

## The Brazen Freedom of God's Children: "Insolent Ravens" (Q 12:24) and "Carefree Lilies" (Q 12:27) as Response to Mass-Poverty and Social Disruption?

The sociological backdrop against which the Sayings Source Q could develop has been the subject of fierce debates.<sup>1</sup> It was G. Theißen, who in the early seventies of the last century developed the thesis that the first followers of Jesus consisted of itinerant prophets following the ethos of poverty, homelessness, nonviolence and the eschatological expectation of God's kingdom.<sup>2</sup> Before him, it was already observed by P. Hoffmann that the authorities behind the Sayings Source were charismatic prophets, who lived up to a special ethos of poverty and peacemaking as signs of the beginning reign of God.<sup>3</sup> Hoffmann and Theißen were followed by many scholars in this, e. g., by D. Zeller, M. Tiwald, U. Schnelle, I. Broer, who also underlined the emblematic lifestyle of the Q-prophets.<sup>4</sup>

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1 For a detailed *status quaestionis* see: W. Stegemann, "Hinterm Horizont geht's weiter". Erneute Betrachtungen von Gerd Theißen's These zum Wanderradikalismus der Jesusbewegung, in: P. Lampe/H. Schwier (ed.), *Neutestamentliche Grenzgänge*. Symposium zur kritischen Rezeption der Arbeiten Gerd Theißen's, Göttingen 2010, 76–95; C. Heil, Die Missionsinstruktion in Q 10,2–16. Transformationen der Jesusüberlieferung im Spruchevangelium Q, in: W. Eisele/C. Schaefer/H. U. Weidemann (ed.), *Aneignung durch Transformation*. Beiträge zur Analyse von Überlieferungsprozessen im frühen Christentum (FS M. Theobald) (HBS 74), Freiburg 2013, 25–55, 48–54; G. Theißen, Kynische und urchristliche Wandercharismatiker. Zu W. Stegemann: "Hinterm Horizont geht's weiter", in: Id., *Von Jesus zur urchristlichen Zeichenwelt*. "Neutestamentliche Grenzgänge" im Dialog, Göttingen 2011, 101–116.

2 Cf. G. Theißen, *Wanderradikalismus*. Literatursoziologische Aspekte der Überlieferung von Worten Jesu im Urchristentum (first published in 1973), in: Id., *Studien zur Soziologie des Urchristentums* (WUNT 19), Tübingen<sup>3</sup>1989, 79–105; G. Theißen, "Wir haben alles verlassen" (Mc. X,28). Nachfolge und soziale Entwurzelung in der jüdisch palästinischen Gesellschaft des 1. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. (first publication in 1977), in: Id., *Studien zur Soziologie des Urchristentums* (WUNT 19), Tübingen<sup>3</sup>1989, 106–141; G. Theißen, *Die Jesusbewegung*. Sozialgeschichte einer Revolution der Werte, Gütersloh 2004, 33–98. Regarding the background of Theißen's thesis cf.: Heil, *Missionsinstruktion* (n. 1) 52.

3 P. Hoffmann, *Studien zur Theologie der Logienquelle* (NTA.NF 8), Münster<sup>3</sup>1972 (first published in 1971), 312–334.

4 D. Zeller, *Redaktionsprozesse und wechselnder "Sitz im Leben" beim Q Material* (first published in 1982), in: Id., *Jesus Logienquelle Evangelien* (SBAB 53), Stuttgart 2012, 101–117, 114; D. Zeller, *Kommentar zur Logienquelle* (SKK 21), Stuttgart 1984; M. Tiwald, *Der Wanderradikalismus als Brücke zum historischen Jesus*, in: A. Lindemann (ed.), *The Sayings*

The pillars on which the thesis of G. Theißen is built can be described as consisting of the following presuppositions:

*1<sup>st</sup> presupposition:* Due to the Roman oppression of the region there were *massive social conflicts* resulting in the development of two classes, dividing society into collaborators and profiteers of the Romans on the one hand and in active or passive resistance fighters as result of mass poverty in the lower social strata<sup>5</sup> on the other hand. According to Theißen, this caused a disruption of social structures<sup>6</sup> in Galilee and triggered patterns of social deviance,<sup>7</sup> as identified by Josephus: banditry, insurrections, fierce religious disputes over collaboration and a cultural split between the Hellenistic lifestyle and Jewish identity.

