Luke are drawing on traditions from the same source. If both evangelists drew on independent traditions (i.e., oral traditions that had not been collected into a source), much greater divergence in wording would be expected. This observation is supplemented by an appeal to Markan priority: even though Matthew and Luke are different Gospels, both have used Mark. Thus, it is likely, so the argument runs, that where they agree closely in non-Markan sections, both are using a common source.

Although in many of the non-Markan passages that Matthew and Luke share the verbal agreement is striking, in the following three passages (and in many others) it is not. Both Matthew and Luke include the *parable of the man who built his house on the rock (Mt 7:21, 24-27 // Lk 6:46-49), but the wording differs considerably. In Matthew 23:4, 6-7, 13, 23, 25-27, 29-32, 34-36 // Luke 11:39-52 a large number of similar sayings are found in the same order; in some sayings the wording is very close, but in others there is striking variation. Both Matthew and Luke include what is clearly the same parable of the pounds, but their versions of the lengthy parable differ in numerous details (Mt 25:14-30 // Lk 19:11-27).

Supporters of the Q hypothesis account for the differences in the wording of non-Markan traditions in two main ways. Since both Matthew and Luke often revise the wording of Mark quite extensively, we should not be surprised to find that they have also done so with the second main source that they utilized. This is a plausible argument, and in some passages the evangelists' *redaction of Q can be discerned with little difficulty.

But why have the evangelists revised some Q traditions quite considerably but not others? Some have suggested that the variations in some passages are so great that it is likely that Matthew and Luke drew on two different editions of Q. In other words, Q was revised and even extended (perhaps more than once); it was utilized at different stages in its evolution by Matthew and by Luke. Some writers use the abbreviations Q^{Mt} and Q^{Lk} to refer to the versions of Q used by Matthew and Luke. This has resulted in rather elaborate genealogies to explain the differences between Matthew and Q (see, e.g., Betz, 43-69). Others have explained such differences by ascribing them to the vagaries of the oral traditioning process (Dunn; Baum), a solution that sits well with the last two decades' interest in oral studies within NT research (*see* Orality and Oral Transmission). Such appeals have not gone uncriticized (e.g., Burkett), particularly because they struggle to explain how the oral medium is consistent with the extensive, shared sequence between Matthew and Luke (see 2.2 below), a pillar for the two-source hypothesis. At any rate, some such explanation seems necessary to account for the close verbal similarity in some passages and differences in others.

2.2. The Phenomena of Order. Although Matthew weaves his sources together (especially in the five large discourses) and Luke places them in "strips" or blocks, there are some significant agreements in the order in which the non-Markan traditions are found in Matthew and Luke. These agreements in order cannot be coincidental and strongly

suggest the use of a common source. For example, the following individual sayings or small units appear in Matthew in the same order: Luke 3:7-9, 16-17; 4:1-13; 6:20b-21, 22-23, 29, 30, 32-35, 36, 37-38, 41-42, 43-44, 46, 47-49; 7:1-10, 18-23, 24-26, 27, 28, 31-34, 35. In at least 85 percent of the Q traditions it is possible to ascertain the common order or to determine which evangelist disturbed the common order.

In this connection, another much-discussed line of evidence is doublets. In several passages in Matthew and Luke we find that essentially the same material is repeated; these repetitions are known as doublets. "Source" doublets occur where Matthew and/or Luke use the Markan form of a saying but elsewhere also include a a similar saying that can best be explained as stemming from Q. The following two doublets are particularly striking (though there are many more): (1) "The one who has, to that one will more be given . . ." (Mk 4:25 // Mt 13:12 // Lk 8:18), with a similar saying at Matthew 25:29 // Luke 19:26; (2) "Whoever wants to follow me must deny themselves . . ." (Mk 8:34-35 // Mt 16:24-25 // Lk 9:23-24), with a similar saying at Matthew 10:38-39 // Luke 14:27; 17:33.

