

Q REVIEW

Peter M. Head and P.J. Williams

Summary

This review article focuses on recent treatments of Q, the sayings source widely believed to stand behind the common material in Matthew and Luke (the double tradition). We begin with some recent works against the Q hypothesis, before examining the work of the International Q Project, including their Critical Edition of Q and Kloppenborg Verbin's Excavating Q. We then turn to a more detailed treatment of Casey's Aramaic Approach to Q, which seeks to reconstruct the original Aramaic text of material common to Matthew and Luke. Discussion of these works suggests that contrary to the claims implicit in several studies it is not possible to reconstruct the actual wording of Q in either Greek or Aramaic with any confidence.

I. Introduction

In recent years Q has come of age. In both popular and scholarly books on Jesus and the Gospels it has become an almost omnipresent feature.¹ Somewhere along its journey, the boring old *Sayings Source* has had a makeover and been transformed into the really terribly important *Sayings Gospel*.² The Jesus Seminar proclaimed the existence of Q as one of the seven pillars of scholarly wisdom (although this particular pillar hardly gains credibility by association with the other six).³ Apparently more seriously, the International Q

¹ On this see M. Goodacre, *The Case Against Q: Studies in Markan Priority and the Synoptic Problem* (Harrisburg, PN: Trinity Press International, 2002), 1–5. Particularly telling is his comment that G. Theissen & A. Merz, in their highly regarded book *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide* (ET; London: SCM, 1998), 'are more willing to discuss doubts about the existence of Jesus than they are doubts about the existence of Q' (Goodacre, p. 12).

² Cf. F. Neirynck, 'Q: From Source to Gospel', *ETL* 71 (1995) 421–30.

³ R.W. Funk & R.W. Hoover (eds), *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1993), 9–19.

Project (hereafter IQP), after many years of discussion, have published their *Critical Edition of Q* and one of the co-directors of the IQP, John Kloppenborg Verbin, has published the massive work *Excavating Q: The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel*. From quite a different perspective we have Maurice Casey's *Aramaic Approach to Q*, seeking to show that Q was not a single document, but that the evangelists used a variety of material from common Aramaic sources. This review article surveys some of this recent work on Q.⁴

We should perhaps begin with the basics. Broadly speaking Q is the term used for the double tradition, the material (mostly but not entirely sayings of Jesus) found in common to Matthew and Luke, but not in Mark. Some scholars have always used the term simply to denote that material, perhaps 235 verses or so. Others have argued that certain features of this material suggests that this material comes from a source (*Quelle*) used independently by both Matthew and Luke (in addition to Mark). These features include close agreement in wording, substantial agreement in order, alternating primitivity (this argument states that since neither Matthew nor Luke always exhibit the most primitive form of the double tradition sayings material it is likely that they both depend on a common source), and the theological coherence of the resultant collection. Since Luke is often thought to preserve more fully the original order of Q the Lukan reference is customarily used for the Q text underlying the Luke-Matthew parallel at the point (e.g. Q 11:3). The Q theory is therefore dependent upon *both* Markan Priority *and* the independence of Matthew from Luke. As we shall see, if one denies either of these one can do without Q altogether.

Indeed, precisely this has been attempted in two major ways recently.⁵ Firstly, a group of scholars have supported the theory that Luke made direct use of Matthew, and that Mark subsequently utilised both Matthew and Luke (normally known as the Griesbach Hypothesis, or the Two-Gospel Hypothesis as the contemporary adherents prefer). Their book, *Beyond the Q Impasse: Luke's Use of Matthew* attempts to give 'a plausible account of the composition of the Gospel of Luke on the assumption that his major source was

⁴ Careful readers will detect that the section on Casey was originally authored by Williams in Aramaic; the other material is by the Head community.

⁵ Martin Hengel has recently advocated Matthew's knowledge of Luke as the solution to the double tradition, *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Collection and Origins of the Canonical Gospels* (Harrisburg, PN: Trinity Press International, 2000), 169–207. Hengel remains content to speak about a logia source, or indeed several, but it [they] would not be Q in the normal sense.

Matthew'.⁶ It is clearly not a proof of Luke's use of Matthew — the whole description of Luke's method is merely the product of assuming Luke's use of Matthew and attempting to map out the manner of that use — although some attempt to present linguistic evidence in support of Luke's use of Matthew is attempted.⁷ Nor does the book contain any real engagement with other theories; there is no attempt to show that this way of looking at the evidence is more plausible than any other. Of course, on this theory, Q becomes unnecessary because direct dependence of Luke upon Matthew can account for the double tradition.

This neo-Griesbachian treatment of Luke has recently been complemented by a similar treatment of Mark in *One Gospel from Two: Mark's Use of Matthew and Luke*, which adopts a similar approach: to assume the hypothesis and see how it works out, without interacting with any alternative hypotheses.⁸

From the perspective of the Farrer-Goulder Hypothesis, Mark Goodacre has recently published his *The Case Against Q*, which offers a new treatment of the hypothesis that the double tradition can be explained, on the basis of Markan priority, by Luke's use of Matthew. Goodacre counters the dismissal of this view because of the oddity of Lukan redaction of Matthew, by arguing that Luke would have known Mark very well and thus have been able to discern Matthean additions to Mark easily, using them in different ways in his own Gospel. The

⁶ *Beyond the Q Impasse: Luke's Use of Matthew: A Demonstration by the Research Team of the International Institute for Gospel Studies* (ed. A.J. McNicol, D.B. Peabody & D.L. Dungan; Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 1. Cf. the later comment: 'We tried to look at Matthew the way the Hellenistic Greek author of Luke-Acts might have, assuming he had set himself the task of creating a revision of the Gospel of Matthew for use among Christian Churches which gained their original impetus under the Pauline mission' (p. 14).

⁷ *Beyond the Q Impasse*, 21–24. The evidence supplied, it must be said, is exceedingly weak, although we cannot go into it in detail here. Luke 7:1 is cited as definite evidence of Lukan use of the Matthean redactional phrase closing off the Matthean discourses (Matt. 7:28 par. Here; see also 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1): unsurprisingly the texts are cited in English, because there is not a single Greek word in common — the evidence is non-existent. Luke 4:14–16 is reported to be a similar case where redactional words and phrases from Matthean summaries are used by Luke — 'important evidence indicating Luke's direct literary dependence upon Matthew' (81–82). But the parallels are unconvincing and the vocabulary is too general to have any confidence that Luke is using the parallel material in Matthew. The grammatical arguments are also overstated.

⁸ *One Gospel from Two: Mark's Use of Matthew and Luke: A Demonstration by the Research Team of the International Institute for Renewal of Gospel Studies* (ed. A.J. McNicol, D.B. Peabody & L. Cope; Harrisburg; London; New York: Trinity Press International/Continuum, 2002).

agreements between Matthew and Luke offer evidence for Luke's knowledge of Matthew which the two source theory (which labels them 'minor agreements' and explains them in *ad hoc* ways) has never adequately dealt with. Engaging critically with contemporary Q scholarship Goodacre offers a refreshing and well-written challenge to the consensus. He often makes the case that Luke's use of Matthew is not perhaps as impossible as has often been thought, although he does not really establish it as more plausible than the independent use of a common source (or sources). He also makes important modifications to Goulder's statement of the theory (allowing for the ongoing impact of oral tradition on Matthew and on Luke). This allows him to admit alternating primitivity, but to attribute this to Luke sometimes following Matthew and sometimes having access to primitive oral tradition.

The International Q Project

While both of these previously-mentioned books represent a challenge to the supremacy of the two-source hypothesis, attention must now be given to those who take this hypothesis so seriously as to focus attention on the details of the second source, the sayings source Q, and in particular the reconstruction of the text and wording of Q. For almost two decades this has been the aim of the International Q Project.⁹ For more than a decade a group of around 40 Q-scholars have met regularly, at SBL conferences, and in Claremont, Toronto and Bamberg (representing the locations of the project directors), and have worked through the texts of Q, publishing each year the results of their deliberations in the form of a critically reconstructed text of Q for various passages.¹⁰ Between 1995 and 2000, the three general

⁹ Two important essay collections should also be noted here: *From Quest to Q: Festschrift James M. Robinson* (ed. J.M. Asgeirsson, K. de Troyer & M.W. Meyer; BETL CLVI; Leuven: LUP, 2000) and *The Sayings Source Q and the Historical Jesus* (ed. A. Lindemann; BETL CLVIII; Leuven: LUP, 2001).

