

'To refer, not to characterise': A synchronic look at the Son-of-Man logia in the Sayings Gospel Q

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The article intends to address the Son-of-Man problem by applying Delbert Burkett's 'question of reference' to those Son-of-Man logia that appear in the Sayings Gospel Q. A position is taken that recent philological approaches to the Son-of-Man problem have not been overly convincing, successful or helpful. Similarly, attempting to determine the authenticity of individual Son-of-Man sayings has not led to any form of scholarly consensus. In place of these approaches, a synchronic approach is defended and applied to the Son-of-Man sayings in Q, with interesting results.

Assessing philological approaches

Despite the massive attention given to philological studies on the Son-of-Man problem, they remain problematic. Recently, the most influential philological proposal of exactly *how* the Aramaic idiom functioned at the time of Jesus is the one made by Maurice Casey (cf. Hurtado 2011:172; Müller 2008:313; Owen 2011b:28). It is therefore worthwhile for our purposes to take a quick look at his philological offering. In 1976, Casey proposed that Vermes's (1967:310–328) idiomatic examples from ancient sources had two levels of meaning (cf. Müller 2008:314). According to Casey (1976:147–154), the term בר (א)נש(א) could be employed to make a general statement (first level of meaning) that was in effect applicable to the speaker herself, albeit indirectly (second level of meaning). By paying particular attention to research done by other scholars on translation theory, Casey was able to argue that the translation of בר (א)נש(א) with ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου was both natural and practically inevitable (see Müller 2008:314–315). The latter term is both an example of what Casey calls 'translationese' and the best option available to the ancient translators.

Casey (1980) took this incentive further in his 1980 monograph on the relation between Daniel 7:13 and the Son-of-Man difficulty, arguing that the Son-of-Man concept was a scholarly construct and not a feature of 1st-century Judaism at all. According to Casey, Daniel 7:13 did play a role in some Son-of-Man texts, but these instances were too few to be authentic or to explain how the term had originated. Casey believed that the early church had invented the small number of Son-of-Man sayings that were influenced by Daniel 7:13. He (Casey 1987) continued his investigation in 1987 by arguing that בר (א)נש(א), when used idiomatically, may occur with or without the prosthetic definite article א, without changing the meaning or reference point of the idiom at all. Another piece of the puzzle was fitted when Casey (1994) surveyed the utilisation of בר (א)נש(א) in both the Peshitta and the Targums. This survey confirmed his 1976 proposal that the Aramaic term בר (א)נש(א), when used idiomatically, was oftentimes used in generic statements with specific reference to the *speaker*. However, he *also* found that בר (א)נש(א) could be utilised in generic statements with particular reference to *someone other than the speaker*. This person could be *any* specific (well-known) individual, like Joseph or Moses. As such, בר (א)נש(א) did not have any 'messianic overtones' in and of itself but could indeed be referring to the Messiah when he is expressly mentioned in the (con)text. Moreover, the Aramaic term could be referencing the speaker *and* one or more other persons.

In 1995, Casey appealed to brand-new evidence from various related fields, including bilingualism, translation studies and recent research on translation techniques in the Septuagint. Casey (1995) maintained, firstly, that many bilingual translators were prone to transference and, secondly, that translators of sacred texts often operated with a hefty degree of literalism. It followed for him that the translators acted within the norm when they translated בר (א)נש(א) with ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (cf. Müller 2008:315). In Casey's opinion, the article before υἱὸς, as well as the use of υἱὸς itself, was understandable within the contexts of transference and literalism. Moreover, by keeping the article and υἱὸς, the translators ensured that the references to Jesus were obvious in the Greek versions of these sayings. Also, Casey opined, translators prone to transference would inadvertently have noticed both the generic and the specific references of these sayings in the *Greek* text. Continuing his interest in translation theory, Casey (1998, 2002a) subsequently paid particular attention to the translation strategies used by ancient authors. This focus allowed Casey to offer an explanation

not only for why the term ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου never occurred in reference to someone other than Jesus but also for why the term almost never occurs in the plural. According to Casey, the strategy of the translators of (א)נש(א) בר was to use the Greek term ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου when it referred to Jesus and not to translate the term otherwise. In the same year that his 2002 monograph on Q appeared, Casey (2002b) also argued that generic nouns may interchangeably appear in either the definite or indefinite states, without affecting their meaning or function.

All of Casey's efforts on the Son-of-Man problem converge in his 2007 monograph (second edition printed in 2009), *The Solution to the 'Son of Man' Problem*. After providing a selectively-focused overview of Son-of-Man scholarship in chapter one, Casey continues in chapter two to explain and justify his methodological approach. He argues four points that underlie, and are fundamental to, his method:

1. The Aramaic language remained surprisingly stable for centuries. This allows one not only to *uncover* the idiomatic usage of the expression 'Son of Man' from a wide chronological range of Aramaic sources but also to *reconstruct* the Aramaic *Vorlage* of certain Greek sayings from just as wide a range of sources. Casey appeals to Aramaic sources as early as 750 BCE and as late as 1200 CE (cf. Lukaszewski 2011:10).
2. When Aramaic nouns function in a generic way, they could occur in either the definite state (also known as the 'emphatic state' or 'determined state') or the indefinite state (also known as the 'absolute state'), without any difference in meaning. Seeing that the term (א)נש(א) בר is a generic term for 'man,' it could appear in either state without causing a change in meaning.
3. The expression (א)נש(א) בר could reference humanity in general or a more restricted grouping of people. When appearing in the singular, it could also imply an individual, 'whether anonymous, generic or specific' (Casey 2009:67).
4. When used idiomatically, the speaker would employ the term (א)נש(א) בר in a general statement only to say something indirectly about either herself, herself and others or someone else indicated by the literary context. Casey concludes that Jesus used the term in this way. Chapter three of Casey's book is entirely devoted to persuasively dispelling the Son-of-Man concept.

These three chapters lay the foundation for the rest of the book, which argues for the authenticity of those logia that can be reconstructed in their original Aramaic forms and the inauthenticity of those logia that 'clearly' did not originate from the *lingua franca* of Jesus. Casey provides cumulative support for his distinction between authentic and inauthentic sayings by appealing to 'historical plausibility,' which is undoubtedly Casey's favourite criterion after the use of Aramaic reconstructions. As such, he argues that the sayings with Aramaic underlay all have plausible *Sitze im Leben* in the life of the historical Jesus whilst the sayings without such underlay all have plausible *Sitze im Leben* in the early church. Casey's 'solution' naturally relegates all the Son-of-Man sayings based on Daniel 7:13 to the early church. According

to Casey (2009:270–272), the following Son-of-Man sayings in Q are authentic: Q 7:31–35; Q 12:8–10; Q 9:57–60. Conversely, Casey regards the following Son-of-Man logia in Q as inauthentic: Q 6:22; Q 11:30; Q 12:40; Q 17:24, 26, 30.