Although H. Fledderman urges that no one should underestimate the evidentiary importance of such doublets (Fledderman 2005, 60), this is still a line of evidence with its own attendant consequences and limitations. For example, the phenomena of shared order and doublets may militate against the possibility that both evangelists were drawing on independent oral traditions. Why should so many traditions appear in both Gospels in the same order, especially when there is often no obvious reason for their juxtaposition? At the very least, Matthew and Luke seem to have drawn on a cycle of oral traditions with a fairly fixed order. C. Tuckett considers doublets one of the weakest arguments for the two-source hypothesis because their presence often is explicable on a variety of grounds (Tuckett 1996, 10-11).

2.3. Q as a Coherent Entity. The Q material hangs together as an entity. With several exceptions, the Q traditions may be regarded as sayings of Jesus. Many supporters of the Q hypothesis go further and claim that the non-Markan traditions shared by Matthew and Luke betray a similar theological outlook. There is admittedly a level of circularity in this kind of argument. Since portions of Q are reconstructed on the basis of its perceived coherence with other Q sayings material, both the consistency of Q and the probative value of this value are subject to question. Perhaps more promising are renewed attempts to define Q's genre and literary aims on a macrolevel (Järvinen; Fleddermann 2012).

The cumulative force of the preceding arguments is impressive, but the case for Q falls short of absolute proof. Even the strongest supporters of Q accept that the hypothesis is less securely established than Markan priority. However, for many, Q remains a valid working hypothesis for study of the Gospels.

3. The Nature and Extent of Q.

The evidence is marginally stronger for concluding that Q was a written document rather than a collection of oral traditions transmitted with a fairly fixed order. However, the need for comparative studies of the transmission, revision and expansion of oral and written traditions in antiquity remains. Although most of the early supporters of Q thought that it was a collection of sayings in Aramaic (and therefore earlier and more reliable than traditions that circulated in Greek), this view is no longer widely accepted. It was based partly on one interpretation of the comments of Papias (early second century), quoted by Eusebius (at the beginning of the fourth century): "Matthew collected the sayings [*ta logia*] in the Hebrew language [i.e., perhaps Aramaic] and each one interpreted [or 'translated'] them as he was able." However, since Papias also uses *ta logia* to include Mark's narratives, as well as sayings of Jesus, most scholars now conclude that Papias was referring to canonical Matthew and not Q. If so, Papias's phrase "in the Hebrew language" may either be a reference to the Jewish features of Matthew's Gospel or a mistake.

Several scholars have claimed that some Q traditions that differ considerably in Matthew and in Luke rest on the evangelists' differing, or even in some cases mistaken, translations of underlying Aramaic traditions. However, the linguistic evidence is not clear-cut, and Matthew's and Luke's knowledge of Aramaic is not demonstrable (*see* Languages of Palestine). On the other hand, there is some linguistic evidence supporting the conclusion that Q was composed originally in Greek. Since there is often close verbal correspondence in Matthew's and Luke's Q traditions, it is probable that both were drawing on traditions in the same language, Greek. Q probably was originally a little larger than the 230 or so verses shared by Matthew and Luke. Since both Matthew and Luke omit some Markan material, why should we suppose that both have incorporated Q in full? Hence, some of the traditions found only in Matthew or in Luke (M or L) may have belonged originally to Q, though the precise extent of such additional Q traditions is not clear. Two examples will

show just how difficult it is to be sure. Matthew 11:28-30 follows immediately after a Q block and, according to some, even though these verses are not found in Luke, they may have belonged to Q. However, if they did belong to Q, why did Luke omit traditions that he surely would have included had he known them? Luke 4:16-30 is at least partly independent of Mark. Did Luke include some Q traditions in this important passage, even though there is no trace of non-Markan material in the equivalent passage in Matthew? Since some of the non-Markan traditions in Luke 4:16-30 cohere well with a number of Q traditions, several scholars accept this suggestion.

4. Questioning the Q Hypothesis.

Until about four decades ago the two-document hypothesis (i.e., Markan priority and Q) was accepted widely by scholars from very different backgrounds. Earlier objectors to the Q hypothesis had made little headway. Some claimed that the alleged contents of Q are so heterogeneous that it is unlikely to have existed as a distinct source; this point will be discussed below. Others noted that no other writing quite like Q seems to have existed in the early church, though the discovery of the *Gospel of Thomas* partly undermined this point. Other objectors claimed that the considerable variations in the proposed reconstructions of Q eroded confidence in the hypothesis. More recently, however, reconstructions have shown that there is broad agreement about the contents of Q.

