* Social structure and development: The scientific, technical and economic facets of a particular culture are closely related to the other elements of the culture. The basic pattern of a culture could prevent development in the western sense of the word. Fowler (p 22) concedes this. He is of the opinion that changes were externally imposed on African cultures. This over-simplifies the whole process of cultural change. Once the African cultures came into contact with the three above mentioned elements of western culture, radical changes were bound to take place. These changes are not so much 'externally imposed' but rather inevitable. It is not denied that externally imposed changes did often occur. Speaking of externally imposed changes, Fowler ignores the radical changes forced upon African culture by Christian missions. These changes did not start in the superstructure of African cultures, but rather in the deep structure. It is this kind of change that has devastating consequences for a culture as a whole. Change now becomes unavoidable, comprehensive and radical.

The theme of this book is that the people of Africa themselves should decide what changes should be made and what development should look like. African cultures have many aspects that can assist and enrich change and development. This emphasis makes it essential that this book should be widely read.

The First Gospel: An introduction to Q — Arland D Jacobson


Reviewer: Rev G C J Nel

Arland D Jacobson, Executive Director of the Charis Ecumenical Centre in Moorhead, Minnesota, is the author of various articles on Q, especially on the aspects of the literary unity and history of composition of Q.

Introduction

'The First Gospel — an introduction to Q' consists partially of and has its roots in Jacobson's doctoral dissertation which was completed as long ago as 1978, under the title: 'Wisdom Christology in Q'. Articles written by the author in 1982 and 1987 are also incorporated in the present work, making it a book which contains the thoughts of the author over a lengthy period. This can be regarded as an bonus point as Jacobson succeeds in bringing his previous standpoints into debate with recent research.

Although Jacobson initially exploits the original thoughts of his mentor J M Robinson whose work entitled: ‘LOGOI SOPHON': Zur Gattung der Spruchquelle Q' represented a pioneering attempt on the question of the hermeneutics of the Sayings Gospel Q, with this work Jacobson shows himself to be an independent researcher.
Motivation purpose, and procedure
Jacobson regards Q-study as necessary for two reasons:

* It sheds light on the time when Christianity was born from Judaism and
* it also sheds light on the historical figure of Jesus of Nazareth. Jacobson wants to 'map' the literary terrain of Q — individual sayings and groups of sayings should be understood in larger context. In this he succeeds to a large extent.

An important presupposition that Jacobson states is that Q is not a Christian but a Jewish document — an idea that forces us to a recontextualisation of material known to us through Matthew and Luke. Jacobson mentions two procedures of reconstructing the Q material:

* a reconstruction of the initial wording of each saying or group of sayings and
* a reconstruction of the original sequence of material. In the latter Jacobson is the first scholar to place this particular aspect as the central focus of his work.

Summary of contents
Besides the preview and introduction the book consists of 8 chapters, a conclusion and various handy indexes. In the first chapter entitled 'Source Criticism' Jacobson discusses the two aspects of this literary 'tool':

* examination of the document for signs of literary disunity and
* the establishment of the literary unity of the putative source(s). His assumption is that synoptic relationships are literary ones and, regarding the two document hypothesis, he regards it as viable, but not to be simply taken for granted.

In Chapter 2 his main argument consists of the idea that Q should be regarded as a gospel rather than just a source and he substantiates this argument by citing views from H J Holtzmann (1863) through to H E Tödt (1959). One feels this idea needs further elaboration. Chapter 3 is a discussion of recent Q research and, in contrast to the redaction-critical approach of Lührmann according to which isolated sayings were edited according to various existing tendencies, and also to Schulz who distinguishes between earlier and later material in Q on account of traditions, Jacobson introduces his own method of 'composition criticism': no saying in Q was meant to be an individual saying, but all are part of larger literary schemes. The sequence of Q material needs to be reconstructed and the reconstructed material must then be analysed. In Chapter 4 the question of the literary unity of Q comes up for discussion. Jacobson regards references to 'this generation' in connection with Israel's rejection of God's messengers to be the centre around which Q's literary unity builds. Jacobson sees in this theme ('this' generation') a deuteronomistic tradition which he regards as the theological framework for the redaction of Q. In Chapters 5 to 8 Jacobson divides the Q-text into 4 parts: (1) 'John and Jesus' (Q 3:1-6 to Q 7:31-35); (2) 'Mission and reception' (Q 9:57- Q 10:22); (3) 'Against this generation' (Q 10:23- Q 11:48) and (4) 'To the Community' (Q 12:2 - Q 22:30).
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Jacobson admits that there is no clear picture of the compositional history of Q but, as he concludes in the final chapter, the small community where Q had its beginning is of great importance as it represents the earliest Jesus movement.

Conclusion
Jacobson admits this work is not the last word on the Sayings Gospel Q. It is definitely, however, an essential contribution to the very important debate on Q.

Patterson, Stephen J 1993 — The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus

Reviewer: Rev J M Strijdom

In this book, published as a revision of his 1988 dissertation, Stephen Patterson argues for the authorial independence of the Gospel of Thomas from the Synoptics (Part 1), constructs a social-historical context in which Thomas Christianity would fit in its relationship to other early Christianities (Part II) and finally shows the relevance of his conclusions for historical Jesus research (Part III). His arguments are presented in a clear and systematic way, and are always developed on the basis of the primary texts and in constant dialogue with views of researchers similar and contrary to his own.

In Part I Patterson puts forth his reasons for the thesis that Thomas, in writing his gospel, did not rely on the written logia in the Synoptics. By carefully comparing the individual Thomas sayings with their synoptic parallels; he demonstrates that neither in terms of content nor in terms of sequence does Thomas show conclusive signs of literary dependence on the Synoptics. The few instances where verbal influence is clearly apparent are explained as due to later scribal harmonization with the canonical gospels (especially Matthew), whereas the occasional correspondence in order is ascribed to earlier oral clustering, which was taken over by Thomas as well as the Synoptics. For the greatest part, however, the Thomistic logia betray neither the unique tendencies nor the distinctive vocabulary of the Synoptics and should therefore be considered an autonomous tradition for which a distinctive social form of Christianity should be imagined.

Part II first proposes a social-historical description of this hypothesized Thomas Christianity and then attempts to situate this particular form of Christianity within the context of its contemporary Christianities (Patterson dates the more-or-less final form of Thomas as we have it to the 70's CE and locates it in eastern Syria). From the content of the sayings, Patterson infers that Thomas Christians valued and practised a life of itinerant social radicalism. These Christians were, in his opinion, wandering charismatics who, in imitation of their Jesus logia by their lifestyles, radically challenged the conventions of their society. They rejected their own families and local pieties, were homeless, took poverty on themselveS willingly, begged, and criticized the political powers fundamentally. In contrast to this type of Christianity, there developed, however, settled house communities with local leaders. The domestication of Jesus sayings in the synoptic gospels is adduced as part of the evidence for this very process, while it is argued that Didache 11-13, the Epistle of James and 3 and 2 John provide clear evidence that conflict ensued in the latter part of the first century between radical itinerants on the one hand and local authorities of settled house communities on the other. He furthermore advances the hypothesis that the anticosmic aspect of Thomas' gnosticizing tendency is directly related to this social-historical