However, there are some difficulties with Casey's methodological approach, which has been criticised by a number of scholars. Here are some of the main objections:

- Contrary to what Casey claims, the Aramaic language did *not* remain stable for such a long period of time (cf. Hurtado 2011:173; Lukaszewski 2011:11, esp. n. 50). In fact, the development of the Aramaic language can be divided into different epochs, each with its own dialect and grammar. The examples Casey provide to demonstrate that the language remained stable are trivial and of no use. Owen (2011b:29) dubbed his appeal to specific examples 'an extended exercise in obfuscation.'
- It follows from the previous objection that the Aramaic construction (א)נש(א) בר is anachronistic and grammatically ambiguous (cf. Shepherd 2011:51; see Owen 2011b:30–31; Lukaszewski 2011:10–12, 20–21). It neither represents the particular dialect (like Middle Aramaic) of a specific people (like the Galileans), nor does it fit into any specific time period (like the 1st-century BCE). Rather, it represents four divergent Aramaic terms – בר אנש, בר אנשא, בר אנשא and בר אנשא – each of which may have had a different meaning. Casey uses this problematic and ambiguous term not only to discover the original idiomatic usage of the term but also to 'reverse-translate' the Aramaic *Vorlage* of Greek sayings.
- The definite singular form 'the son of man' (בר אנשא) – which is necessary to translate the Greek term ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου – appears *only twice* in all of the Aramaic literature from Palestine in Jesus' time (see in particular Owen & Shepherd 2001; cf. Hurtado 2011:172; Owen 2011a:viii; 2011b:29–30; Shepherd 2011; cf. also Müller 2008:2). In neither case does it function to make a generic reference. Moreover, the almost complete absence of this form in Middle Aramaic utterly contradicts the idea that it was a 'familiar idiom' when Jesus lived (cf. Hurtado 2011:173). The indefinite singular form 'a son of man' (בר אנשא) appears more frequently in Middle Aramaic but never in the generic way Casey proposes. Rather, this generic application is always achieved either by the plural form 'the sons of men' (בני אנשא) or plainly by 'man' (אנשא). These observations apply not only to Aramaic but also to Hebrew and Greek, and they are representative of the term's usage in the Old Testament, including both the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint (see Hurtado 2011:160–162, 173).
- The definite and indefinite states of nouns had not yet coalesced in Western Aramaic of the 1st-century CE (cf. Lukaszewski 2011:12; Owen 2011b:29; Shepherd 2011:51–52; see Owen & Shepherd 2001; Williams 2011:72–77). This means that the expression בר אנשא had not yet lost its determinative force at that time and could therefore not have been used in generic expressions by Jesus (cf. Owen 2011b:31–32).

- It is not a given that an Aramaic phrase, whether it be the one proposed by Casey or not, lies behind the Greek expression ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (see Lukaszewski 2011:17–20, 25–27; Williams 2011:68–69). The term might be of Greek origin. It might also have originated from Hebrew, from one of the pre-Arabic dialects or from another Semitic language.
- Casey appeals to studies of translation theory that concentrate on modern languages (cf. Lukaszewski 2011:18). The few times that he does appeal to ancient translation techniques, particularly as they pertain to the Septuagint, he tends to oversimplify the *modus operandi*. Particularly, the Septuagint's consistent refusal to translate the expression 'son of man' with a definite article speaks *against* the suggestion that translators (quite naturally) added or kept the definite article when translating this term in the sayings of Jesus (cf. Hurtado 2011:162).
- Throughout the argumentation of his hypothesis, Casey almost entirely ignores secondary scholarship devoted to the grammar of the Aramaic language (cf. Owen 2011b:32–33).
- According to Owen (2011b:34–35), the examples put forward by Casey to substantiate the particular idiomatic use of בר אנש proposed by him are not discussed adequately. In Owen's view, the literary contexts of these examples are consistently ignored. For example, the literary context of Sefire 3:14–17 – a text to which Casey (2009:81) attaches great weight 'because it establishes the use of this idiom long before the time of Jesus' – clearly identifies the term בר אנש there as a specific reference to a future heir of the kingdom. In fact, these examples only accomplish to illustrate that the form (בני אנשא) required to translate the Greek ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is consistently avoided by these ancient authors.
- As was the case with his examples of the idiomatic use of בר אנש, Casey does not spend enough time or effort trying to understand the actual use of the term ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου in its various *literary gospel contexts* before reconstructing the Aramaic *Vorlage* (see Williams 2011:65–66). As a result, attempts to construe certain Son-of-Man logia as generic have been forced (cf. Burkett 1999:94).
- One cannot simply assume, as Casey does, that only those sayings capable of being reconstructed into their (supposed) Aramaic originals are authentic (cf. Williams 2011:73; see Owen 2011b:48–49). Apart from the possibility that Jesus might at times have spoken another language, the translators might also at times have paraphrased Jesus' sayings – not to even mention the complicated process of their oral and written transmission.
- Casey's 'corporate' reading of Daniel 7 is not accepted by all, neither is his assumption that a messianic reading of this text is inherently erroneous and inauthentic (see Owen 2011b:35–38).
- According to Burkett (1999:92–96), Casey's approach leads to 'implausible results' – results that cannot be applied to most of the gospel sayings themselves (see also Owen 2011b:38–39). His 'solution' forces us to believe that only a handful of sayings are authentic, and that,

out of these, not a single one survived with its original meaning intact whilst the overwhelming majority of them were created by the early church. In accord with Burkett's objection, it could be added that Casey even partitions those Son-of-Man logia that appear in one of the earliest gospel sources, namely Q, into authentic and inauthentic sayings.

- When Casey utilises the criterion of historical plausibility, he assumes *a priori* not only that Jesus himself could not have appealed to Daniel 7 but also that Jesus himself could not have preached an apocalyptic message (see Owen 2011b:39–45). Thus, all apocalyptic sayings are 'naturally' attributed to the early church as references to the *parousia* of Jesus.

These objections are noteworthy enough to cause concern. Even though Casey's 'solution' is currently the most influential and best argued philological study on the Son-of-Man problem, his hypothesis is fundamentally and methodologically problematic (cf. Hurtado 2011:176). In such circumstances, one might be pressed to appeal to one or more of the *other* philological 'solutions' to the Son-of-Man problem. Most scholars in this field now agree on three fronts: (1) Jesus used the expression 'Son of Man' in a circumlocutional, generic and/or indefinite sense, thereby referring to himself, either directly or indirectly; (2) sayings are only authentic if they can be 'reverse-translated' into Aramaic and (3) the early church added the titular Son-of-Man logia, particularly those where the expression itself refers to Daniel 7:13. Lindars (1980, 1983), for example, argues that בר נשא was an Aramaic idiom by which the speaker could refer to a selected class of individuals, amongst whom she herself was included, translating the term 'a person/someone in my position.' Bauckham (1985) believes that Jesus used the Aramaic term בר אנש in the indefinite sense – meaning 'someone' or 'a man' – as an intentionally ambiguous self-reference (see also Fuller 1985). Kearns (1988) proposes that the term was used by Jesus in a generic, non-titular sense. Chilton (1996, 1999) argues that Jesus employed the expression 'Son of Man' generically, as a reference to himself and others, as well as distinctively, as a reference to an apocalyptic angel other than himself.

Unfortunately, these 'solutions' suffer difficulties similar to those of Casey (see Burkett 1999:92–96). These scholars are all faced with the same fundamental predicament, which is that the grammatical form needed to understand the expression 'Son of Man' in its original Aramaic is almost entirely absent from Middle Aramaic (cf. Shepherd 2011:51). Unless and until 1st-century Galilean sources are excavated containing the exact Aramaic form needed, Aramaic reconstructions and philological 'solutions' will remain unconvincing (cf. Hurtado 2011:174; Lukaszewski 2011:26–27; Shepherd 2011:60). The proposals that suggest an indefinite meaning, like those by Bauckham, Fuller and *perhaps* Lindars (cf. Lindars 1985:35, but cf. also Burkett 1999:92; Müller 2008:318; see esp. Bauckham 1985:23–33), all suffer from an additional difficulty. Regardless of what the original Aramaic term might have meant, the Greek term ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου could not under any circumstances have been translated with 'a

man' (cf. Burkett 1999:92–93). Suggestions of transference or mistranslation do not explain away this difficulty. The proposal by Lindars, in particular, was met with widespread disapproval and refutation (cf. Lukaszewski 2011:9, esp. n. 40). Kearns' suggestion that בר (א)נש(א) derives from Ugaritic is problematic for a variety of reasons (cf. Casey 2009:48). Also, his suggestion that the term בר (א)נש(א) has multiple meanings (like 'citizen' or 'Lord'), is erroneous (cf. Casey 2009:48–49). Kearns here confuses the term's idiomatic point of referral with its denotative meaning.