¹⁰ See, e.g., J.M. Robinson, 'The International Q Project Work Session 17 November 1989', *JBL* 109 (1990) 499–501; 'The International Q Project Work Session 16 November 1990', *JBL* 110 (1991) 494–98; 'The International Q Project Work Session 16 November 1991', *JBL* 111 (1992) 500–508; M.C. Milton & J.M. Robinson, 'The International Q Project Work Sessions 31 July–2 August, 20 November 1992', *JBL* 112 (1993) 500–506; 'The International Q Project Work Sessions 6–8 August, 18–19 November 1993', *JBL* 113 (1994) 495–99; 'The International Q Project Work Sessions 23–27 May, 22–26 August, 17–18 November 1994', *JBL* 114 (1995) 475–85. For discussion see R.A. Derrenbacher, Jr. & J.S. Kloppenborg Verbin, 'Self-Contradiction in the IQP? A Reply to

editors (Robinson, Kloppenborg and Hoffmann), using the IQP reconstructions as a ‘first draft’, ‘refined’ the text and produced the reconstructed Greek text of Q which has now been published as *The Critical Edition of Q* (henceforth *CEQ*).¹¹

It is worth noting at the outset that, according to the ‘History of Q Research’, published as *CEQ*’s introduction,

The IQP has indeed refrained from entering into the never-ending discussion over the existence of Q, and has preferred to concentrate its energy...on seeking to reconstruct the text of Q, on the assumption that this may in the end be a more compelling and useful argument for its existence.¹²

It is not only the reconstructed text that has this role, the title and format of the book also contribute to this same aim. The title, *The Critical Edition of Q*, is deliberately provocative — normally this terminology would be used of editing texts on the basis of the extant manuscripts of the text. Here it is applied to the redactional-critical reconstruction of a hypothetical text, as a way to gain credibility for the project. The format — 561 pages to document a text of around 4,500 words in around 250 verses¹³ — is also designed to give an impression, marking the significance of the work and presenting Q to the world in a newly decisive manner. In the preface we are told: ‘the

Michael Goulder’, *JBL* 120 (2001) 57–76; C. Heil, ‘Die Q-Rekonstruktion des Internationalen Q-Projekts: Einführung in Methodik und Resultate’, *NovT* 43 (2001) 128–43.

¹¹ James M. Robinson, Paul Hoffmann & John S. Kloppenborg, eds, *The Critical Edition of Q: Synopsis, Including the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, Mark and Thomas, with English, German and French Translations of Q and Thomas* (Leuven: Peeters & Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000). Robinson is largely responsible for the introductory history of Q research (pp. i–cvii); Kloppenborg produced the Greek concordance of the Q text (pp. 563–81). Since it is the agreed text of the three editors (minority opinion and alternative reconstructions by one of the editors is often noted) the *CEQ* text of Q is not identical with the IQP text of Q (as noted in notes at various points). See F. Neirynck, ‘The Reconstruction of Q and IQP/CritEd Parallels’ in *The Sayings Source Q and the Historical Jesus* (see note 9), 53–147.

¹² J.M. Robinson, ‘History of Q Research’, *Critical Edition of Q*, lxvii (n. 156).

¹³ We might compare the modest, but useful, F. Neirynck, *Q-Synopsis: The Double Tradition Passages in Greek* (SNT 13; Leuven: LUP, 1988). The revised edition (published with an appendix in 1995), contains only 79 pages. An abbreviated version of the *CEQ* has been produced by the same editors: *The Sayings Gospel Q in Greek and English with Parallels from the Gospels of Mark and Thomas* (CBET 30; Leuven: Peeters, 2001); this lacks the critically annotated and bracketed text of Q and offers only the simplified ‘resultant Q text’. For an interesting discussion about the royalties for editors of these works see J.M. Robinson’s note (23.1.2002) and P. Hoffmann’s reply (1.2.2002) in the Documenta Q archives at: <http://lists.cgu.edu/cgi-bin/lwgate/DOCUMENTAQ/archives/documentaq.archive.0201/date/article-0.html> and [/article-1.html](http://lists.cgu.edu/cgi-bin/lwgate/DOCUMENTAQ/archives/documentaq.archive.0201/date/article-1.html).

text of Q need no longer be just an imaginary black box lurking somewhere behind certain Matthean and Lukan verses as their source, but can emerge as a text in its own right' (p. xiii; cf. also p. xix). Introducing the volume to the scholarly world Robinson noted that 'a facile offhanded dismissal of Q as a mere hypothesis is harder to carry off with *The Critical Text of Q* [sic] open on the desk'.¹⁴

The reconstructed text of Q is given as the fourth column of an eight-column synopsis (Q is flanked by the relevant Matthean and Lukan texts, then other columns contain Matthean and Lukan doublets, and parallels from Mark, Thomas, and on occasion also from John and the LXX or other early Christian literature). This reconstructed text contains many complex formatting features which we shall try to explain in a moment; so a simpler and non-formatted 'resultant Q text' is also reproduced, alongside, English, German and French translations at the bottom of each page.

Using this book requires close attention to the discussion of the sigla used (pp. lxxx–lxxxviii, esp. lxxx–lxxxiii) before one can begin to decipher the information contained in the Q layout — a bookmark-sized summary which could be inserted into the page one was working on would be a useful addition. These provide information on the opinions, categorisations and decision-making processes of the editors and so are crucial for understanding and therefore evaluating the proposed reconstructed text. On the other hand, they clutter the presentation of all but the most closely parallel texts in such a way as to make one wonder whether a better method of presentation could have been found. As an example, we shall take the shortest verse in Q — 4.13: καὶ ὁ διάβολος ἀφίησιν αὐτόν.

Here the braces surrounding the whole verse — { and }; delimited as well by the raised zero — indicate some degree of doubt as to whether the whole should be regarded as Q, because of possible overlap with Mark (Mk. 1:13b is in col. 1). The raised numbers identify the variation units (further identified using notes to the text). The square brackets around καί indicate that this

⁰ { [καί] ¹ [[] ²] [~] ὁ διάβολος ^{~3} ἀ(φίησιν) ⁴ αὐτό(ν) ⁴ ^{~3} [({})] ⁵ . } ⁰

¹⁴ J.M. Robinson 'The Critical Edition of Q and the Study of Jesus' in *The Sayings Source Q and the Historical Jesus* (see note 9), 27–52 (from p. 28).

reading is found in Luke, but not Matthew (which has τότε). Double square brackets enclose reconstructions that are probable but uncertain (rated as C). Here the double square brackets enclose a single square bracket with nothing inside. Single square brackets indicate a Lukan wording; no space means that the Lukan wording (here identified in the parallel column and a footnote as συντελέσας πάντα πειρασμόν) is regarded as not in Q, with a probability of C, ‘considerable degree of doubt’. The raised squiggles around ὁ διάβολος indicate divergence of sequence between Matthew and Luke. The reconstructed Q text follows Luke’s order here (without signalling this explicitly). The parentheses around most of the next word indicate lettering found in Matthew, but not Luke, which has ἀπέστη — it seems somewhat arbitrary to claim the *alpha* as agreed by both source texts. Similarly the parentheses around the *nu* of αὐτόν signal that this lettering follows Matthew rather than Luke (who has αὐτοῦ following ἀπ’). The raised squiggles indicate that this is the alternative position for the words encased with raised squiggles already (without telling us that this is Matthew’s positioning). There is no gap between the squiggles, which means that this reconstruction is rated as A ‘virtually certain’ or B ‘some degree of doubt’ (it is rather strange that these two ratings are treated together, especially since a note reveals that one of the editors: Robinson, regards this as a more plausible position for ὁ διάβολος than the earlier, Lukan, one). The interesting [({})] is nowhere explained, but seems to mean that there is text present in Luke [], Matthew (), and Mark {}, the existence of which is marked by these sigla, but none of which is regarded as part of reconstructed Q with a strong probability (i.e. A or B) because there is no space between the central braces.