*2<sup>nd</sup> presupposition:* Theißen's thesis maintains that the phenomenon of social deviance and disintegration was adapted in a creative way by Jesus and his followers in the Q-movement. The breaking up of social peace had led to eschatological expectations since the time of the Maccabees<sup>8</sup> and it now found expression in the announcement of God's reign by Jesus. In opposition to the violent uprisings (as practiced by the Zealots) or the expectation of an eschatological war against God's enemies (as proclaimed in the manuscripts of Qumran), he announced a peaceful new order of the world under God's reign. Thus the Q-missionaries were only following the instructions of Jesus when they proclaimed eschatological peace and the kingdom of God (cf. Q 10:5, 9<sup>9</sup>). The authorities behind this mission were *itinerant charismatics, living out a deliberately chosen ethos of poverty, nonviolence, and homelessness*.<sup>10</sup> Their lifestyle reflected their

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Source Q and the historical Jesus (BETL 158), Leuven 2001, 523–534; M. Tiwald, Wanderradikalismus. Jesu erste Jünger – ein Anfang und was davon bleibt (ÖBS 20), 2002, 246–257; U. Schnelle, Theologie des Neuen Testaments (UTB 2917), Göttingen 2007, 364: "Wanderradikalismus"; "Ethos der Heimatlosigkeit (Q 9,58; Q 10,4e), der Familienlosigkeit (Q 14,26) und der Gewaltlosigkeit (Q 6,29f.)"; I. Broer/H. U. Weidemann, Einleitung in das Neue Testament, Würzburg<sup>3</sup>2010, 70.

- 5 Cf. Theißen, Nachfolge (n. 2) 138: "Wir haben also Grund zu der Annahme, daß im 1. Jh. n. Chr. in Palästina wenige Reiche noch reicher geworden sind, während die kleinen Leute Kleinbauern, Pächter, Fischer und Handwerker – in Bedrängnis gerieten."
- 6 Cf. Theißen, Nachfolge (n. 2) 106: "Soziale Entwurzelung".
- 7 Theißen, Nachfolge (n. 2) 112–133 distinguishes here between evasive, aggressive, collaborative and subsiditive patterns. Cf. also Theißen, Soziologie (n. 2) 142.
- 8 T. Hieke, Am Ende der Tage wird es geschehen ... Zur Eschatologie des Alten Testaments, in: Id./R. Kühschelm/M. Striet/B. Trocholepczy, Zeit schenken – Vollendung erhoffen. Gottes Zusage an die Welt (Theologische Module 8), Freiburg i. Br. 2013, 7–52, 10–27, 37f. For the question if Q contains "apocalyptic" patterns cf. C. Tuckett, Apocalyptic in Q?, in: M. Tiwald (ed.), Q in Context I. The Separation between the Just and the Unjust in Early Judaism and in the Sayings Source – A New Look at the "Parting of the Ways" (BBB 172), Bonn 2015, 107–121.
- 9 The quotation of the Sayings Source Q follows: J. M. Robinson/P. Hoffmann/J. S. Kloppenborg (ed.), The Sayings Gospel Q in Greek and English with Parallels from the Gospels of Mark and Thomas, Leuven 2001.
- 10 Cf. Theißen, Wanderradikalismus (n. 2) 83: "wandernde christliche Charismatiker"; 86: "Wanderradikalismus"; 105: "Ethos des Wanderradikalismus".