The diachronic question of authenticity

Regarding the authenticity of Son-of-Man logia, past and present scholars have routinely felt obliged to choose between one of four possibilities namely (1) all the Son-of-Man sayings are authentic; (2) all the Son-of-Man sayings are inauthentic; (3) only the future Son-of-Man sayings are authentic and (4) only the present Son-of-Man sayings are authentic (cf. Burkett 1999:44; Theissen & Merz 1998:550). Within the historical-Jesus debate, proponents of an apocalyptic Jesus tend to support the first or third positions whilst proponents of a sapiential Jesus tend to support the second or fourth positions (cf. especially Theissen & Merz 1998:245; also Borg 1994:8, 51; Borg, in Miller 2001:41; see e.g. Crossan 1991; Van Aarde 2004; also see e.g. Witherington III 1995:95–97). It follows that scholars who defend a sapiential understanding of the historical Jesus and those who defend an apocalyptic interpretation can readily appeal to this term. All they need do is support their choice by arguing for the authenticity of preferred logia. Arguments appealing to authenticity abound and have in the past (and present) supported any one of the four positions noted. The wide range of proposals of authenticity put forward – ranging from the one extreme that all Son-of-Man sayings are authentic to the other extreme that none of these sayings are authentic, with no shortage of positions in between – testifies to the inadequacy of this approach in reaching reliable results. According to Theissen and Merz (1998:550), 'scholars are not yet in a position to make a well-founded decision between the [four] possibilities [noted above]' (cf. also Allison 1998:128; Allison, in Miller 2001:95; Burkett 1999:5).

Apart from a handful of scholars, including, for example, Chilton, those who follow a philological approach tend to agree that the early church added the Son-of-Man logia that refer to Daniel 7:13. Despite such a relative consensus, this belief ultimately remains an assumption. It has not been proven with any degree of persuasiveness. There need not have been an existing Son-of-Man concept in order for Jesus to have used the term in an apocalyptic way or context. Apocalyptic texts dating to the 1st century all interpret Daniel 7:13 as a reference to a specific individual figure (cf. Burkett 1999:118). Although a few rabbinic texts did interpret Daniel 7:13 as a corporate reference to all of Israel, most of these writings viewed the 'one like a son of man' in Daniel 7:13 as a specific figure (cf. Burkett 1999:118–119). Whenever Daniel 7:13 was seen as a reference to a specific figure in

the 1st century – which was almost all the time – that figure was associated with the Messiah. It follows that even if there were no unified Son-of-Man concept in the 1st century – which there was not! – it was still natural at the time to see the 'one like a son of man' in Daniel 7:13 as a specific messianic-apocalyptic figure (cf. Bock 2011:90, 94). In fact, the absence of a specific Son-of-Man concept was probably conducive to Jesus' (and Q's) intent with the expression, not least of all in allowing him to fill this term with meaning and content as he used it (cf. Bock 2011:89, 96–97). As such, there is no real reason to doubt that Jesus himself could have used the expression 'Son of Man' in reference to Daniel 7:13 (cf. Bauckham 1985:28, 29–30).

According to Owen (2011b:30), in fact, the *most natural philological* explanation of Jesus' use of the Aramaic expression 'Son of Man' is that he used it in reference to Daniel 7:13. Likewise, Williams (2011:75) believes that 'the linguistic evidence is compatible with the idea of a defined [Son-of-Man] concept, if that concept could be established in pre-Christian sources on other grounds.' Thus, the Aramaic roots of the expression 'Son of Man' do not necessarily contradict the idea that Jesus made use of this expression in reference to an apocalyptic figure, be it himself or someone else. According to Casey's 'solution', the Aramaic-idiomatic term 'Son of Man' appears in two *authentic* logia (Q 12:8–9, 10) that are *apocalyptic* in nature and theme. One or both of these two sayings are also considered authentic by Lindars, Bauckham, Fuller and Chilton. Added to these two sayings, some other, intrinsically apocalyptic, sayings are also believed to be authentic by Lindars (Q 11:30), Bauckham (Q 11:30; Mk 14:62 par.), Fuller (Q 11:30; 12:40; 17:24, 30) and Chilton (Mt 19:28). Hence, all these scholars (perhaps inadvertently) agree that Jesus was not averse to apocalyptic themes and that he discussed them on occasion. According to Burkett (1999:93), the only occurrence of 'Son of Man' that can with any degree of confidence be said to have a generic *Vorlage* is the one that appears in the *apocalyptic* saying in Q 12:10.

Given everything that has so far been said, it is no surprise that the two views currently predominating Son-of-Man scholarship are the (messianic-)apocalyptic view and the idiomatic-non-titular view (cf. Burkett 1999:5, 122). The current division between scholars like Casey, Lindars, Bauckham, Fuller and Kearns, on the one hand, and scholars like Owen, Lukaszewski, Shepherd, Williams and Bock, on the other, mirrors an almost identical division at the end of the nineteenth century between scholars like Wellhausen, Eerdmans and Lietzmann, on the one hand, and scholars like Dalman and Fiebig, on the other (cf. Müller 2008:315). This division is further not only a cause but also a result of the current schism between historical-Jesus researchers on whether Jesus was primarily a wisdom sage or an apocalyptic prophet (cf. Borg 1994:69; Funk 1996:64; Kloppenborg 2005:1; Miller 1999:24, 2001:1–2; Patterson, in Miller 2001:70; cf. also Telford 1994:72–73; see Wright 1996:20–21, 28, 2002:12–13, 23; see also Craffert 2003; Van Aarde 2004:423–424).

Theissen and Merz (1998:542) summarised the state of scholarship on the Son-of-Man problem with the following statement:

Unfortunately the two linguistic and literary traditions which could give us a clear understanding [i.e. 'Son of Man' as an apocalyptic figure and 'Son of Man' as a generic expression] provide no clear information about how the term is to be understood. (cf. also Borsch 1992:144)

Our foregoing overview has confirmed this pessimism. Decades of discussing and debating the authenticity of individual Son-of-Man sayings have ended in a *cul-de-sac*. Although philological research has some promise, we unfortunately do not currently have nearly enough extant texts, from either the right period or the right region, that would enable us to put forward a 'solution' with any degree of confidence. All that is left, then, is to consider Q's *synchronic* treatment of the term 'Son of Man.' Diachronic questions of authenticity must retreat to the background so that room can be made for synchronic questions of literary context. Given the wide range of concurrent opinions on precisely which of the Son-of-Man sayings (in Q) are in fact authentic (cf. Burkett 1999:79–80, n. 25), the time has perhaps come to give precedence to a synchronic study of (Q's) Son-of-Man logia (see Schenk 1997). Bock (2011:89) maintains that 'any "son of man" remark [will] be ambiguous unless it is tied to a specific passage or context.'

The synchronic 'question of reference'

Our synchronic analysis will mostly concentrate on what Burkett (1999:32–42) calls 'the question of reference.' In other words, the following investigation will mainly concern itself with discovering the referent of each occurrence of the expression 'Son of Man' in Q. In answering 'the question of reference,' we must first determine whether a saying refers to Jesus or not. If it refers to Jesus, we must determine whether it is used as a title or as a straightforward self-reference. If, on the other hand, it does not refer to Jesus, we must determine to whom (or what) it does in fact refer. Lastly, if Jesus did use it as a reference to himself in the third person, we must decide whether or not other people were also implied by the term. The sequence in which these questions are discussed will be determined by each individual saying.