Several things could be said here. First, this passage is by no means a complicated example; on the contrary, it is relatively simple compared to many of the passages of reconstructed Q, but it shows that *the wording of Q can never be reconstructed with any certainty*. Secondly, it seems obvious that this system of sigla is pretty unwieldy and not at all user-friendly. Thirdly, most of the information that these sigla actually encode is available in the synopsis presentation already. Fourthly, the interpretative material that is included, the certainty ratings, ostensibly borrowed from the United Bible Societies *Greek New Testament*, is both un-nuanced (although five ratings are used in IQP and in the *Documenta Q* work-books: A, B, C, D and U[nclassified]); only three are used in the *CEQ*: A or B, C, D or U) and

is often presented primarily through the presence or absence of a blank space between a variety of brackets, braces and/or parentheses.

Fifthly, the really crucial information — for example, why we should think that Q has καί rather than τότε; which position we should prefer for ὁ διάβολος — is completely absent. The reconstructed text of Q is delivered in complex packaging, but without any argument as to why this wording of Q should be accepted, other than the mere fact that it is printed in this book. We are clearly meant to trust the objectivity and scholarship of the three editors as they fine-tuned the outcome of the deliberations of the forty. But it is easier to take things on trust if one can see the arguments. The fundamental problem is that it is extremely difficult to engage critically with this particular reconstructed Q text because we do not know the arguments that the editors found persuasive. While the UBS *Greek New Testament* gives evidence for and against readings as well as probability ratings, here we get only a scaled-down version of the probability ratings and no actual evidence (beyond what is obvious in the synopsis). A better model for the whole project would have been the United Bible Societies' *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* where the evidence for and against readings are discussed and evaluated (and minority reports also occasionally included).

Sixthly, despite the size of the book and the amount of blank space on each page no room has been found for the citation of textual evidence for the texts of Matthew and Luke on which the reconstruction of Q is obviously based (let alone the other parallel texts). There are numerous notes (pp. xc–cvi), but even these are strangely more likely to cite modern versions than manuscript evidence; the result is that this is not an adequate tool for the serious study of the Q tradition as it actually appears in the manuscripts of Matthew and Luke (Aland's *Synopsis* or Nestle-Aland²⁷ remains a necessary accompaniment — unfortunately).

There is another important resource emerging from the IQP, which offers just this sort of analysis of arguments related to the reconstruction of Q, but in rather a different scale — not necessarily the sort of thing that will be on everyone's shelves, namely, the series of books (which will probably total 32 volumes), entitled *Documenta Q: Reconstructions of Q through Two Centuries of Gospel Research Excerpted, Sorted and Evaluated*, which aim to assemble all the significant arguments relevant to the reconstruction of Q.¹⁵ The

¹⁵ J.M. Robinson, J.S. Kloppenborg & P. Hoffmann, general editors (Leuven: Peeters, 1996–).

arguments are sorted into various categories (Luke=Q, pro; Luke=Q, con; Matthew=Q, pro; Matthew=Q, con), reproduced from the sources, and followed by evaluative comments from the editors. So far seven volumes have been published.¹⁶ Some idea of the scale of these productions can be gained by checking the discussion of Q 4:13, which takes thirty pages.¹⁷ The Q text is presented in exactly the same format as is subsequently reproduced in *CEQ*; then each of the major questions are discussed in turn. For example, whether Q should be reconstructed with Luke's *καί* or Matthew's *τότε* is treated on pp. 359–62, where the opinions of around thirty different scholars are mentioned (with some citations where reasons were given), followed by four evaluative comments — basically *τότε* is characteristically Matthean, and therefore plausible as Matthean redaction of Q, while *καί* is not a characteristic Lukan redactional sentence-opener. So the Lukan wording is adopted for Q with the ranking of B (“a convincing probability”: there may be good arguments on both sides of the question, but the arguments on one side clearly outweigh the arguments on the other side’, p. xiv). Somewhat similarly, in relation to the question we raised earlier about the position of *ὁ διάβολος*, we find a two page treatment (pp. 368–69) in which around a dozen scholarly opinions are cited. Here the evaluations are split. Three opt for the Lukan position, broadly following the principle that Luke is more likely to preserve the word order of his source, with a probability rating of D (‘a way of indicating the decision towards which one is inclined, but without enough certainty to include the reading in the text’, p. xiv); while one of the editors (Robinson, whose minority position is also noted in *CEQ*), suggests that Luke has had reason to change the word order of Q and opts for the Matthean positioning (also with a D rating).

¹⁶ *Q 4:1–13, 16 The Temptations of Jesus — Nazara* (ed. C. Heil, S. Carruth & J.M. Robinson, 1996); *Q 6:20–21. The Beatitudes for the Poor, Hungry, and Mourning* (ed. T. Heike, 2001); *Q 7:1–10 The Centurion’s Faith in Jesus’ Word* (ed. S.R. Johnson, 2002); *Q 11:2b–4. The Lord’s Prayer* (ed. S.D. Anderson, S. Carruth & A. Garsky, 1996); *Q 12:8–12. Confessing or Denying — Speaking against the Holy Spirit — Hearings before Synagogues — Fleeing among the Towns of Israel* (ed. U. Brauner, C. Heil, P. Hoffmann, J.E. Amon, T. Heike, M.E. Boring & J.Ma. Asgeirson, 1998); *Q 12:49–59. Children against Parents — Judging the Time — Settling out of Court* (ed. S. Carruth, A. Garsky, C. Heil, T. Heike & J.E. Amon, 1997); *Q 22:28, 30. You Will Judge the Twelve Tribes of Israel* (ed. P. Hoffmann, S.H. Brandenburger, U. Brauner, T. Hieke, 1999).

¹⁷ *Q 4:1–13, 16 The Temptations of Jesus — Nazara* (ed. C. Heil, S. Carruth & J.M. Robinson, 1996), 359–89.

There is little doubt that these tools, *Documenta Q* and *CEQ*, are important resources for the attempt to reconstruct the Q wording in detail, and for communicating (marketing?) the results of the IQP endeavours. Since much of what is given is informed opinion, we remain dependent for evidence upon the old tools: the *Synopsis* and a good Greek *Concordance*. Unless, that is, one has the good fortune to have a new book which combines the features of a concordance with those of a synopsis — to present the synoptic evidence concordantly — a *Synoptic Concordance*.¹⁸ Although this comes at a scale (four volume, 4,000 pages) and a price (over 600 Euros) that may place it beyond the means of the average synoptic scholar, it does provide most of the evidence one needs (although unfortunately it does not include textual information). Essentially for each word it offers statistical information and then a concordance laid out as a *Synopsis*, with various coded annotations. E.g. at τότε (vol. 4, 722–32) we can see usage statistics at a glance (90–6–15+21). Through coded lists we are informed that in the double tradition Matthew has τότε 13 times (only 3 of which are paralleled in Luke — the references and synoptic presentation are easy to find: Luke 6:42; 11:24, 26 [all of these are in *CEQ*]) — the other ten are mostly used as a conjunction/introduction and Luke has either καί (4×), δέ (2×), or nothing. Luke does have τότε 3 times in the double tradition without parallel in Matthew (investigation in the synoptic presentation shows that each of these use τότε in its temporal sense, rather than as a conjunction — Luke 13:26; 14:21; 16:16 [all of these are also in *CEQ*]). Thus we could easily find in this tool the evidence which would support the IQP conclusion that τότε is found in Q, but not in its characteristically Matthean usage.

Excavating Q

In his recent work *Excavating Q: The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel*, ‘a book on how one talks about Q, and why it matters’ (p. ix), John Kloppenborg Verbin offers a major statement on the existence, nature, theology and social-setting of Q.¹⁹ The title

¹⁸ P. Hoffmann, T. Hieke & U. Bauer (eds.), *Synoptic Concordance: A Greek Concordance to the First Three Gospels in Synoptic Arrangement, Statistically Evaluated, Including Occurrences in Acts: Vol. 1: Introduction — Einführung, ALPHA–DELTA; Vol. 2: EPSILON–IOTA; Vol. 3: KAPPA–OMIKRON; Vol. 4: PI–OMEGA* (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1999 [vol. 1], 2000 [vols. 2–4]).