Since 1965, however, several fresh attempts to undermine the Q hypothesis have offered alternative explanations of the evidence. Several rival hypotheses have been vigorously supported and must be considered seriously. On the two-Gospel hypothesis (to be distinguished from the two-document hypothesis), first set out in 1789 by J. J. Griesbach and recently defended vigorously by W. Farmer, A. McNicol and others, Luke has used Matthew, and Mark has used both the earlier Gospels. Other scholars (most notably A. Farrer, M. Goulder and M. Goodacre) retain Markan priority and dispense with Q by claiming that Luke has used Matthew. Both of these alternative solutions to the Synoptic problem eliminate the need for any form of the Q hypothesis by claiming that Luke used Matthew.

If this claim is accepted, major implications follow for our understanding of the origin, transmission and development of the Gospel traditions. On this view, the earliest form of the traditions must always lie behind Matthew's Gospel, not Luke's; hence, Matthew is particularly important in historical reconstruction. If Luke has used Matthew, then he has used this major source freely indeed. He is the first "interpreter" of Matthew, which he has dismantled in order to write his own very different Gospel. For the following reasons, advocates of the Q hypothesis find this most unlikely.

4.1. The Matthean Discourses. If Luke has used Matthew, what has happened to Matthew's five impressive discourses? On this view, a small part of Matthew's *Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5—7 reappears in Luke 6:20-49, but the rest of the material is either scattered (apparently haphazardly) throughout Luke's Gospel and set in different contexts or is omitted completely. Why would Luke want to do this? Matthew's other discourses have been treated similarly. For example, Matthew's second discourse in Matthew 10 reappears in no fewer than seven different chapters in Luke.

Although attempts have been made to account for Luke's rather odd treatment of the Matthean discourses, they have convinced few. M. Goulder recognizes that Matthew's fifth discourse poses particular difficulties for his hypothesis. He has to concede that Luke has carefully separated the Markan and non-Markan parts of Matthew 24—25. The former are included in Luke 21, the latter are isolated (by marking a copy of Matthew with a pen) and included in Luke 12—13; 17; and, we may add, Luke 19. This is a tortuous explanation of Luke's methods.

4.2. The Matthean Expansions of Mark. If Luke has used Matthew, we would expect him to have adopted some of the expansions and modifications that Matthew makes to Mark. But hardly a trace of them can be found in Luke. Where Matthew and Mark have the same tradition, Luke opts for Mark's version and ignores Matthew's; at the same time, he rearranges Matthew considerably. Why did Luke find Matthew so unattractive, when in almost all other parts of early Christianity it became the favorite Gospel?

Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi provides a good example. At Luke 9:18-21 Mark's account (Mk 8:27-30) has been used, but there is no sign in Luke of the major addition Matthew makes to Mark at 16:16-19. Here several sayings of Jesus addressed to Peter, including the words "On this rock I will build my church," have not been used.

Why, then, does Luke omit so many of Matthew's numerous expansions of Markan material? This point has often been pressed by those who deny that Luke has used Matthew. Goulder replies as follows. Luke has a "block policy": "When he [Luke] is treating Markan matter he has Mark in front of him, and he has made it his policy not to keep turning up

Matthew to see what he has added. . . . Luke does not include the additions because he had decided on a policy which involved letting them go" (Goulder, 1:44). This leads Goulder to suggest that once a Markan block has been dealt with, Luke sometimes comes back to Matthew's additions to Mark: some of the additions are transferred to other contexts, some are ignored unintentionally, some are rewritten.