The first Son-of-Man saying we shall consider is the one in Q 7:34. Theoretically, the idiomatic use of ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου could, in this literary context, imply more than one person by means of the masculine singular. The masculine singular of the participles ἐσθίων [eating] and πίνων [drinking] may be explained as an extension of that Aramaic idiom. As such, the masculine singular forms of these two participles may be referencing a group or class of people. The same can, however, not be said of the response by 'this generation,' since the idiom is concluded beforehand. These opponents are not speaking in idiomatic terms when they describe the Son of Man as 'a person (ἄνθρωπος) who is a glutton (φάγος) and a drunkard (οἰνοπότης), a friend (φίλος) of tax collectors

and sinners.' The Son of Man is clearly portrayed here as a single, individual person (ἄνθρωπος) (cf. Wink 2002:89). In *this* instance, the four nouns referring to the Son of Man are in the nominative masculine singular because they refer to no more than a single person. If the response by 'this generation' was an extension of the foregoing idiom, it would also have featured ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. Instead, it features ἄνθρωπος only. If the response did not refer to more than one person, neither did the initial statement. In other words, although it is theoretically possible to read the two participles (ἐσθίων and πίνων) as an extension of an Aramaic idiom that implies more than one person, the literary context renders such a reading extremely unlikely (cf. Wink 2002:89). Just like the four nouns in the response, these two participles are in the masculine singular form because they refer *exclusively* to a single individual. Thus, in the case of Q 7:34, we may rule out any 'corporate' or generic interpretation of the term 'Son of Man.' Casey (2009:137) observes: 'Everyone does come eating and drinking, otherwise they die!' However, it does not necessarily follow from such a general observation that Q 7:34 was intended to be understood in such a generic way. Clearly, the Greek text refers specifically and solely to Jesus himself. As a result of his commitment to the generic level of meaning, Casey is obliged to put forward a novel interpretation of this text and to introduce backgrounds not explicit or implicit in the text itself (cf. Owen 2011b:45).

It seems very probable that the expression in this case refers to Jesus. The larger literary context (Q 7:18–35) is preoccupied with establishing the relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus (cf. Piper 1989:124; Kirk 1998:366, 377; cf. also Allison 1997:8). In all probability, this theme is carried forward in Q 7:33–34 by comparing not only the two personages and their respective lifestyles with one another but also the responses extorted by each of them (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:111). Whereas the Baptist refrained from eating and drinking, the Son of Man did not. However, both received a negative response from 'this generation' (cf. Kirk 1998:376). What is more, both received a positive response from tax collectors and sinners (cf. vv. 29 and 34). This comparison would only make sense if the term 'Son of Man' did indeed here refer to Jesus (cf. Wink 2002:89). Such a conclusion is confirmed by the consistent use of the masculine singular form, which appears no less than eight times in verse 34 alone.

This leaves us with a choice between understanding the term 'Son of Man' here as a self-reference or a title. Since Jesus is not making a Christological or soteriological statement about himself but is simply mentioning his mundane habit of 'eating' and 'drinking,' it seems unlikely that the expression was meant as a title for Jesus. The word 'came' has no titular significance in this context but simply indicates vocation, implying that Jesus *saw it as his duty* to eat and drink with sinners (cf. Wink 2002:88–89). It is possible that the expression 'Son of Man' here *connotes* the lowliness and/or shamefulness of Jesus, who is being accused of the shameful behaviour – typical of lower-class people – of acting as a glutton and a drunkard (cf. Kirk 1998:380; cf. also Casey 2009:137). The potential generic and corporate

interpretations have already been refuted. We have also seen above that the indefinite interpretation would never be an appropriate or acceptable explanation of the Greek form ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. Besides, the memorable actions of Jesus are specifically in view here. By process of elimination, we have to conclude that Jesus used the term 'Son of Man' in Q 7:34 as a mere reference to himself, and only himself, in the third person (cf. Wink 2002:89).

The next Son-of-Man saying to be discussed is the one in Q 9:58. This logion does not make sense as a reference to some specific entity other than Jesus, whether it be an apocalyptic emissary, an expected Messiah or something else. There is absolutely no indication of apocalypticism in the saying itself, its utilisation of the expression 'Son of Man' or its literary context. Q 9:58 does not make a Christological or soteriological statement, indicating that it was probably not employed as a title for Jesus. Both the opening statement in verse 57 and the greater literary context (Q 9:57–60; Q 10:2–9) indicate that we are dealing here with the (sapiential) topic of discipleship (cf. Edwards 1976:101; Kloppenborg 1987:190; Kirk 1998:347; cf. also Allison 1997:11). The word 'follow' (ἀκολουθεῖω) – a usual indicator that discipleship is in view – appears not only in verse 57 but is also repeated in verse 60 (see Kingsbury 1978). In both cases, Jesus is the one potentially being followed. As many have noticed before, this probably implies that the Son-of-Man saying purports to elucidate the potential cost, harshness and difficulty of discipleship. This makes it unlikely that the term 'Son of Man' could here imply someone or something other than Jesus.

However, the term 'Son of Man' does not necessarily exclude others from participating in Jesus' fate, meaning that it could be read as a non-exclusive reference to Jesus *and others* (see Casey 2009:168–178). A non-exclusive idiomatic interpretation is perhaps supported by the fact that the animals 'foxes' (ἄλωπεκες) and 'birds' (πετεινά), with which the Son of Man is compared in verse 58, appear in the plural. Also, logical reasoning leads to the realisation that discipleship by its very nature implies more than the person being 'followed.' However, the number of animals featuring in the comparison may have absolutely no bearing on the interpretation of the term 'Son of Man.' Furthermore, even though the undertaking of discipleship implies more than one person, the Son-of-Man reference may exclusively be to the lifestyle of Jesus himself whilst the saying *in toto* implies a degree of participation in that lifestyle (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:192). It is rather unlikely that the term 'Son of Man' here represents or alludes to humanity in general, even though the present text compares (a) human(s) to animals. Discipleship was not something shared by all people. Neither can the statement that 'the Son of Man does not have anywhere to lay his head' be logically applied to all of humankind (*contra* Edwards 1976:101; Wink 2002:82). Both verbs of which Son of Man is the subject (ἔχει and κλίνει) appear in the third person singular, suggesting an individual person. Yet, this is completely compatible with the idiomatic use of the expression 'Son of Man.' Finally, verse 58 is Jesus' answer to

the anonymous comment in verse 57 (cf. Edwards 1976:101). The fact that Jesus is in view in verse 57 suggests that Jesus is also the referent of the expression 'Son of Man' in verse 58.

Hence, in Q 9:58, the expression 'Son of Man' is probably used by Jesus as a self-reference in the third person (cf. Meyer 2003:21). This self-reference may or may not include a group of disciples sharing in Jesus' lifestyle. If it does imply participation, it is the *saying* and the literary context that allow this implication, not the *expression* 'Son of Man' (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:192). Thus, the saying may be paraphrased something like this: 'Remember before you commit to following me that, unlike many animals, I often do not have shelter or refuge.' The unstated implication is that if you follow Jesus, you will share in his hardship (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:191; cf. also Allison 1997:13; cf. further Casey 2009:170). The reading of Q 9:58 that is most natural and that remains most faithful to the literary context is one that has Jesus use the term 'Son of Man' as an exclusive self-reference (cf. Casey 2009:178). It is possible that the expression 'Son of Man' here *connotes* the lowliness of Jesus not having a permanent residence and/or the humility or embarrassment of Jesus not being able to provide refuge for his disciples (cf. Kirk 1998:340, 341; cf. also Casey 2009:175).