¹⁹ *Excavating Q: The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000).

encapsulates the over-riding metaphor of excavation, in which Q can be conceived as an archaeological ‘site’, whose various layers or strata can be uncovered and studied. The subtitle encapsulates the argumentative claim that Q was ‘a literary and theological work in its own right and...deserves a designation that acknowledges its integrity and independent value as a document of early Christianity’.²⁰

The book is an invaluable resource for understanding what contemporary Q scholars have been thinking: Kloppenborg Verbin has been an insider to much recent Q study and he writes with an awareness of the whole scope of Q studies over the last two centuries or so, and with an awareness of the social and theological locatedness of that Q scholarship. Only a brief account can be offered here.

After a helpful introduction to the synoptic problem generally, and to the two source hypothesis, Kloppenborg Verbin turns to the character and reconstruction of Q (chapter 2). To cut a long story short he conceives of Q as a Greek document (albeit ‘formulated in an environment in which Aramaic speech patterns could influence its language’, p. 77), from the Galilee, written around the time of the Jewish Revolt (the final redaction occurred after the events of AD 70). The order of the Q document can be reconstructed (basically by following Luke’s order [although the argument is somewhat more sophisticated than that, pp. 88–91]); the extent of Q can be determined, essentially by including all of the double tradition and those portions of the triple tradition with substantial Matthew-Luke agreements; and the wording of Q can be determined in accordance with the principle that ‘where Matthew and Luke disagree in wording, the version which appears to be less likely the product of redaction is more likely to be the wording of Q’ (p. 101).²¹

As already noted, Kloppenborg Verbin has been at the heart of the IQP since its inception, and his earlier book, *The Formation of Q*, pioneered a literary-critical analysis of Q into strata, an approach

²⁰ *Excavating Q*, 402 (the argumentative claim is defended in pp. 398–408).

²¹ As regards content the result can be listed as follows (using standard features: Lukan reference; <doubtful>, (probable)): 3:(3), 7b–9, 16b–17, <21–22>; 4:1–13, (16a); 6:20a, 20b–23, (24–26), 27–33; (Q/Matt 5:41); 6:(34–35b), 35c; 36–37b, 38c; 39–45, 46, 46–49; 7:1b–2, 6b–10, 18–19, 22–23, 24–28, (29–30), 31–35; 9:57–60, (61–62); 10:2–16, 21–22, 23b–24; <Matt 10:5b–6, 23>; <10:25–28>; 11:2–4, <5–8>, 9–13, 14–20, (21–22), 23, 24–26, (27–28), 29–32, 33–35 (36), 39–44, 46–52; 12:2–12, (13–14, 16–21), 22b–31, 33–34, <35–38>, 39–40, 42b–46, 49, 51–53, 54–56, 58–59; 13:18–19, 20–21, 24, (25), 26–27, 28–29, 30, 34–35; 14:<5>, 11/18:14; 14:16–24, 26–27; 17:33; 14:34–35; 15:4–7, (8–10); 16:13, 16, 17–18; 17:1b–2, 3b–4, 6b, <7–10>, (20–21), 23–24, 37b, 26–27, (28–29), 30, 34–35; 19:12–13, 15b–26; 22:28–30.

which is further explained and defended here. The key element involves distinguishing an earlier sapiential layer comprising six clusters of material with paraenetic, hortatory and instructional concerns ('the formative stratum' Q¹); from the deuteronomistic and judgemental material which dominates the five blocks of material in Q ('the main redaction' Q²).²² This stratification has been widely accepted within the IQP.²³ The non-apocalyptic agreement between sayings in Q¹ and some of those in the Gospel of Thomas has been fundamental to a number of scholars associated with the Jesus Seminar.²⁴ For others, the discernment of different strata within an already hypothetical and reconstructed document has been a step too far.²⁵ The evidence of 'stratigraphic markers', passages from Q² redaction embedded into Q¹ settings (Q 6:23c; 10:12, 13–15; 12:8–10), is the crucial link in the argument (pp. 146–50); and one which seems vulnerable to criticism.²⁶

²² Q³ is quasi-biographical and narrative material incorporated at the final stage of Q development. See *Excavating Q*, 112–65; cf. J.S. Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q: Trajectories in Ancient Wisdom Collections* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987).

²³ Robinson wrote: 'the assumption of early sapiential collections embedded in Q...followed by a deuteronomistic layer corresponding to the final redaction of Q...seems to have become a general assumption of the present status of Q scholarship', 'History of Q Research', *Critical Edition of Q*, lxvi.

²⁴ E.g. B.L. Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993), esp. 35–38; cf. *Excavating Q*, 185–91 (for Kloppenborg on Mack). Kloppenborg himself resisted converting his literary history of the development of Q into tradition history of the Q materials (*Formation*, 244–45; cf. also 'The Sayings Gospel Q and the Quest of the Historical Jesus', *HTR* 89 (1996) 307–344, esp. 322–23 n. 70), although it seems inevitable that Q¹ would be more primary than Q² in historical Jesus study (e.g. *Excavating Q*, 201–211; cf. also his approval of the Cynic 'analogy', pp. 420–44).

²⁵ So in general D. Catchpole, *The Quest for Q* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993); C.M. Tuckett, 'On the Stratification of Q' in J.S. Kloppenborg & L.E. Vaage, eds, *Early Christianity Q and Jesus*, *Semeia* 55 (1991) 213–22; *Q and the History of Early Christianity: Studies on Q* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 70–74; A. Kirk, *The Composition of the Sayings Source: Genre, Synchrony, and Wisdom Redaction in Q* (NovTSup 91; Leiden: E.J. Brill).

²⁶ Other important features of this impressive book include the treatment of the theology of Q, the Q People, the way Q would have been read in the Galilee, and the role Q has played in historical and theological debates about early Christianity.

An Aramaic Q?

Maurice Casey's *An Aramaic Approach to Q*²⁷ is a sequel to his monograph *Aramaic Sources of Mark's Gospel*.²⁸ It is structured very similarly to its predecessor but expands the approach taken there to cover material in both Matthew and Luke. The opening chapter is an overview of the state of research on Q (pp. 1–50), chapter 2 is a brief discussion of method (pp. 51–63), and chapters 3–5 consider three sets of texts, before a short conclusion (pp. 185–90). The texts studied in the three core chapters have been purposely chosen for the variety of situations they demonstrate. Chapter 3 'Scribes and Pharisees: Matthew 23.23–36 // Luke 11.39–51' presents a case where Casey believes that a single Aramaic source underlies two different Greek translations used by the evangelists. In chapter 4 'John the Baptist: Matthew 11.2–19 // Luke 7.18–35' the author reconstructs a single Aramaic source which, in the form of a single Greek translation, was used by both evangelists. In chapter 5 'Exorcism and Overlapping Sources: Mark 3.20–30; Matthew 12.22–32; Luke 11.14–23; 12.10' there is discussion of a case where a passage in Q overlaps with a passage in Mark. Here Casey reconstructs Aramaic sources, finding that in the case of one saying no fewer than three Greek translations went back to a single Aramaic original.

According to Casey,

Q is a convenient label for the sources of passages which are found in both the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke, and which have not been taken from Mark's Gospel. ... It implies that Q was not a single document, and that Luke did not take all his Q material from Matthew ...' (p. 2).

Casey prefers what he terms 'a chaotic model of Q' (e.g. pp. 48, 187).

In his lengthy review of scholarship Casey maintains that there has been an assumption through Q scholarship that it is a single document — an assumption that has never been demonstrated. He surveys scholarship under historical headings: 'From Holtzmann to Tödt' (pp. 2–15), 'From Robinson to Kloppenborg' (pp. 15–32), climaxing in the rhetorically entitled 'Trends from Kloppenborg to Kloppenborg Verbin' (pp. 32–50).

²⁷ Maurice Casey, *An Aramaic Approach to Q: Sources for the Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (SNTSMS 122; Cambridge: CUP, 2002); ISBN 0 521 81723 4 £42.50/US\$60.00.