programmatic aims: like the OT-prophets, they not only preached in words but also by prophetic actions. Their explicit poverty (not even sandals, no provisions, no money, cf. Q 10:4) homelessness (cf. Q 9:57–60) and nonviolence (cf. Q 6:29) are indicative of the “brazen freedom of God’s children”<sup>11</sup>, who – like insolent ravens (Q 12:24), carefree lilies (Q 12:27), and pertinacious begging children (Q 11:9–13) demonstrate the uncompromising confidence in God and in his forthcoming salvation even against all odds in the underprivileged region of Galilee. In this way, the lifestyle of Jesus and the Q-prophets can be seen as אִוָּת like in the times of the OT-prophets.<sup>12</sup> An אִוָּת symbolically anticipates a reality that has not yet arrived, but is imminent.<sup>13</sup> Hosea marries “a wife of whoredom” (Hos 1:2) to underline the unfaithfulness of Israel; Ezekiel bakes his bread on human dung (Ezek 4:12) to symbolize how unclean Israel has become; and Jeremiah puts a yoke on his neck to illustrate the future fate of Israel (Jer 27:2). Poverty and nonviolence were thus an ethos deliberately chosen by itinerant mavericks<sup>14</sup> to symbolize the forthcoming reign of God.

<sup>3<sup>rd</sup></sup> *presupposition*: Theißen draws parallels between the itinerant charismatics of the Sayings Source and the itinerant prophets of the Didache.<sup>15</sup> Here he further develops ideas of G. Kretschmar, who in the nineteen-sixties observed that itinerant charismatic prophets must have been common in early Christian communities of Syria-Palestine.<sup>16</sup> Kretschmar draws from the Didache, Lucian of Samosata and the Pseudo-Clementine Literature. G. Theißen now completes the picture by putting the itinerant charismatics of the Sayings Source in line with the itinerant prophets of the Didache. He interprets the τρόποι κυρίου mentioned by *Did.* 11:8<sup>17</sup> as the distinctive lifestyle of a true prophet in contrast with the false prophets, as constituting the ethos of Jesus and the Q-preachers: poverty,

11 Cf. M. Tiwald, “Blickt auf die Vögel des Himmels” Die unverschämte Freiheit der Kinder Gottes, in: *Bibel heute* 195 (3/2013) 7–9.

12 Cf. Tiwald, *Wanderradikalismus* (n. 4) 156.

13 Cf. F. J. Helfmeyer, Art. אִוָּת, in: *ThWAT I* (1973) 182–205, 183, 202.

14 Cf. Theißen, *Wanderradikalismus* (n. 2) 96: “Nach all dem dürfte klar sein, daß die urchristlichen Wandercharismatiker Außenseiter waren. Sie werden in den Orten einige Sympathisanten gehabt haben. Aber es ist nicht schwer, sich vorzustellen, wie die Mehrheit über sie geurteilt hat ...”

15 Cf. Theißen, *Wanderradikalismus* (n. 2) 83, 86f. 91.

16 Cf. G. Kretschmar, Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach dem Ursprung frühchristlicher Askese, in: *ZThK* 61 (1964) 27–67, 36f. Kretschmar’s article is anteceded by A. von Harnack, *Die Lehre der zwölf Apostel nebst Untersuchungen zur ältesten Geschichte der Kirchenverfassung und des Kirchenrechts* (TU 2), Berlin 1991 (reprint, first published in 1886), 154–157, where he muses about the polarity between charismatic and hierarchic structures in the Didache.

17 The quotation of the Didache follows I. H. Hall/J. T. Napier (ed. by M. B. Riddle), *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, in: A. Roberts/J. Donaldson (ed.), *The Ante Nicene fathers. Translations of the writings of the fathers down to A.D. 325* (American reprint of the Edinburgh edition. Revised and chronologically arranged, with brief prefaces and occasional notes, by A. C. Coxe), Buffalo 1885.

peacemaking/nonviolence and homeless itinerancy. By doing so he opens up the possibility of interpreting the Q-prophets by using features of the Didache and *vice versa* – but also runs the risk of circular logic by mixing up two different text corpora.

Summing up, all of these three presuppositions have been in for heavy criticism, but they have also gained wide approval in other circles. I myself tried to reshape some of these ideas in my doctoral thesis, published in 2001. Now, nearly fifteen years later, it seems to be appropriate to ask whether the old approach still is viable.