We now turn to Q 6:22. In Luke, the saying ends with 'Son of Man' (τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου), but in Matthew, the saying simply ends with 'me' (ἐμοῦ). It seems probable that the expression 'Son of Man' was originally part of the Q text, seeing that the deliberate exclusion thereof by Matthew makes more sense than its deliberate inclusion by Luke (cf. Catchpole 1993:93; cf. also Wink 2002:274, n. 3; 305, n. 111; Casey 2009:239). Matthew probably disliked the fact that the term failed to reference either the apocalyptic role of Jesus at his second coming or anything significant about Jesus' public career. Matthew was probably also displeased with the fact that 'Son of Man' could here be interpreted as a reference to someone other than Jesus.

According to most scholars, the Son of Man is put forward here as the reason why (ἐνεκεν) the followers of Jesus are being persecuted (cf. Piper 1989:61; Catchpole 1993:94; Kirk 1998:391, 392; Wink 2002:101; cf. also Allison 1997:101; Hurtado 2011:164). If that is indeed the case, there is no sign of the influence of Daniel 7:13, and the term 'Son of Man' acts as either a title for Jesus or a self-reference in the third person (cf. Casey 2009:239). The term cannot in this case be viewed as inclusive of other people besides Jesus (cf. Catchpole 1976:94; Casey 2009:240; cf. also Williams 2011:75; *contra* Wink 2002:101). In support of a titular understanding, it could be argued that Jesus does not speak of himself in the same mundane way he did in Q 7:34 or Q 9:58. Rather, he puts himself forward as the reason for persecution, which betrays a somewhat swollen sense of self-regard and self-interest. However, Jesus is not making any Christological or soteriological claim. He is simply stating that those who follow his lead might be subject to persecution. In other words, the mortal Jesus, and his earthly ministry, is the cause of persecution. The expression 'Son of Man' could

in this case easily be replaced by the proper noun 'Jesus' without changing the logia's meaning. As such, the best understanding of the present logia is probably that Jesus used it as a non-titular self-reference.

It is, however, also possible that the Son of Man is put forward as the reason why (ἐνεκεν) the persecuted are *blessed*. If such a reading is followed, it implies that the persecuted are blessed because of their reward at the apocalyptic court where the Son of Man will confess them before the angels (cf. Q 12:8–9; cf. Catchpole 1976:94; Allison 1997:101). The second interpretation is supported by the fact that it coheres with the other beatitudes in having an *apocalyptic* apodosis follow the *sapiential* protasis. This would indicate that verse 23 is not to be read in sole conjunction with verse 22 but as a summary statement of all the beatitudes in verses 20–22. If this interpretation is accepted, it follows that the expression 'Son of Man' is here neither a title for Jesus nor a self-reference in the third person. If it does in any way refer to Jesus, it refers to his role as an agent of the apocalyptic event. However, it is not a given that *Jesus* should in this text be seen as the apocalyptic agent. The Son of Man could easily here be viewed as someone other than Jesus. In summary, Q's Jesus uses the expression 'Son of Man' in Q 6:22 either as a reference to himself in the third person or as an allusion to an apocalyptic agent, who may or may not be Jesus himself. There are five reasons for preferring the former interpretation: (1) the preposition ἐνεκεν follows directly after the phrase καὶ εἶπωσιν πᾶν πονηρὸν καθ' ὑμῶν and not after μακάριοι ἐστε; (2) the former explanation results in a fine parallelism wherein four beatitudes starting with μακάριοι are followed by four causal clauses containing ὅτι; (3) both Matthew and Luke understood the term 'Son of Man' here as a mundane, non-eschatological reference to Jesus (cf. Casey 2009:239); (4) for the most part, the second interpretation is not even mentioned or discussed by scholars as an option and (5) 1 Peter 4:14 betrays knowledge of this tradition and presents it in accordance with the second interpretation (cf. Wink 2002:207).

With regards to the interpretation of the Son of Man in Q 11:30, scholarship is generally divided between two options (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:132). A number of scholars believe that the Son-of-Man reference is here an allusion to Daniel 7:13 (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:132, n. 134; Kirk 1998:198, n. 182; cf. e.g. Catchpole 1993:246). Other scholars thought that the term 'Son of Man' functions in Q 11:30 as an unmistakable term for Jesus during his this-worldly ministry. In support of the former view, attention could be drawn to both the literary context (vv. 31–32), which develops apocalyptic themes, and the future tense of the verb ἔσται in verse 30 (cf. Catchpole 1993:246). There are, however, excellent reasons for preferring the second view. In this text, one must first determine the meaning of the word 'sign' (σημεῖον) before any judgement can be reached on the usage of the term 'Son of Man.' One question is fundamental at this point: What exactly was *Jonah's* sign? It could not have been the 'historical' figure of Jonah himself (cf. Catchpole 1993:245), since Jonah spent a whole day gallivanting in Nineveh without raising

as much as an eyebrow (cf. Jnh 3:4). Yet, when Jonah cried out his apocalyptic message, the people of Nineveh took notice and radically changed their ways (cf. Jnh 3:4–9). This reaction ultimately led to their apocalyptic salvation (cf. Jnh 3:10). It logically follows that 'Jonah's sign' *must have been* his apocalyptic message (cf. Wink 2002:91; *contra* Catchpole 1993:246). This conclusion indicates that the Son of Man could *not* in Q 11:30 have referenced the apocalyptic agent of Daniel 7:13. Neither in Daniel 7 nor in Q does this figure bring any kind of message (*contra* Edwards 1976:114). Instead, he simply appears at the apocalyptic event when it is already too late for repentance or redemption. In Q 11:30, the referent of the Son of Man must be Jesus (cf. Kirk 1998:198). Once this is accepted, the comparison between Jesus and Jonah becomes clear. The message of both Jonah and Jesus was about *apocalyptic destruction* and *repentance* (cf. Jnh 3:4, 10; Q 10:12–15; cf. Wink 2002:91). In both cases, the apocalyptic message represented the *only* warning sign of apocalyptic doom (cf. Jnh 3:5; Q 11:29; cf. Kloppenborg 1987:133). Both Jonah and Jesus became a sign by means of their this-worldly conduct (cf. Jnh 3:1–4; Q 11:16).

The literary context in Q 11:31–32, which also mentions Jonah, the Ninevites and 'this generation,' supports the foregoing conclusion even if it does develop apocalyptic themes (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:133). The noun 'something' (πλεῖον) is in the neuter here because it refers back to the 'sign' (σημεῖον) of verse 29, which is the Son of Man's message (see Wink 2002:91–92; *contra* Catchpole 1993:242). Like Jonah and Solomon, the one responsible for this 'greater message' (πλεῖον) not only has to be flesh and blood but must also have been on earth at some stage before the apocalypse arrives. It follows that the mysterious figure of verses 31–32 cannot be the eschatological figure of Daniel 7:13 since that figure only arrives on the scene when it is too late (cf. Q 17:23–24). The respective messages of Jonah and Solomon were beacons for their *contemporaries*. Similarly, the message of the arcane figure in Q 11:29–32 has to be a beacon for his contemporaries, including 'this generation' (cf. Wink 2002:90–91). The latter statement is supported by the vocabulary of Q 11:31–32. The interjection 'look' (ἰδοῦ) and the adverb 'here' (ἔδδε) both indicate that this figure must be a corporeal person that existed when Q 11:29–32 was spoken. As Kloppenborg (1987:133) puts it: '[T]he double saying [*in* Q 11:31–32] pronounces judgment upon those who refuse to respond to some *present reality* which is greater than Jonah or Solomon' (*italics original*). In light of all this, the 'something greater than both Jonah and Solomon' has to be the message of the earthly Jesus. It follows that the Son-of-Man reference in verse 30 must be to Jesus during his worldly ministry, that is, if we are to make sense of the explanatory examples in verses 31–32 (cf. Kirk 1998:198). Hence, both the book of Jonah and the literary context in Q support the proposal that Jesus, and not the apocalyptic figure of Daniel 7:13, is the Son of Man in Q 11:30.