²⁸ Maurice Casey, *Aramaic Sources of Mark's Gospel* (SNTSMS 102; Cambridge: CUP, 1998). A useful review of this by B.A. Mastin is found in *JTS* 51 (2000) 654–63.

In surveying more recent work Casey complains of a ‘largely American Q’ (p. 41), the view that Q was a single Greek document (even if it existed in several versions). Goulder’s likening of Q to a Juggernaut is ‘a regrettably fair comparison’ (p. 47), while Q scholarship is ‘in a regrettably bureaucratised state’ (p. 50). Reviewing Goulder’s work,²⁹ he concludes

Some of the arguments in Goulder’s introduction are so powerful that they should be considered to have destroyed the typically American view of Q. (p. 45)

His own attitude to the weight of evidence is clear from the following quotation:

These two points [the lack of reference to Q in antiquity and the fact that it has not survived] should have been devastating enough to prevent the emergence of anything like the American Q, a single document, with its own theology, cherished by its own community. (p. 47)

Casey’s own model, relying on work by Loveday Alexander and Alan Millard, is to suppose that multiple written sources were available to Matthew and Luke.

It makes excellent sense to suppose that different sets of notes on wax tablets should be made available to Matthew and Luke, and should not be kept when Matthew and Luke had edited what they needed into Gospels written with a deliberate eye on the needs of Christian communities. (p. 48)

However, since Casey’s wax tablets are no less hypothetical than ‘the American Q’, these models will inevitably be tested by their ability to explain the data in the gospels. We therefore turn to some points of this evidence.

Casey’s Evidence for an Aramaic Q

Purify vs. Give Alms: Matthew 23:26 // Luke 11:41

In arguing that Matthew and Luke sometimes made or used two different Greek translations of an Aramaic source (p. 55), Casey lays considerable weight on the relationship between Matthew 23:26 καθάρισον πρῶτον τὸ ἐντὸς τοῦ ποτηρίου ἵνα γένηται καὶ τὸ ἐκτὸς αὐτοῦ καθαρὸν ‘first cleanse the inside of the cup so that its outside also may become clean’ and Luke 11:41 πλὴν τὰ ἐνόντα δότε

²⁹ M.D. Goulder, *Luke: A New Paradigm* (2 vols.; JSNTS 20; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989).

ἐλεημοσύνην καὶ ἰδοὺ πάντα καθαρὰ ὑμῖν ἐστὶν ‘but give alms of that which is within and behold all things are clean for you’. He follows Wellhausen’s proposal that Luke’s δότε ἐλεημοσύνην represents a confusion of Aramaic *zakkau* ‘give alms’ and *dakkau* ‘purify’. As Wellhausen says

Im Aramäischen nun reduziert sich die im Griechischen ganz unbegreifliche Variante auf *dakkau* (reinigt) und *zakkau* (gibt Almosen). Die beiden Verba sind graphisch wenig verschieden und ursprünglich sogar identisch. Lukas hat sich also versehen und zwar verlesen. Hier ist es zweifellos, daß das Versehen von einer schriftlichen Vorlage ausgeht, und von da aus wird das auch für andere Fälle wahrscheinlich.³⁰

This is a piece of evidence to which Casey returns repeatedly (pp. 3, 10, 20, 23–24, 38, 55, 82) and which therefore requires special scrutiny.

To comment on Wellhausen’s original proposal, the fact that the alleged verbs are variants of the same original verb in earlier Semitic (ursprünglich sogar identisch) is hardly relevant at a synchronic level.³¹ This means that the main reason for the error in Wellhausen’s model is that ‘die beiden Verba sind graphisch wenig verschieden’. There are several problems with Wellhausen’s suggestion and the way it is supported by Casey.

(1) Since *daleth* and *zayin* are not particularly graphically close the confusion is not quite natural. Neither would the verbs have sounded particularly similar.

(2) While Wellhausen’s suggestion would be plausible if the two sayings were close except that one evangelist used καθάρισον and the other δότε ἐλεημοσύνην, this is not the case.³² Both mention something to do with ‘inside’ in the first half and ‘clean’ in the second, and both begin with imperatives. But since both ‘inside’ and ‘clean’ have occurred in the immediately preceding context in both gospels it is possible that two quite different original sayings continuing the previous discussion might have continued using the same vocabulary. This would not necessarily show the Matthean and Lukan sayings to be genetically related.

(3) Matthew’s imperative καθάρισον is singular while Luke’s δότε is plural. Since both fit the context within the respective gospels it could

³⁰ J. Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien* (2nd edn; Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1911) 27.

³¹ The different initial consonants of these two verbs reflect the way an original **dh* had developed into *d* in Aramaic and *z* in Hebrew.

³² As Kloppenborg says, ‘... appeal to mistranslation does not explain the other (substantial) differences between Matthew and Luke.’ (*The Formation of Q*, 58).

be argued that either one had been assimilated to their present context and no longer represent the number of the original. However, the difference in number creates further distance between these supposedly related forms. Casey is inconsistent in the reconstructions he gives: on p. 38 he has the singular imperatives *zky* and *dky*, but elsewhere the plural, *zkw* and *dkw*. This produces the rather ironic statement that ‘... τὰ ἐνόντα δότε ἐλεημοσύνην is a literal translation of נא לְגוֹא זְכִי ...’ (p. 38). How can it be literal if the Greek has a plural imperative and the Aramaic a singular one?

(4) In Wellhausen’s scheme the translator has to mistake the word *dkw* ‘cleanse’ at the beginning of the verse and yet correctly render the word ‘clean’, from the same root, at the end of the verse. This happens in Luke following a context which has been talking about cleansing.

(5) For the confusion to occur, there clearly needs to be an imperative meaning ‘give alms’ with which the correct *dakkau* can be confused. While it is true that the *pael* of *zky* is registered in the meaning ‘to give charity’,³³ further study of the use of this verb makes the proposed confusion less probable. Casey reconstructs the original of the saying as *dkw n’ lgw*.³⁴ If a translator was going to mistake *dkw* for *zkw* it would be easier to do so if there was evidence that *zkw* could be followed by *lamedh* and an impersonal object referring to that which was given as alms. But it is unlikely that the verb can yield the right meaning in this construction. Some of the evidence Casey gives for the use of the term (p. 23) does not stand up to scrutiny. The two forms he cites from 11QtgJob are irrelevant since they do not mean ‘give alms’ and the form *zkw* in 4Q542 is not relevant since it is a noun. A doubly irrelevant example of Casey’s is his reference to *zky* in Ahiqar 46 where the word is not a verb and besides comes from an earlier period of Aramaic when many words that in all dialects by the time of Jesus would be written with *daleth* were still written with *zayin*.³⁵ For further examples Casey merely refers to Dalman as giving relevant examples meaning ‘give alms’ in the Palestinian Talmud.³⁶

³³ Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period* (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan, 1990) 177a.

³⁴ Casey p. 64. One may have serious doubts about *gw*, rather than *gw*, as an appropriate spelling; see also p. 139 below for reservations about Casey’s use of the term *n*.

³⁵ Thus in the very line to which Casey refers the later forms *dk* and *dy* are still written *zk* and *zy*. On the writing of this sound in the Elephantine Papyri (of which Ahiqar is an example) see T. Muraoka and B. Porten, *A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic* (Leiden: Brill, 1998) 3–6.

³⁶ Casey, p. 23 n. 86 citing G.H. Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu* (2nd edn; Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1930) 71.

Dalman does indeed give examples in this meaning, though none are relevant here because the meaning ‘give alms’ only comes into effect when explicit mention is made of a beneficiary. Thus the recurring *zkh ymy* (j. Shek. 49b (2×), j. Taan 64b) means ‘give alms to me’, but *zkh* on its own would not mean ‘give alms’ but ‘be righteous’. The former phrase only comes to me ‘give alms to me’, via the route of meaning ‘do righteousness with me’, or ‘attain merit through me’.³⁷ The core meaning of *zkh* in most cases thus remained ‘be righteous/meritorious’. Thus for Casey to be correct we need to suppose that the translator had before him *dkw n’ lgw’*, mentally processed *zkw n’ lgw’* and, despite the fact that *zkw* used without reference to a recipient refers to any righteous state or action, understood it to refer quite specifically to one involving giving.