## 1. The Thesis of the disruption of social structures in Galilee at the time of Jesus

Especially R. Horsley and D. Oakman have depicted Jesus as a social revolutionary. They both reject the idea that Jesus might have been inspired by an ethos of itinerancy and poverty<sup>18</sup> and instead point out the “political aims of Jesus”<sup>19</sup>. They particularly focus on the strong injustice that was inflicted on poor Jewish peasants by “overlapping layers of Roman and Jewish rulers”<sup>20</sup> or resulting from “urbanization, monetization, commercialization, and tenancy promoted by the Roman elites ...”<sup>21</sup> Jesus was concerned with alleviating the “serious problems of hunger and poverty” and fighting against “social malaise”.<sup>22</sup> According to Horsley and Oakman there was a clear-cut borderline “between the powerful rulers, on the one hand, and the hapless peasants that they exploit, on the other”.<sup>23</sup> “The country people ... displayed a hostility ... to the administrative cities”<sup>24</sup> – as can be seen in the numerous rebellions, mentioned in Josephus’ *Vita* (34f., 38f., 66f., 97–100, 102–104, 124f., 154, etc.<sup>25</sup>). Even if the depiction of Horsley and Oakman seriously underestimates Jesus’ primarily religious moti-

18 Cf. R. A. Horsley, *Sociology and the Jesus Movement*, New York <sup>2</sup>1994, 43–46; D. E. Oakman, *The Political Aims of Jesus*, Minneapolis 2012, 71, even denies the religious aims of Jesus: “... Jesus’ message about the Power of God ... was about its presence and workings, not about its future arrival or apocalyptic fireworks.”

19 Cf. the title of Oakman’s book (n. 18) and 127: “Jesus had, in fact, been a *lēstēs* in advocating rearrangements of debts and tax resistance. And, Pilate historically had perceived things correctly and rendered judgment.” Cf. Horsley, *Sociology* (n. 18) 132 (“sharp conflict between the Jesus movement and the ruling institutions”).

20 Horsley, *Sociology* (n. 18) 93.

21 Oakman, *Aims* (n. 18) 42.

22 Horsley, *Sociology* (n. 18) 67.

23 Horsley, *Sociology* (n. 18) 86; cf. Oakman, *Aims* (n. 14) 39–43.

24 Horsley, *Sociology* (n. 18) 87; cf. Oakman, *Aims* (n. 14) 49–57.

25 The quotations from Josephus’ works follow: W. Whiston (ed.), *The genuine works of Flavius Josephus*, New York 1828.

vation, some passages in Josephus' writings seem to hint in the direction of a socio-cultural split between the Hellenistic cities and the Jewish peasants.

In *Ant.* 18:36–38 we read:

<sup>36</sup> And now Herod the tetrarch, who was in great favour with Tiberius, built a city of the same name with him, and called it Tiberias. He built it in the best part of Galilee, at the lake of Gennesaret. There are warm baths at a little distance from it, in a village named Emmaus. <sup>37</sup> Strangers came and inhabited this city; a great number of the inhabitants were Galileans also; and many were necessitated by Herod to come there out of the country belonging to him, and were by force compelled to be its inhabitants; some of them were magistrates. He also admitted poor people, such as those who were collected from all parts, to dwell in it. Nay, some of them were not quite freemen; <sup>38</sup> and these he was benefactor to, and made them free in great numbers; but obliged them not to forsake the city, by building them very good houses at his own expense, and by giving them land also; for he was sensible, that to make this place a habitation was to transgress the Jewish ancient laws, because many sepulchres were to be here taken away, in order to make room for the city of Tiberias; whereas our laws pronounce, that such inhabitants are unclean for seven days.

Herod Antipas built the city on a burial ground, violating Jewish law and rendering Jewish visitors unclean for seven days – not to mention the perpetual status of uncleanness in which its inhabitants were placed. No wonder that he had to gather the future inhabitants from everywhere – namely poor persons – and forced them to live in the city. The rest of the inhabitants were strangers (foreign landlords) or magistrates (retainers of the foreign rulers). This clearly illustrates the strong cultural split between Hellenism and Jewish way of life and certainly explains the hate stirred up against the Romans and the resulting insurgency.

In *Vita* 30 we read:

When I had therefore received these instructions, I came into Galilee, and found the people of Sepphoris in no small agony about their country, by reason that the Galileans had resolved to plunder it on account of the friendship they had with the Romans; and because they had given their right hand and made a league with Cestius Gallus, the governor of Syria: ...