When discussing the comparison between Jesus and Jonah, it was argued that the 'sign of the Son of Man (or Jesus)' is

his apocalyptic message, not his person. This conclusion is also confirmed by Q 11:31–32 where it is said that the Queen of the South and the Ninevites experienced apocalyptic favour, not because they knew Solomon or Jonah but because they heeded the wisdom (σοφίαν) of Solomon and the announcement (κήρυγμα) of Jonah, respectively (cf. Catchpole 1993:242; Kirk 1998:198). Verse 32 explicitly states that the Ninevites will experience apocalyptic favour *because* (ὅτι) they *repented* (μετενόησαν) when they heard Jonah's apocalyptic message (κήρυγμα). Likewise, verse 31 explicitly states that the Queen of the South will experience apocalyptic favour *because* (ὅτι) she *listened* (ἀκούσαι) to Solomon's sapiential message (σοφίαν). Although Solomon was primarily known for his wisdom and wealth, he was also admired in the 1st century for his role as a staunch preacher of repentance in the face of apocalyptic judgement (see e.g. Wis. Sol. 6:1–19; cf. Catchpole 1993:242; Kloppenborg 1987:133–134). In general, contemporary wisdom often included stern messages of repentance (cf. e.g. Wis. Sol. 11:23; 12:10, 19; Sirach 17:24; 44:16, 48). According to Q 11:31–32, both the Queen of the South and the Ninevites will experience apocalyptic *salvation* because they took the respective messages of Solomon and Jonah to heart. According to Q 11:29–30, in contrast, 'this generation' will experience *condemnation* at the apocalypse because they failed to heed the sign of the Son of Man, meaning Jesus' message (cf. Piper 1989:167).

If the Son of Man does not in this case refer to the Danielic emissary, what are we to make of the fact that, in verse 30, the verb ἔσται appears in the future tense? Kloppenborg (1987:132) believes that it could be a gnomic future that points to present time. It is much more likely, though, that Q's Jesus used the future tense because he intended future time (cf. Edwards 1976:114; Catchpole 1993:246). There are two ways to explain the future tense in this case. Seeing that the 'Son of Man' here refers to the corporeal Jesus, the future tense could indicate *the rest* of his earthly ministry, including the immediate future during which Jesus will or will not give a sign. The future tense of the verb δοθήσεται in verse 29 could be presented as evidence in support of this interpretation (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:132). However, such an explanation would exclude the part of his ministry that had already been completed, including his concurrent message of apocalyptic doom. This seems unlikely to have been the intention (cf. Wink 2002:90–91). It is much more likely that the future tense does indeed here point to future time, most likely the predicted time of the apocalypse (cf. Edwards 1976:114; Catchpole 1993:246). When 'this generation' stands before God at the apocalyptic court (cf. Q 12:8–9), the 'sign of the Son of Man,' meaning Jesus' message, *will have been* their only warning of apocalyptic judgement (cf. Wink 2002:91). *Koine* Greek does not have a perfect-future tense that would enable it to articulate something similar to the English phrase 'will have been.' The future tense alone must suffice. Just like the acceptance of Jonah's message resulted in apocalyptic pardon (cf. Jnh 3:10), Jesus' message, if accepted, *will* result in apocalyptic pardon. Just like the respective messages of Solomon and Jonah *will* result in apocalyptic favour for

the Queen of the South and the Ninevites (cf. Q 11:31–32), the message of Jesus, if accepted, *will* result in apocalyptic favour for 'this generation.' Q 11:30 is therefore looking forward at the apocalyptic event and predicting that 'this generation' will regret not heeding the 'sign of the Son of Man,' which they had already received during their lives on earth (cf. Piper 1989:167). In dealing with Q 11:29–30, Wink (2002:91) states: '[The Son of Man] will not come in the future to judge; rather, he is the present standard by which one will be judged in the future.' Just like the message of Jonah could only be appreciated *after* it had resulted in apocalyptic pardon, the message of Jesus – that is, the sign of the Son of Man – will only be appreciated *after* it had already resulted in apocalyptic destruction. The beauty of hindsight!

If the expression 'Son of Man' here refers to the earthly Jesus, is it possible that Q 11:30 implies more than only Jesus with its use of the expression? If more people are implied, it certainly does not include all of humanity since only a few individuals throughout history have preached at all. The silent masses are exactly that: silent. The generic and indefinite interpretations of the term 'Son of Man' are therefore taken off the table. However, the idiomatic use of the expression 'Son of Man' could perhaps imply a selected group of individuals. Jesus was certainly not the only one in Israel's history to preach a message of repentance. Q 11:29–32 recalls also Jonah and Solomon. The apocalyptic message of John the Baptist also comes to mind (cf. Q 3:7–9, 16–17). Unfortunately, this view goes against the intention of Q 11:29–32 where the Son of Man is *compared* to Jonah and Solomon. Such comparison with other historical figures naturally excludes these figures from being the Son of Man himself. When dealing with Q 7:34, we concluded that the comparison between Jesus and the Baptist meant that the term 'Son of Man' there referred exclusively to Jesus. The same is true in the present (con)text. One entity (the Son of Man) is compared with another entity (Jonah and Solomon respectively), indicating that the two are mutually exclusive. The elevated role Q 11:30 bestows upon the Son of Man, in view of apocalyptic judgement, opens up the possibility that the term 'Son of Man' is here used as a *title* for Jesus (cf. Edwards 1976:114). However, it is the 'sign' – that is, the apocalyptic message – that carries soteriological weight, not the Son of Man (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:133). Instead, the expression 'Son of Man' here refers to the earthly Jesus and his mortal ministry. If the expression 'Son of Man' was intended as a title for Jesus, one would have expected the Son of Man himself to be the enforcer of soteriological and apocalyptic salvation, not merely his message. To conclude, as with the other Son-of-Man texts we looked at, the expression 'Son of Man' here refers exclusively to Jesus during his earthly ministry. Even though it appears in a text that handles apocalyptic images and themes, it is neither a *title* for Jesus nor a reference to the apocalyptic figure of Daniel 7:13.

Luke has the phrase 'Son of Man' in Q 12:8, but Matthew does not. Most scholars agree that Luke is more original at this point (cf. Piper 1989:58). The phrase 'Son of Man' is also attested in a parallel saying at Mark 8:38. Luke had no

reason to add the phrase 'Son of Man' here (cf. Piper 1989:58). Besides, it is not customary for Luke to add this phrase to his sources (cf. Catchpole 1993:93). Hence, it is very likely that those responsible for the *Critical Edition of Q* are correct and that this phrase was originally part of Q (see Robinson, Hoffmann & Kloppenborg 2000). Matthew probably replaced it with the typically-Matthean *καὶ ὡς* because the saying, as it stood, could be construed to mean that someone other than Jesus was the Son of Man (cf. Piper 1989:58; Catchpole 1993:93; cf. also Casey 2009:186). Matthew did not overreact in this regard, seeing that this individual saying has been elemental in convincing a large number of prominent scholars throughout history, including Bultmann, that the historical Jesus did not use the term 'Son of Man' in reference to himself (cf. Burkett 1999:38; see Casey 2009:186–187). In a sense, this view is legitimate since the text does indeed seem to differentiate between the Son of Man (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) and the personal pronoun 'me' (ἐμοί), which refers to the speaker, Jesus (cf. Piper 1989:58). Such a reading is not a given, though (cf. Burkett 1999:38). It is not *demanded* by the text. Furthermore, Matthew understood the term here as a reference to Jesus. Despite the concurrent presence of the personal pronoun, Q's Jesus may still be using the term 'Son of Man' in reference to himself.