Moreover, Casey has to postulate that the hypothetical translators of his sources were inconsistent. In the second half of the verses (Matthew 23:26 // Luke 11:41) Casey reconstructs *bryt’* behind both Luke’s πάντα ‘everything’ and Matthew’s τὸ ἔκτος ‘the outside’ (pp. 64, 81). The beauty of this suggestion is that *bryt’* could mean both ‘outside’ and ‘creation’, and Luke’s πάντα can be explained by a connection between ‘creation’ and ‘everything’. The problem, however, is that the translator of the two immediately preceding verses in Luke has successfully managed to translate *bryt’* by ‘outside’, with a clear semantic opposition to the ‘inside’. How plausible is it that a translator, seeing the same word for the third time in a consecutive text, is going to translate it in a way which reveals no connection with the previous occurrences? But matters are worse than that: we have to imagine that a translator of the Aramaic behind Luke 11:39–41 translated ‘cleanse’ correctly in v. 39, but incorrectly in v. 41, as well as translating ‘inside’ correctly twice in vv. 39 and 40, before translating it incorrectly in v. 41. The supposition is sufficiently implausible that one would have to consider v. 41 translated by a different person. Yet once one accepts the possibility that v. 41 is no longer part of a continuous document with what precedes, it need no longer be considered an exact parallel to Matthew 23:26. After all, it is the position of Luke 11:41 which provides one of the strongest incentives for its comparison with Matthew 23:26.

³⁷ Jacob Neusner, *The Talmud of the Land of Israel: A Preliminary Translation and Explanation*, vol. 18, *Besah and Taanit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) 158, translates the example in j. Taan. 64b ‘attain merit through me [by giving me charity]’.

All in all, whatever the relationship between Matthew 23:26 and Luke 11:41 they are a precarious basis on which to posit multiple Greek translations of an Aramaic source.

Dill and Rue: Matthew 23:23 // Luke 11:42

In the same passages, in Matthew 23:23 // Luke 11:42, we have another supposed evidence for two independent translations of an Aramaic Q. Casey follows Eberhard Nestle's proposal that that Luke's *πήγανον* 'rue' (contrasting with Matthew's *ἄνηθον* 'dill') arose when he misread *ܫܒܪܫ* as *ܫܒܪܫ*.³⁸ Kloppenborg had responded to Nestle's suggestion saying

... it is doubtful whether *πήγανον* stands for *ܫܒܪܫ* since *πήγανον* has an exact Aramaic equivalent, *ܦܝܓܢ*.³⁹

Casey retorts:

But *ܦܝܓܢ* is Hebrew, and Kloppenborg offers no evidence that it was used in Aramaic. (p. 24)

Casey is correct that *pygm* is the Hebrew form, but Babylonian Jewish Aramaic and Syriac do attest *pygn*⁷ (*pêgnā*).⁴⁰ This makes the positing of *pygn*⁷ in first century Palestinian Aramaic at least no less speculative than Casey's positing of *šbr*⁷ for the same period. Casey states:

The word *ܫܒܪܫ* does not survive in the Aramaic of our period, but this is merely because the few extant texts do not include any discussions of herbs. It was already in existence in Akkadian as *šib-bur-ra-tū*, so there should be no doubt that it is early enough in date. It is found in later Aramaic, and abundantly attested in Syriac. (p. 73)

Thus all the references Casey gives to *šbr*⁷ come from outside of Palestine and are in East Aramaic dialects. If we are indeed to connect this word with Akkadian *šibburratu* — a point of which the authoritative Akkadian dictionary seems unsure,⁴¹ and which leaves the difference in vowels and gender between the two nouns

³⁸ E. Nestle, "Anise" and "Rue", *Expository Times* 15 (1904) 528.

³⁹ Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 58–59.

⁴⁰ Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods* (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan, 2002), 899a.

⁴¹ *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*, Š part II, 377. This calls Aramaic *šbr*⁷ 'a possible cognate' to Akkadian *šibburratu*. To say that words are 'cognate' is not to identify them as the same word, but only to state that they have an etymological link. However, Casey, in the quotation above from p. 73 speaks as if the Aramaic and Akkadian forms were actually the same lexeme.

unexplained⁴² — then we still cannot be sure that this word existed in Palestinian Aramaic at the time of Jesus. One should not rule out the possibility that, as seems to be the case elsewhere and as is plausible on the basis of geography, a word has passed somehow from Akkadian into Eastern Aramaic and never was current in Western Aramaic, or Imperial Aramaic of the Western regions. Moreover, the line that Casey takes seems rather counterintuitive. We *know* that there was rabbinic discussion about the tithing of anise/dill (Hebrew שבת = Eastern Aramaic שבתא = ἄνηθον = *Anethum graveolens*; see mMaaseroth 4,5). We also know that there was discussion about the tithing of rue (Hebrew פיגום = Eastern Aramaic פיגנא = πήγανον = *Ruta graveolens*; see mSheviith 9,1⁴³). The wording of the evangelists in Greek therefore fits within the context of rabbinic concerns, and it is therefore unclear why we must bring a quite different plant, ‘Syrian rue’ (*Peganum harmala* = East Aramaic שברא), into the discussion at all.

The suggestion of Nestle, which Casey follows, seems in fact to go back to a misreading of the work on Aramaic plant names by Löw.⁴⁴ It is useful to return to Nestle’s original short note, a large proportion of which is cited below. Commenting on Matthew 23:23 and Luke 11:42 he says

What is more likely than the identity of *anise* and *rue*, ἄνηθον and πήγανον? The botanical plants of course are not identical, nor are the Greek words; but now turn to the *Semitic original*, which must underlie the Greek. I seek the Greek words in the index of Löw, *Aramaicische* [sic] *Pflanzennamen* (1881), and am bidden to look for πήγανον, p. 371f., and for ἄνηθον, p. 373. In § 317 Löw treats of שברא, *Peganum Harmala*, L., and in § 318 of שבתא, *Anethum graveoleus*, L. His book follows the order of the alphabet.

Can there be any doubt that Luke used a Semitic source and misread in it שברא for שבתא, just as in the preceding verse, according to the beautiful discovery of Wellhausen, he took זכו as imperative Peal and translated ‘give alms,’ instead of the Pael ‘cleanse’?⁴⁵

Thus Nestle’s suggestion resulted from consultation of the index of Löw and finding the Aramaic entries pointed to by the Greek index. However, the index is merely a list of all Greek plants cited, and does

⁴² Aramaic *šbr*’ is masculine and Akkadian *šiburratu* feminine.

⁴³ Here פיגום is the first word of the chapter, and therefore arguably in a prominent position within the tradition.

⁴⁴ Immanuel Löw, *Aramaicische Pflanzennamen* (Leipzig: Wilhelm Engelmann, 1881).

⁴⁵ Nestle, “‘Anise’ and ‘Rue’”, 528. Actually, Wellhausen clearly posited the *paal* of *zkw*, not the *peal*. Nestle’s suggestion is an accidental or deliberate improvement on Wellhausen.

not equate these words with the Aramaic word in whose entry they occur. Löw's original entry on *Peganum harmala* is quite clear. After equating the Syriac form *šbr*' (*šabbārā*) with Arabic *ḥarmal* and therefore with *Peganum harmala*, it adds 'πήγανον ἄγριον, nicht πήγανον *Ruta* [*graveolens* und Andere namentlich *Chalepensis* L.]'⁴⁶ The entry denies the equation between Aramaic *šbr*' and unqualified Greek πήγανον, but maintains the equation between *Ruta graveolens*, πήγανον, Hebrew פִּיגְוֹן, and Syriac *pygn*'. Despite the common element πήγανον used in the Greek names of both *Ruta graveolens* and *Peganum harmala*, the entry provides no basis for supposing that a translator even *could* have equated *šbr*' with πήγανον, even if the former term was used in first century Palestinian Aramaic.

The *dill-rue* variant and the *cleanse-give alms* variant are two of the strongest of Casey's arguments for multiple Greek translations of the same Aramaic text. Most of the others have less force. However, even the strongest examples are an uncertain base on which to mount a model of multiple translations of a single Aramaic source.