Cf. *Vita* 375

The Galileans took this opportunity, as thinking they had now a proper time for showing their hatred to them, since they bore ill will to that city [sc. Sepphoris] also. They then exerted themselves, as if they would kill them all utterly, with those who sojourned there also.

Sepphoris is plundered by the Galilean peasants because of their friendship with the Romans – obviously the city was identified as collaborating with the Romans.

Nevertheless the depiction of Horsley and Oakman is too schematic, because it neglects the complexity and plurality in the interplay between Hellenism and the

Jewish way of life. To begin with, we must concede that the cultural split was not so much between the rural Jewish population and pagan Hellenistic cities, but between diverging conceptions of Jewish identity. We have to acknowledge that only cities like Scythopolis, Caesarea Maritima and Paneas were pagan non-Jewish cities.<sup>26</sup> In contrast to this, Sepphoris and Tiberias were mainly Jewish cities, as archeological findings in Sepphoris – like ossuaries, mikvaot, stone vessels – and the records of Josephus concerning the population of Tiberias and Sepphoris clearly have indicated!<sup>27</sup> Hellenisation in Galilee was not primarily induced by foreign forces, but in first line by the Hasmoneans – it was the “indigenous elite who embraced the ‘new fashions’.”<sup>28</sup> Under the Herodean dynasty, settlements on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee reached an unprecedented density.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, the thesis of mass poverty and social disruption needs to be rethought just as well as the assumption that the Hellenistic and Jewish ways of life were two diametrically opposed attitudes. The situation was far more complex, Galilee has to be considered as a “kaleidoscope of different groups but not as a monolith.”<sup>30</sup> We have to reckon with diverging conceptions of Jewish life that intermingled in the Galilee at this time.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, the question becomes even more virulent as to why neither Sepphoris nor Tiberias are mentioned in the New Testament – Jesus seems to have avoided these cities, which is even more striking, as Sepphoris was in the direct vicinity of Nazaret and Tiberias since the year 19 CE was the residence of Antipas and capital of Galilee. The question thus arises concerning how selective Jesus’ geographical radius was and how representative his ministry might be considered for the whole of Galilee.<sup>32</sup> – Freyne, Meyers, Zangenberg and Berlin assume that there was a deep split inside

26 Cf. *M. A. Chancey*, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee* (SNTS 118), Cambridge 2002, 168 and 180, even if some of Chancey’s positions are overdrawn, e. g., when he states that pagans in first century CE Galilee were only a small minority (167) and that Galileans only would have occasionally encountered gentiles from adjacent territories, but not in Galilee (169).

27 Cf. *Chancey*, *Myth* (n. 26) 79f., 93–95. Cf. *J. K. Zangenberg*, *Jesus Galiläa Archäologie*, in: C. Claussen/J. Frey (ed.), *Jesus und die Archäologie Galiläas* (BThSt 87), Neukirchen-Vluyn 2008, 7–38, 27–29. Cf. also *S. Freyne*, *Jesus and the Urban Culture of Galilee*, in: Id., *Galilee and Gospel. Collected Essays* (WUNT 125), Tübingen 2000, 183–207, 190f.; *C. A. Evans*, *Jesus and His World. The Archeological Evidence*, London 2012, 24–26, especially 26: “... Sepphoris in Jesus’ day was a thoroughly Jewish city.”

28 *J. K. Zangenberg/D. Van de Zande*, *Art. Urbanization*, in: C. Hezser (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Jewish Daily Life in Roman Palestine*, Oxford 2010, 165–188, 174. Cf. also *Zangenberg*, *Jesus* (n. 27) 26f.

29 Cf. *Zangenberg*, *Jesus* (n. 27) 28f.

30 *Zangenberg*, *Jesus* (n. 27): “Galiläa wird mehr und mehr als ‘Kaleidoskop’ unterschiedlicher Gruppen verstanden, weniger als Monolith.”

31 Cf. *Zangenberg*, *Jesus* (n. 27) 33: “Überhaupt ist damit zu rechnen, dass durchaus auch in Galiläa unterschiedliche Interpretationen dessen nebeneinander und zum Teil auch gegen einander existierten, was Judentum war und zu sein hatte.”