The saying would not make any sense if we were to translate 'Son of Man' with the indefinite term 'a man.' The saying demands a more specific referent. The logion would make no more sense if 'Son of Man' were to be translated with the generic term 'man,' meaning humanity in general (*contra* Catchpole 1993:93). That would imply that the perpetrator will witness against herself at the apocalyptic judgement. It would also imply that outsiders, like Gentiles and 'this generation,' would be witnesses at a trial that does not concern them in the slightest. Casey (2009:179–194) argues that the term 'Son of Man' references the multitude of witnesses at the apocalyptic court amongst whom Jesus will be the primary witness. The problem with this suggestion in a synchronic reading of the text is that such an interpretation is not possible in Greek. It is, however, possible that a bilingual audience might have been able to recognise an Aramaic idiom underlying the Greek. If so, the main witness will still be Jesus. If Jesus and his message is so essential for both apocalyptic deliverance and apocalyptic judgement (cf. Q 3:16–17; Q 7:23; Q 10:22; Q 11:23, 30–32; Q 13:35; Q 17:23–24, 33), why would there be a need for additional witnesses? These witnesses seem superfluous. In Daniel's vision, the 'one like a son of man' is an individual being with ultimate power. This does not mean that he could not have been a *symbol* for some type of corporate entity, like the 'saints' of Daniel's vision or the whole Jewish nation. Unfortunately, however, the phrase 'one like a son of man' is not interpreted in Daniel 7:15–28. All we have is the vision itself, where the 'one like a son of man' is clearly described as a single figure. The Similitudes of Enoch and 4 Ezra 13 demonstrate that it was customary in 1st-century Judaism to interpret the 'one like a son of man' in Daniel 7:13 as a singular apocalyptic-messianic figure (see Müller 2008:339–343). Moreover, the multitudes of Daniel 7:11 are not judicial witnesses in the

court proceeding. In fact, there is no mention of witnesses in Daniel 7 at all. Verse 16 rather gives the impression that the multitude are simply there to observe, not to give witness. Also, the Son of Man does not form part of the multitude, whether they be witnesses or not, but is distinguished from them as a completely separate entity. It may be able to corroborate Casey's suggestion from other intertexts, but it is certainly not possible to do so from Daniel 7:13, which is undoubtedly the most important intertext for Q 12:8–9 (see Burkett 1999:122–123).

It seems more likely that Jesus is here referring only to himself in the third person (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:212; Kirk 1998:210; cf. also Catchpole 1993:92). In verse 8, the first part of the saying is inverted by the second part (cf. Piper 1989:56, 59; Catchpole 1993:198). The subject of ὁμολογήσῃ in the protasis becomes the object of ὁμολογήσει in the apodosis. Similarly, in verse 9, the subject of ἀρνήσῃται in the protasis becomes the object of ἀρνήσῃται in the apodosis. This inversion is customary in sayings of retribution, of which Q 12:8–9 is a certain example (cf. Piper 1989:58, 59). In turn, it is customary for sayings of retribution to swap the subjects and objects of each leg of the saying. Hence, the structure of this logion more than implies that the personal pronoun 'me' in the protasis of verse 8 should be equated with the term 'Son of Man' in the apodosis. This indicates that the most natural reading of the text is that Jesus used the expression 'Son of Man' in exclusive reference to himself. As we saw, this is also how Matthew understood this Q text.

There is, however, another, equally-valid explanation for the use of the term 'Son of Man' in this context, namely that it refers to an apocalyptic agent. Q 12:8–9 obviously alludes to Daniel 7:13 (cf. esp. Casey 2009:181; cf. also Bock 2011:91–92; Burkett 1999:123; Wink 2002:178; cf. further Kirk 1998:209). In fact, out of all the Son-of-Man logia in Q, this one employs the most obvious imagery from Daniel 7:13. The repeated use of the preposition ἐμπροσθεν ('[standing] before') plus the references to 'angels' are unmistakable images of an apocalyptic courtroom (cf. Kirk 1998:209). It is doubtful that either the author or the audience would have been confronted with Q 12:8–9 without calling to mind the image of Daniel 7:13. This would explain why Q's Jesus used a personal pronoun to speak of himself directly in the first part of the saying, and used the term 'Son of Man' in the second part of the saying. The use of the personal pronoun 'me' (ἐμοί), in the first part of the sentence, allowed Jesus to be absolutely unambiguous about the fact that it was he himself that needed to be confessed in public. In contrast, the use of the term 'Son of Man,' in the second part of the sentence, allowed Jesus to recall the image of Daniel 7:13 whilst at the same time referring to himself in the third person. By employing his usual self-reference (Son of Man) in a saying that recalled Daniel 7:13, Q's Jesus was probably associating himself with the apocalyptic Son-of-Man figure in that text (cf. Bock 2011:89, 93, 96–97; see Theissen & Merz 1998:552–553; *contra* Hurtado 2011:171–172). For whatever reason, Q's Jesus only did so indirectly, in a veiled, ambiguous and oblique manner (cf. Bauckham 1985:29–30; Meier 2001:646; see

Hampel 1990; Hengel 1983; Nolland 1992:17–28). For those who were familiar with the Sayings Gospel Q (and/or those who knew Jesus personally), the only logical conclusion to draw from this dual (apocalyptic and ordinary) usage of the term ‘Son of Man’ would have been that Jesus himself was the symbolic figure described by Daniel (cf. Dodd 1971:112). Q’s Jesus probably intended this conclusion to be drawn but also obscured it with the use of a vague term such as ‘Son of Man’ (cf. Bock 2011:89, see Bauckham 1985:28–30).

Q 12:10 is notoriously difficult to interpret (cf. Edwards 1976:121). Even though verse 10 follows directly after Q 12:8–9, it is doubtful that this saying also references an apocalyptic figure. What would cause someone to say something bad or derogatory about an imaginary angelic being like the one in Daniel 7:13? Nothing comes to mind! If one believes that the Son of Man is here a reference to an apocalyptic figure (cf. Edwards 1976:122), one would have to explain the existence of a logion that prohibits the unlikely occurrence of someone speaking against a paranormal figure with a singular purpose to be fulfilled only at a future date. The generic and indefinite uses of the term seem more probable (cf. Wink 2002:85). Both would in this case amount to the same meaning, namely the act of speaking against one’s fellow man (cf. Casey 2009:140, 143). The saying would then maintain that the sin of speaking against one’s fellow man is forgivable but not the sin of speaking against the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, the literary context testifies against such an interpretation. Q 12:2–12 is chiefly about confessing or denying both the person and the message of Jesus (cf. vv. 3, 8a, 9a). This means that the current saying is most naturally read, in its Q context, as referring exclusively to Jesus (cf. Kirk 1998:210; Kloppenborg 1987:212). Thus, we have yet another example of Jesus using the term ‘Son of Man’ as an exclusive self-reference in the third person. He might have used the term in this Q context because he was embarrassed to mention that there were people who ‘spoke against’ him in public, thereby attacking and denigrating his social status (*contra* Wink 2002:85). By allowing this transgression against his person, Jesus could also have been emphasising his lowliness.

Most interpreters who have rejected the ‘self-referential conclusion’ did so because Q 12:10 would then be contradicting Q 12:8–9. And indeed it does (cf. Kirk 1998:210; Kloppenborg 1987:207–208, 211–212; Sim 1985:235–236). Verse 9 promises apocalyptic judgement to those who deny Jesus whilst verse 10 claims that those who deny Jesus will be forgiven. This contradiction is no reason to doubt the likelihood that ‘Son of Man’ here refers to Jesus, though. Deliberately placing such direct contradictions side by side was not an unusual or uncommon practice in ancient wisdom literature (cf. Kirk 1998:211, 346; cf. also Allison 2010:90). It has also been suggested that this contradiction might be an indication of changed circumstances in the lives of the Q people (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:212). Although Q 12:10 does not explicitly reference apocalyptic judgement, it is highly likely that the mentioned ‘forgiveness’ (ἀφεθῆσεται) refers to that final judgement, not least of all because of the

apparentness of apocalypticism in the preceding verses and the future tense of the verb ἀφεθῆσεται (cf. Edwards 1976:122).