4.3. Agreements of Matthew and Luke Against Mark. According to some scholars, a further phenomenon erodes the plausibility of the view that Luke used Matthew: the minor agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark. A number of scholars have appealed to the minor agreements in order to undermine the Q hypothesis and also to offer clear-cut support for Luke's use of Matthew. The minor agreements, it is countered, can be turned against this alternative hypothesis. For those who entertain Luke's use of Matthew, it is clear that in Markan contexts Luke sometimes prefers Matthean words or phrases. But it must also be acknowledged that in Markan contexts Luke makes it his policy not to keep turning up Matthew to see what he has added. On this evidence, champions of Q will counter that the minor agreements do not undermine the Q hypothesis, for if Luke did use Matthew, he must have redacted the first Gospel quite perversely. Nevertheless, the sheer weight of minor agreements and their quality is fair reason to be cautious; accordingly, E. P. Sanders calls minor agreements "the Achilles' heel" of the two-source hypothesis (Sanders and Davies, 76).

4.4. Variations in Similar Non-Markan Traditions. Where Matthew and Luke contain similar non-Markan traditions, most scholars accept that it is difficult to decide which evangelist has the earlier form of the tradition. But scholars who claim that Luke has used Matthew must accept that it is always Luke who has changed Matthew's earlier form of the tradition. Their attempts to defend this view often look like special pleading.

For example, if Luke has used Matthew, then he has abbreviated Matthew's earlier and fuller version both of the Beatitudes (Mt 5:1 12) and of the Lord's *Prayer (Mt 6:9-13). Why would Luke want to do this? In both cases it is difficult to discover plausible reasons; it is much less difficult to suppose that while Luke has retained Q traditions with few changes, Matthew has expanded them.

4.5. Variations in Placing Q Sayings Relative to Markan Contexts. After the temptations of Jesus (Mt 4:1-11 // Lk 4: 1-13) Luke and Matthew never use the Q sayings that they share in the same Markan context. If Luke has used Matthew, then he has carefully removed every non-Markan (Q) saying from the Markan context that it has in Matthew and placed it in a different context.

4.6. Implied Differences between Luke's Treatment of Mark and Matthew. One final point sums up several of the above observations. If we accept that Luke has used Mark, then with the help of a synopsis we can readily discover the changes of various kinds that he has made to Mark. On the whole, he has retained the order of Mark's traditions and has considerable respect for their content, especially when he is quoting sayings of Jesus. If Luke has also used Matthew, we would expect him to have modified his second source in broadly similar ways. But this is by no means the case.

5. The Theology and Purpose of Q.

Were Q traditions brought together simply as an anthology or summary of the sayings of Jesus? How coherent are they? Do they contain one primary theological perspective? Were Q traditions selected, arranged and modified for particular theological or pastoral reasons? Discussion of these questions has been approached from three quite different angles.

5.1. The Relationship of Q to the Earliest Kerygma. At the turn of the twentieth century several writers on the purpose of Q accepted that it must have contained an account of the death and resurrection of Jesus as well as a collection of his sayings. However, since in their passion and resurrection narratives Luke and Matthew share no more than a few phrases that are not found in Mark, it is impossible to sustain this view.

In his influential study of Q, A. Harnack insisted that Q was a source of unparalleled value. It had been compiled without any discernible bias, "whether apologetic, didactic, ecclesiastical, national or anti-national" (Harnack, 171). Mark had exaggerated apocalypticism and subordinated the "purely religious and moral element" of Jesus' message (Harnack, 250-51). Q, on the other hand, was a relatively complete account of "the message of Jesus" that expressed clearly the very essence of Christianity for twentieth-century people.

Harnack's theological presuppositions were challenged by K. Barth and R. Bultmann, who insisted that proclamation of the cross and the resurrection, not the teaching of the historical Jesus, was at the heart of the earliest Christian preaching. Harnack's confidence in Q as "the message of Jesus" was also challenged by the work of the first form critics (*see* Form Criticism). They insisted that since all the

Gospel traditions have been shaped by the faith and the needs of the post-Easter communities, not even Q provides direct access to the teaching of Jesus.

So what was the relationship of Q to the kerygma or proclamation of the earliest post-Easter communities? M. Dibelius, B. H. Streeter and T. W. Manson all saw Q as a supplement to the early kerygma of the cross and resurrection of Jesus. Q traditions were used as ethical guidance and encouragement for those who had accepted the kerygma.