32 *Zangenberg*, *Jesus* (n. 27) 37f.

the Jewish population.<sup>33</sup> They posit the “simultaneous existence of a seemingly very traditional rural world next to strongly urbanized centres of Hellenism beginning already in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE (Magdala) and continuing well into the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE (Tiberias).”<sup>34</sup> The strong Hellenisation and urbanization in Galilee certainly tipped the scales of sociological equilibrium and triggered not only a crisis of socio-religious identity but also led to an atmosphere of social instability. In these complex social structures different political and religious conceptions seem to have coexisted and competed against each other.<sup>35</sup> “What remained was an atmosphere of distrust and alienation between some Jewish circles and their Hellenized elites, and a Jewish population that was divided about the blessings and curses of Hellenism and the increasing urbanization of their country.”<sup>36</sup> This can be shown in the case of Tiberias in the dawn of the revolution: in Tiberias there were three factions (*Vita* 32–42): 1) *the peace party* – rich and honoured men who had their wealth to lose; 2) *the war party* – “ignoble persons” (*Vita* 35) who had nothing to lose; and 3) *persons who wanted to gain personal profit by the change of affairs*, like “Justus, the son of Pistus, who was the head of the third faction, although he pretended to be doubtful about going to war, yet was he really desirous for sedition, as supposing that he should gain power to himself by the change of affairs” (*Vita* 36). In his speech Justus laments that Tiberias now has become capital of Galilee instead of Sepphoris, and that the royal treasury and the archives were now removed from their town (*Vita* 38). – Personal interests here mingle with politics and religion! And besides: Josephus himself changed his mind from rebel against to kinsman of the Romans in the course of the revolt! So there certainly were “fundamental fissures ... [in the] Jewish population”,<sup>37</sup> as Berlin/Overman have stated. And Freyne adds: “The causes for these deep divisions in Jewish society were manifold, and certainly cannot be laid at the door of the Romans alone. Some Jews had benefited greatly from the increased op-

33 Cf. Freyne, *Jesus* (n. 27) 192f.; E. M. Meyers, *Sepphoris. City of Peace*, in: A. M. Berlin/J. A. Overman (ed.), *The First Jewish Revolt. Archaeology, History, and Ideology*, London/New York 2002, 110–120, 114; ZangenberglVan de Zande, *Urbanization* (n. 28) 174; A. Berlin, *Romanization and anti Romanization in pre Revolt Galilee*, in: Ead./J. A. Overmann (ed.), *The First Jewish Revolt. Archaeology, History, and Ideology*, London/New York 2002, 57–73, 67.

34 J. K. Zangenbergl, *Archaeological News in the Galilee. Tiberias, Magdala and Rural Galilee*, in: *Early Christianity* 1 (2010) 3–14, 481.

35 Cf. Zangenbergl, *Jesus* (n. 27) 32f.

36 ZangenberglVan de Zande, *Urbanization* (n. 28) 174. Cf. also J. Wilker, “God is with Italy Now”. Pro Roman Jews and the Jewish Revolt, in: B. Eckhardt (ed.), *Jewish Identity and Politics between the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba. Groups, Normativity, and Rituals*, Leiden/Boston 2012, 157–187, who portrays different types of Jewish collaborators with Rome and shows how quickly the political sides might have been switched.

37 A. M. Berlin/J. A. Overman, *Introduction*, in: Ead./Id. (ed.), *The First Jewish Revolt. Archaeology, History, and Ideology*, London/New York 2002, 1–14, 9.