In Q 17:24, the Son-of-Man reference is an obvious allusion to Daniel 7:13 (see esp. Casey 2009:212–228; see also Catchpole 1993:78, 246, 250–255; Kirk 1998:257–268; Piper 1989:139–142; cf. also Bock 2011:91). No other interpretation would make sense of the apocalyptic imagery and language in this logion. The text is completely silent about whether or not Jesus is to be associated with this Son of Man. Whether or not the audience of this logion made such an identification depends not on the text itself but on whether or not Jesus was already associated with Daniel’s Son of Man prior to them hearing this logion. The logion’s apocalyptic themes of finality, vividness, unexpectedness, suddenness and devastation are taken up and elaborated by verses 26–27, 30, 34–35 and 37, which paint vivid pictures of just how unexpected, sudden, devastating, visible and final the apocalyptic event will be (cf. Catchpole 1993:254, 274; Edwards 1976:142; see Kirk 1998:259–262; Kloppenborg 1987:162–166; cf. also Allison 2010:35; see also Casey 2009:217–218, 226–228). In these passages, like in verse 24, the Son-of-Man figure acts, in line with Daniel 7:13, as an emissary of the apocalypse (cf. Bock 2011:91; see also Catchpole 1993:78, 246, 250–255; Piper 1989:139–142; see further Casey 2009:212–228). As in verse 24, this figure may or may not be identified with Jesus. The rhetorical argument of the entire passage is that the apocalyptic Son of Man will appear so suddenly and unexpectedly *from heaven* that there is no need to go looking for him *on earth* (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:161; cf. also Casey 2009:215). Put differently, you will not be able to find the Son of Man before he finds you.

In Q 12:40, the term ‘Son of Man’ is an obvious allusion to Daniel 7:13 (cf. esp. Casey 2009:219; cf. also Edwards 1976:126; see Kirk 1998:232–233). As in Q 17:24, this figure may or may not be identified with Jesus, depending on whether or not such an identification had already preceded the delivery of the logion itself.

Findings

Given the almost complete absence (outside the New Testament) of the definite forms בר אנשא (Aramaic), בן האדם (Hebrew) and ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (Greek) in Palestine during and before the 1st century, the time has perhaps come to stop drawing at non-existent Aramaic straws in trying to determine the meaning behind ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. Should we not instead be looking at how the Greek term ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is utilised in the New Testament and other documents like Q, take it as our best indicator of what the underlying Aramaic term בר אנשא actually meant? Leivestad (1968:49–105) had already suggested such a *modus operandi* in 1968 (cf. Müller 2008:358). A growing number of scholars recently favoured such a direction of enquiry (see esp. Müller 2008:375–419, esp. 375, 418–419; cf. also Casey 2009:176; see e.g. Schenk 1997). If we follow this path, we are sure to arrive at the same destination as Hare (1990:246): ‘Whatever its spelling and pronunciation, the Aramaic underlying *ho huiois tou anthropou* was understood as referring exclusively

to Jesus' (see also Smith 1991). The point is that, even in the canonical gospels, the expression 'Son of Man' is consistently translated as an exclusive self-reference of and by Jesus. Bock (2011:90), for example, states: 'The designation Son of Man appears 82 times in the Gospels and is a self-designation of Jesus in all but one case, where it reports a claim of Jesus (Jn 12.34)' (see also Hare 1990; Hill 1983:35–51; Hurtado 2011; Müller 1984; Schwartz 1986; Smith 1991).

Our investigation of Q has found that the term was not only used by Jesus as an *exclusive* self-reference but also as a *non-titular* self-reference. We have found six Q sayings (Q 6:22; Q 7:34; Q 9:58; Q 11:30; Q 12:8; Q 12:10) where Q's Jesus uses the expression 'Son of Man' as a non-titular self-reference (cf. Robinson 2007:97–117). This result goes against the *assumption* by a number of scholars that 'in Q [...] Son of Man has come to be used as a christological title' (Kloppenborg 1987:192) or that 'Q uses Son of Man as a title of dignity, not to refer to Jesus' humble guise' (Kloppenborg 1987:213; cf. also Edwards 1976:40, 41, 114; Kirk 1998:341, 380; Piper 1989:126). Incidentally, this result further *supports* one of the philological claims, namely that the expression 'Son of Man' was not originally used as a title.

There are four additional reasons for preferring the result of this study that the term 'Son of Man' was used by Jesus as an exclusive, non-titular self-reference (cf. Hurtado 2011:167, 174): (1) it would explain why Jesus used the term in such a wide variety of seemingly incompatible contexts; (2) it would explain why Matthew and Luke, on certain occasions, felt uninhibited enough to substitute the term 'Son of Man' in their sources with 'I'; (3) not only in Greek, but also in Hebrew and in Aramaic, the definite form of the expression 'the son of the man' had a particularising force, meaning that it referred to someone or something in particular and (4) it would explain why the term occurs almost exclusively in the mouth of Jesus.

For similar reasons as those just noted, Hurtado (2011) comes to the following conclusion:

I submit that the diversity of sentences/sayings in which 'the son of man' is used in the Gospels leads to the conclusion that in these texts the expression's primary linguistic function is to *refer*, not to *characterize*. The expression refers to Jesus [...], but does not *in itself* primarily make a claim about him, or generate any controversy, or associate him with prior/contextual religious expectations or beliefs. 'The son of man' can be used in sayings that stake various claims about Jesus [...], but it is the *sentence/saying* that conveys the intended claim or statement, not the 'son of man' expression itself. [...] Instead, we are to attribute to the *referent*, Jesus, the import of these sentences. (pp. 159–177)

These comments are true in those cases where the term is an obvious reference to Jesus (Q 6:22; Q 7:34; Q 9:58; Q 12:8; Q 12:10) but not in those cases where someone or something other than Jesus might be the referent. We have seen that some Q sayings (Q 12:8; Q 12:40; Q 17:24, 26, 30) undoubtedly refer to the apocalyptic agent of Daniel 7:13. Thus, Hurtado (2011:159–177) is still correct in claiming that the function of all Son-of-Man sayings is 'to refer, not to characterise,' but in

the case of the latter group of sayings, the primary referent has changed. The referent in this second group of sayings is primarily (and most obviously) the apocalyptic agent of Daniel 7:13. It is only after identifying Jesus with the Danielic emissary, and only if this identification is made, that these sayings become *indirect allusions* to Jesus. Q 12:8 appears in both groups. It was argued that this saying has two legitimate points of reference, namely the human Jesus and the apocalyptic figure in Daniel 7:13 (cf. Tuckett 2003:184).

A synchronic analysis of Q has illustrated that those responsible for the document remembered and described Jesus using the term primarily as a non-titular self-reference in the third person. This usage is remarkably similar to the way the term is used in the Gospel of Thomas (cf. Meyer 2003:21). However, Q also remembered and described Jesus using the term in contexts where the imagery of Daniel 7:13 is called to mind (cf. Allison 2010:39; *contra* Robinson 2007:97–117 e.g.). The latter usage, when combined with the memory of Jesus using the term in exclusive reference to himself, implied that Jesus should be identified with the apocalyptic figure from Daniel 7:13 (see Theissen & Merz 1998:552–553). According to Q's memory and description of Jesus, he both intended and obscured this identification with his clever use of the expression 'Son of Man.'

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