Although this general view held sway for some time, it was strongly challenged by H. E. Tödt. Tödt noted that many Q traditions are not hortatory and argued that the purpose of Q can be uncovered by elucidating the Q community's use and development of Son of Man sayings. The community did not develop a passion kerygma, but was convinced that Jesus, who had reestablished fellowship with his followers as the risen one, is also the one who, as the coming Son of Man, would be the eschatological guarantor of that fellowship. Tödt's proposals depended heavily on an unlikely view of the Son of Man traditions in Q, but other scholars followed his lead and showed that Q traditions had been arranged and shaped in the light of christological concerns. G. Stanton drew attention to the importance of the accounts of the *baptism and *temptations of Jesus that stood at the beginning of Q; together with Matthew 11:2-6 // Luke 7:18-23 (and related passages), they confirm that for the Q community, the prophetic *eschatological promises were being fulfilled in the actions and words of Jesus. The past of Jesus (including his rejection by those to whom he was sent), as well as his soon-expected parousia, was important to the Q community (*see* Apocalypticism and Apocalyptic Teaching).

5.2. Redaction-Critical Studies. In the 1950s the ways the four evangelists reshaped and arranged the traditions at their disposal were studied intensively (*see* Redaction Criticism). It soon became possible to show that "redaction" of earlier traditions had been carried out in accordance with particular theological emphases. Discussion of Q from this perspective was pioneered by D. Lührmann and has been continued by a number of scholars. Attention is focused on the ways originally separate traditions have been linked together in Q and on sayings that have been "created" by the Q community in order to clarify or interpret earlier traditions. Separation of original tradition and later redaction is obviously much more difficult and hypothetical than it is in the case of Matthew's and Luke's redaction of their sources, but that has not deterred scholars from trying to discern the primary purposes of the compiler(s) of Q. Along these lines, some have argued that several blocks of Q traditions share strikingly similar literary features or theological emphases. For example, R. Piper has shown that Q traditions include a number of collections of proverbs, or aphorisms, which develop an argument in similar ways. This paved the way for work like that of W. Arnal, who attempts to supplement genre analysis with a sociological mirror reading of Q's proposed context.

But it is not easy to discern the overriding concern of the final redactor of Q. Hence, it is no surprise to discover that some have suggested that Q traditions underwent two or more major redactions. Reconstructions of possible stages in the development of Q traditions are likely to be influenced strongly by the investigator's presuppositions concerning the transmission and development of Gospel traditions, and even by views on the development of earliest Christianity.

5.3. The Literary Genre of Q. Since an appreciation of the literary genre of a writing is a crucial first step in interpretation, it is surprising that earlier writers on Q paid so little attention to its literary genre. J. Robinson remedied this in a bold claim that Q was part of a "trajectory" of sayings genres that extended from Proverbs to gnostic writings (especially the *Gospel of Thomas*) and the mishnaic tractate *'Abot*. On this view, the wisdom sayings in Q are dominant, and Jesus is portrayed primarily as the representative of the heavenly Sophia (Wisdom). Robinson's proposals were refined and extended in J. Kloppenborg's major study *The Formation of Q*. Kloppenborg notes that the writings with which Robinson associates the literary genre of Q are much more homogeneous than Q itself. He argues that the formative component of Q consisted of a group of six "wisdom speeches" that were hortatory in nature and in their mode of argumentation, similar to other wisdom writings. This stratum was subsequently expanded by the addition of groups of sayings that adopted a critical and polemical stance with respect to *Israel; the *temptation story (Mt 4:1-11 // Lk 4:1-13), which was the final addition to Q, gave it a more biographical cast. Those who are impressed by the wisdom character of Q will typically identify it as an instruction genre, a Hellenistic gnomologia, or a collection of *chreiai.

M. Sato argues that the literary genre of Q is comparable with OT prophetic writings. In all three of the main stages of Q's composition many individual Q traditions are prophetic in form and in emphasis. Whereas for Kloppenborg prophetic tradi-

tions in Q are subsidiary to wisdom traditions, for Sato precisely the reverse is the case. Debate on the genre of Q is likely to continue for some time.