But we need to consider some of Casey's more original contributions.

How Reliable Are Casey's Aramaic Reconstructions?

One of the most striking features of Casey's work on Aramaic sources is his attempt to reconstruct the Aramaic behind whole passages in the Greek Gospels. In doing so he feels that he is following a methodological constraint called for by S.R. Driver and M. Black (pp. 9–10).⁴⁷ However, reconstruction of whole sentences is not only difficult because of the level of conjecture needed, but also because it requires considerable technical expertise. There surely is a *via media* between the arbitrary reconstruction of isolated Aramaic words (with no regard to their setting within a plausible sentence), and the overconfident retroversion of a whole Greek passage into Aramaic. Arguably Casey's presentation would be greatly improved if he

⁴⁶ Löw, *Aramäische Pflanzennamen*, 316. The text in square brackets belongs to the original edition, but contain additions not by Löw but by Ascherson, Nöldeke and Fleischer, only some of which contain indications of their author.

⁴⁷ These scholars were responding to a tendency to isolate words from grammatical constructions in discussion and calling for people to consider sentences as a whole when alleging mistranslation of Aramaic. Even if Black called for scholars to reconstruct whole sentences when alleging mistranslation, there is no evidence that he thought reconstructions could demand any degree of confidence, nor was he calling for the retroversion of whole passages as Casey has done. See M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (3rd edn; Oxford: Clarendon, 1967) 8, 14.

dropped the claim to reconstruct the entire text of source documents and only reconstructed Aramaic words and sayings in so far as they were pertinent to his argument.

Below are some select criticisms of some of his reconstructions. As there is as yet no easy way of searching the entire Aramaic corpus and many of the lexica which do exist are incomplete it is often difficult to state definitively that a word or construction could not occur in an Aramaic text. However, the burden of proof lies with Casey to show that his reconstructions are valid Aramaic rather than with his reviewers to show that they could not possibly be.

P. 64 verse 1. *dy ʿśryn* ‘who tithe’. The *peal* participle is impossible; since the verb ‘to tithe’ is denominative it would have to be *paal*, i.e. *mʿśryn*.

P. 64 verse 2. Casey reconstructs the precative particle *nʿ* here and in verse 6. The Hebrew precative particle *nāʿ* is familiar to all, but any Aramaic equivalent it had was decidedly rare, being attested in Syriac (e.g. the Peshitta to 1 Samuel 22:12 in imitation of the Hebrew), but not recorded in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic or the dialects most likely to represent Jesus’ speech. Moreover, its use in *ʿlyn nʿ hyyb hwh lmʿbd* ‘These, surely, (one) was liable to do’, is peculiar since the particle is asseverative and is not used in connection with a verb.⁴⁸

Immediately after this questionable reconstruction Casey continues *wʿnwn lʿ lmʿbr* ‘and (one was liable) not to pass over them (i.e. the others).’ We have a masculine plural *ʿnwn* used meaning ‘those things’, where for the neuter we might be forgiven for expecting a feminine plural. The order is also questionable since *ʿnwn* as direct object of a verb tends to follow it, being of the same status as a suffix, though not graphically joined to the verb it follows. The verb *ʿbr* is then presented as taking an object not mediated by a preposition — which seems suspicious.⁴⁹

P. 64 verse 4. *dy dkyn* ‘who cleanse’. As in verse 1 Casey gives us a *peal* participle where we must have a *paal*.

mlʿ mn ‘full from’ is suspicious since *mlʿ* ‘full’, when associated with a full noun of the entity filling, normally lacks any preposition.

⁴⁸ Yet it is in exactly this context in Mark 2:28 that Casey reconstructs another *nʿ* (*Aramaic Sources of Mark’s Gospel*, p. 138).

⁴⁹ The occurrence of this construction in Palestinian Targumim is probably only due to the bending of native Aramaic syntax in imitation of the Hebrew. Despite frequent rumours to the contrary, Targumim contain some very literal elements in their representation of the Hebrew. For this with regard to the object marker in Targum Jonathan see P.J. Williams, *Studies in the Syntax of the Peshitta of 1 Kings* (Leiden: Brill, 2001) 80–82.

One cannot use the $\epsilon\xi$ in Matthew 23:25 to insist on reconstructing an unnatural *mn* in Aramaic (p. 79) since it is only right to establish what Aramaic idiom is on the basis of texts actually extant in Aramaic.

P. 64 verse 6. *bryt' dk'* 'the outside/person/everything is clean' seems to be a case of a feminine noun with a masculine verb or adjective.

On reading Casey's reconstructions one feels continually uneasy at his use of the states of the noun. Aramaic has, in addition to the construct and absolute (non-construct) states of Hebrew the so-called *emphatic* state, which originally functioned somewhat like a definite article fixed to the end of a noun. He tends to overuse the absolute case. Thus five times on p. 64 the scribes and Pharisees are addressed as *spryn wpryšyn* in the absolute state where one would expect an emphatic.⁵⁰ Moreover, the genitive construction *absolute noun + d* or *dy* 'of' + *definite noun* is used: *bnyn 'ntwn dy qtlyhwn* 'you are the sons of their murderers' (p. 64 verse 11), and *dm dhbl* 'the blood of Abel' (p. 65 verse 13). The construction with the first noun in the *emphatic* state is well attested, but the burden of proof lies with Casey to show that his wording is an attested or probable construction in relevant dialects.⁵¹

P. 65 verse 12. *'mr 'p hkmth dy 'lh'* 'the Wisdom of God said' has a masculine verb with a feminine subject.

P. 65 verse 13, *'lyhdn* is written for *'lyhwn*.

Pp. 79–80. Since the seventh century AD Harklean Syriac version was attempting to be literal the word it used for Matthew 23:25's $\acute{\alpha}\kappa\rho\alpha\sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$, namely *šryhwt'* (found also in Ahiqar) 'must surely be the right word' (p. 79). Though both Aramaic sources are a long distance from Jesus' Aramaic, Casey is confident enough about his reconstructed word to suggest that since Luke rendered it by $\rho\omicron\nu\eta\rho\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$ he may not of known it (p. 80). The word is thus too obscure for Luke to know, but not so obscure as to escape Casey's knowledge of Aramaic.

⁵⁰ Ironically, in his previous monograph when he wanted an indefinite 'Pharisees' he used the emphatic state: *wprwšy' 'wmryn lh* 'And Pharisees said to him' (*Aramaic Sources*, pp. 138–39). No explanation is given as to why in 1998 the Aramaic word for Pharisee was *prwš'* and in 2002 *pryš'*. In *wprwšy' 'wmryn lh* a Mishnaic Hebrew form is strangely sandwiched between two Aramaic words. Aramaic would have *'mryn*.

⁵¹ For instance, it is not a construction registered for Targum Neofiti in David M. Golomb, *A Grammar of Targum Neofiti* (HSM 34; Chico, CA: Scholars, 1985) 218–27.

P. 82. Casey seems to think that ‘blind guides’ in Aramaic would be *ʿwryn ngdyn*, but in Aramaic adjectives and qualifiers typically follow their nouns.

P. 92 (cf. p. 64). Allegedly Luke 11:44 ἐστὲ ὡς τὰ μνημεῖα τὰ ἄδηλα ‘you are like unclear tombs’ is a mistranslation of the Aramaic *dmytwn lqbryn mttšyn* ‘you are like whitewashed tombs’. The participle *mttšyn* should have been connected by the translator with *twš* ‘to plaster’, but was wrongly connected with *šy* ‘hide’. However, whereas the former verb occurs in West Aramaic, the latter is only attested in Eastern Aramaic (Babylonian Jewish, Syriac, Mandaic).⁵² If Casey wants to allege a confusion he needs to propose a specific historical model for it. If this involved Luke using a Greek translation of Aramaic sources translated by an individual more familiar with Eastern Aramaic then this explanation must be shown to work over a number of texts, rather than invoked in an *ad hoc* way.

P. 105 verse 3. *ʿnt hw ʿth* for ‘Are you him coming...?’ is rather dubious since the Aramaic expression is certainly indefinite and does not have a particular individual in mind.