Many thus surmise that Q existed as a written document; its 230 or so sayings of Jesus were used and partly reinterpreted by both Matthew and Luke. If so, we can be less certain about Q's earlier history, literary genre, overall theological perspective and purpose. Although clusters of traditions with related themes can be identified, Q contained such varied material that it is unwise to claim that it had one primary theological perspective or that it was used in the early church in any one specific way. The Q hypothesis will continue to be prominent in tradition-critical study of the Gospels, but also in discussion of the origin and nature of the earliest expressions of Christian faith.

See also Form Criticism; Orality and Oral Transmission; Redaction Criticism; Synoptic Problem.

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QORBAN. *See* Law.

QUEST OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS

It has become customary to think of the quest of the historical Jesus in three phases: the original quest chronicled by Albert Schweitzer beginning in the eighteenth century and ending with Schweitzer himself in 1906; the post-Bultmannian "New Quest" of the 1950s; and the contemporary "Third Quest." However, this scenario owes as much to the enterprising spirit of British publishers as to anything else. Schweitzer's original German title, *Von Reimarus zu Wrede: Eine Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung* (1906)—"From Reimarus to Wrede: A History of Life-of-Jesus Research"—suggested a sober history of biographical research within a strict timeline. The English version of the title, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, was coined by translator William Montgomery and his publisher, Adam and Charles Black. It heightened the impression that critical research showed that the Jesus of history was different (as Schweitzer himself insisted) from the Christ of the creeds, orthodox theology, liberal scholarship and Christian piety. It also reinforced the misconception that Schweitzer had explored the entire quest of the historical Jesus and his place in history. As it was, Schweitzer began with Hermann Samuel Reimarus in 1778 and ended with himself in 1906 (extended to 1912, but not radically changed in the second edition).

History repeated itself in the case of the New Quest. Its historian and leading advocate, James M. Robinson, recalled that the term had its origin in discussions with the editor of the SCM Press in London regarding a paper that Robinson had presented to the Oxford Congress on the Four Gospels in 1957. Robinson's original title was "The Quest of the Historical Jesus Today." It was intended not to supersede Bultmann but rather to develop his ideas. The eventual title given to Robinson's book, *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1959), was "an afterthought."

Given this history, it was perhaps inevitable that any change of direction should be labeled "The Third Quest." The term gained prominence through N. T. Wright's revision of Stephen Neill's *The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861-1986* (1988). Wright drew attention to renewed interest in Jesus as a figure in Jewish history, linked with the discovery of new materials, including the Dead Sea Scrolls. The fact that the term "Third Quest" appeared in a history of NT interpretation published by a major university press enhanced its status as a defining category.

It is debatable whether the term "Third Quest" should be used to describe all historical Jesus scholarship after the sudden demise of the New Quest, or whether it should be restricted to work that emphasized the Jewishness of Jesus and methodologies associated with it. If the former is the case, then the Third Quest appears to be a continuation, albeit a new phase, of the "Old Quest." If the Third Quest entails new and distinctive methodologies, it implies a new enterprise running alongside surviving remnants of previous quests.

"Third" implies two predecessors, suggesting that Schweitzer was right in insisting that the quest began with Reimarus, and that there were no prior attempts to discover the historical identity of Jesus. It also downplays half a century of scholarship exemplified in Britain by the generation of C. H. Dodd and T. W. Manson, in North America by B. W. Bacon and H. J. Cadbury, and in Europe by Joachim Jeremias and Oscar Cullmann.

It is not surprising that scholars found it necessary to invent the facetious term "The No Quest" to fill gaps in the three-quests scenario. In what follows it may be necessary sometimes to use terminology generated by the three-quests scenario, but the discussion will make clear its inadequacy.

This article focuses on the history of postbiblical developments.

1. The Quest of the Theological Jesus
2. Quests Before the Quest
3. Schweitzer's Quest in Context
4. From Harnack to Grundmann
5. From Bousset to Bultmann and the "New Quest"
6. European Alternatives
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