P. 105 verse 8. *lmtzh* for ‘to see’, has miswritten *taw* for *heth*. In the next line this is spelled *lmhz* with no explanation for why a final *aleph* is used for an identical form.

P. 105 verse 11. Casey gives *qwm* rather than *qm* (pronounced approximately *qām*) where clearly the 3 m.sg. perfect of a hollow verb is intended. This is one of five times in Casey’s work when he give the wrong form for the 3 m.sg. perfect of such a verb. The others are *qwm* for *qm* again (pp. 122 and 148), and the form *twb*, given twice for *tb* in his previous monograph.⁵³

Pp. 105 and 129. *ʿhry* supposedly meaning ‘others’ seems to result from confusion with the words for ‘after’ or ‘last’. The word for ‘other’ (at least in any masculine form) would normally have an *n*, as Palestinian Aramaic *ʿwhrn*.⁵⁴

P. 106 verse 19. *wzkt hkmh mn ʿwbdh* ‘And Wisdom is not responsible for his work’. The feminine absolute state *hkmh* is inappropriate, the masculine used in translation, odd.

⁵² See Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*, 520.

⁵³ The mistake in the previous monograph is compounded by the fact that the verb should not be masculine anyway. Casey’s *wpšt wtwb lh yd* supposedly meaning ‘And the hand/arm stretched out and returned to him’ is surely taking the feminine *yd* ‘hand’ as masculine. See Casey, *Aramaic Sources*, pp. 138, 175.

⁵⁴ Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, 38.

Pp. 105 and 131. Casey reconstructs *hwlyln* 'we wailed', citing support from the occurrence of the Hiphil of *yll* in Hebrew and the Haphel in Ahiqar 41. These references should have indicated that the *w* of *hwlyln* was impossible since the *yodh* beginning this verb is not derived from a primitive *waw*.

Pp. 111 and 115. Commenting on his omission of the name 'Jesus' from a reconstructed source he comments that

Aramaic narratives do not mention the subject as often as Greek and English ones... (p. 111)

Slightly later, commenting on the same subject:

It is characteristic of Aramaic narratives that they proceed without repeating the subject, whereas editors in non-Semitic languages will feel a variable urge to add things here and there. (p. 115)

One wonders what empirical basis this comment has. It certainly is not true for Syriac if the Peshitta Gospels are anything to go by. For instance, whereas the Nestle-Aland text of Luke has 88 occurrences of the name *Jesus*, the Peshitta has 175, nearly double the number.

P. 143. The Hebrew root for 'righteous' is given as *šdk* not *šdq*.

P. 147 verse 20. 'Again' is written *twb* rather than *twb*, as if it were an emphatic noun.

P. 147 verse 22. *yš b^l zbwl lh* 'He has Baal Zebul' combines the certainly Hebrew *yš* (Aramaic *ʾyt(y)*) in a single sentence with *lh* which only means 'to him' in Aramaic. The rest of the sentence continues in Hebrew.

P. 148 verse 3. *kl mlkw ^l npšh d^l tplt* for 'every kingdom which is divided against itself', is a case of rather implausible word order.

The translations, moreover, contain a number of unexplained inconsistencies. For instance, on p. 147 Satan's name is spelled *štn* (twice), but on p. 148 *štn*. The reconstructions on p. 148 twice contrast someone speaking *l* 'against' the Son of Man, and ^l 'against' the Holy Spirit, without showing any linguistic or exegetical basis for the contrast. The relative is sometimes spelled *d* and at other times *dy*, e.g. p. 148 verse 9 (see also p. 178 [2×]).

Pp. 147, 149, 156, 163, 165. Casey reconstructs *b^l zbwl* in behind Mark 3:22, and the same form in the parallel of that passage in Q. He then reconstructs the Greek translation of Q's Aramaic and gives the name 'Βαγαλ ζαβυλ[??]' [sic] (p. 149). He explains

I have written βαγαλ ζαβυλ in Q, not because one knows what stood in Q, but to make clearly the point that a different transliteration [from the Marcan form] was probable, so it is most probable that it was Matthew and

Luke who were responsible for ensuring consistent following of the Marcan form. (p. 165)

On Mark's form βεελζεβουλ he comments

It is moreover very unlikely that two transliterators would independently arrive at it. It is not probable that both would agree on two εs for the vowels of בעל, omit the ז, and put ου for ל. (p. 156)

Casey's argument that two transliterators could not have reached the same form is overstated. [˘]ayin is unlikely to be represented at all, the *upsilon* of Casey's alternative ζαβουλ is unlikely to represent a vowel marked by *waw* since *upsilon* on its own is a front vowel. ου will almost invariably be used for Hebrew \bar{u} . As for the sequence εε this is quite close to Biblical Aramaic $b^e \bar{e}l$.

Looking at Casey's reconstructions as a whole we can conclude that they are not sufficiently reliable to be used by anyone not in a position to check them, and we should be particularly wary therefore of his claims to have discovered mistranslations. It is useful here to consider a suggestion made in his *Aramaic Sources of Mark's Gospel* (pp. 85–86) and relied on again in *An Aramaic Approach to Q* (p. 28), concerning the difficult ἐπιβαλὼν of Mark 14:72. He says

... we must infer that Mark had a written source which read ושרא בכא: 'And he began to weep.' He misread this as ושרא בכא: 'And throwing [sc. more abuse], he wept'. (*Aramaic Sources*, pp. 85–86)

Later he says

We have seen that ἐπιβαλὼν translates ושרא, a misreading of ושרא, the Aramaic for 'began'. (*Aramaic Sources*, p. 107)

He is thus inconsistent about the vital issue of the final consonant of the Aramaic verbs in question.

His suggestion is that a difficult phrase in the gospels can be understood by a simple *resh–daleth* confusion is rather alluring, but completely misleading. Whereas the verb $\check{s}d'$ occurs in the *peal* meaning 'throw', the verb $\check{s}r'$ can only mean 'begin' in the *paal*.⁵⁵ The 3 m.sg. verbal forms would always be distinguished therefore not only by the middle radical (*resh* or *daleth*), but also by the final one. The *paal* of $\check{s}r'$ would have to be written $\check{s}ry$ and the *peal* of $\check{s}d'$ with a final *aleph* or *he*. The forms would therefore be distinguished by two out of three letters, and would also be very distinct audibly:

⁵⁵ There are no fewer than four different texts discussed in the second monograph where Casey ignores the difference between *peal* and *paal* in his reconstructions: Mark 14:72 and Luke 11:41, which as mentioned vitally affect his argument, and verses 1 and 4 on p. 64, commented on above.

approximately *šdā* and *šarrī*. Whatever, then, the origin of the intriguing variant ηξατο κλαιειν (D Θ 565) in Mark 14:72 the appeal to Aramaic as the explanation raises as many questions as it answers.⁵⁶

So What Does Casey Contribute?

Casey's contributions are strongest in their discussion of individual texts and in seeking to locate sayings within particular historical environments within first century Judaism. As he puts it:

Like the Aramaic sources of Mark's Gospel which I uncovered in a previous book, the uncovering of the Aramaic dimension of Q enables us to see a more Jewish Jesus than is conventional. (p. 190)

However, many of his positive points in this regard can be detached from the model of Q which he proposes and the reconstructions he makes of Aramaic texts as a whole.

The work is weakest in its reconstruction of Aramaic sources, and in seeking to base far-reaching conclusions about the multiplicity of sources on an insecure linguistic basis. Were the author to relinquish the attempt to provide a continuous Aramaic text for passages in exchange for discussing phrases, or were he to attach greater uncertainty to translations by offering multiple alternatives where they exist, then his presentation would only be strengthened.⁵⁷ The challenge to show that Q is indeed a single document needs to be taken seriously, but in the mean time Casey's arguments for Q being multiple documents has not proved compelling.

⁵⁶ Casey's suggestion is questioned on other grounds by Mastin in *JTS* 51 (2000) 655.

⁵⁷ On p. 183, with reference to the Beelzebul controversy, Casey denies that he has recovered the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus, but says that 'we should be altogether certain that we now have before us a close approximation to what he and his opponents said to each other ...'