portunities of the Hellenistic age, thus creating a wider gap than had existed at any other period previously.”<sup>38</sup> Against this backdrop, small, family-run holdings risked impoverishing because they could not compete with the extended urban economy of wealthy estate owners.<sup>39</sup> The New Testament depicts such absentee landlords (Mark 12:1), exploitative stewards (Luke 16:1–8), publican collaborators (Mark 2:16f; Matt 18:17; 21:31; Luke 5:30; 18:11.13) and day laborers (Matt 20:1–16; Luke 15:19; Jas 5:4). Especially “tenancy became an important instrument of the agricultural economy in Jewish Palestine ... The growth of large estates had important effects on the structure of labour: not only were small-holders forced to cede their plots in favour of large estates, ... but the labour demands of such properties also distorted established agricultural patterns. ... There is evidence of a shift from small-scale polycropping to large-scale monoculture oriented to export...”<sup>40</sup> Jesus’ response was “a prophetic critique of the dominant prevailing ethos, based on covenantal ideals for a restored Israel, within an apocalyptic framework that made it possible to imagine and propose a radically different life-style and values.”<sup>41</sup> This is the reason why Jesus – obviously deliberately – avoided cities like Tiberias and Sepphoris. His “selective geographical radius”<sup>42</sup> cuts out Sepphoris and Tiberias as a prophetic statement of the upcoming counter-society of the *basileia*. Therefore, G. Theißen’s latest notice (2011) concerning the question of poverty and social disruption might be right. He affirms that Galilee at the time of Jesus had *not* been one of the poorest regions, but that it rather was the economic success of some groups and the hereby resulting urbanization of some places that actually caused the problems: a deep cultural, religious and political crisis within the Jewish society of those days. Jesus’ theological assumptions are an attempt to respond to these socio-religious challenges by imposing a counter-reality, that of the upcoming *basileia*.<sup>43</sup> Under these circumstances we have to conclude that *the Galilee of Jesus* as depicted in the New Testament is not representative for the *whole of Galilee in these times*. Quite the contrary, it’s the world of the marginalized losers (small farmers, fishers and craftsmen) that the Bible zooms in on, disregarding the wider focus of

38 S. Freyne, *The Revolt from a Regional Perspective*, in: A. M. Berlin/J. A. Overman (ed.), *The First Jewish Revolt. Archaeology, History, and Ideology*, London/New York 2002, 43–56, 51.

39 Cf. Freyne, *Jesus* (n. 27) 196.

40 J. S. Kloppenborg, *The Growth and Impact of Agricultural Tenancy in Jewish Palestine (III BCE – I CE)*, in: *JESHO* 51 (2008) 33–66, 61.

41 Freyne, *Jesus* (n. 27) 198.

42 Zangenberg, *Jesus* (n. 27) 38 (“So selektiv Jesu geographischer Radius nach dem NT ist ... so begrenzt ist sein Adressatenkreis”).

43 Theißen *Wandercharismatiker* (n. 1) 115: “Vieles spricht dafür, dass das Heimatland der Jesusbewegung damals wirtschaftlich aufblühte und eben deswegen eine Krise erlebte. In solchen Zeiten werden traditionelle Werte genauso in Frage gestellt wie in Zeiten des Abstiegs und Verfalls.”

Hellenistic-Jewish city life and the socially upwardly mobile milieus of those who succeeded in harmonizing Jewish and Hellenistic life. Jesus' primary aim is not a revolution against social injustice but the prophetic announcement of the forthcoming *basileia*. Nevertheless, this *basileia* can only be inherited by the poor, the hungry, and the nonviolent (cf. the Beatitudes, Q 6:20–23.27 f.). In these guidelines we can detect the special ethos of Jesuanic theology, Jesus' personal theological fingerprint: God's option for the poor and marginalized.

## 2. Itinerant Prophets following a special ethos as authorities behind the Sayings Source

The thesis that Jesus and his first followers used homeless itinerancy, peacefulness and poverty as prophetic signs of the forthcoming reign of God, has been repeatedly criticised. For R. Horsley and D. Oakman – as seen before – itinerancy is only a means of communicating the political resistance that Jesus preached.

For W. Stegemann, Jesus' itinerancy does not follow an ethos, but is rather nothing more than the poor daily existence typical for beggars in those times.<sup>44</sup> By deliberately adopting this poverty (cf. Q 10:4), Jesus and the Q-prophets offer an alternative in the struggle for survival.<sup>45</sup> For Stegemann, it was the evangelist Luke who adopted this model and transformed it into a concept of ethical radicalism by forming the ethos of itinerancy and poverty. This ethos is thus nothing more than a literary fiction created by Luke as a means of formulating social critique and social ethics.<sup>46</sup>

J. Draper also perceives “the wandering charismatics thesis” to be “a modern scholarly construct”.<sup>47</sup> He underlines that there is not sufficient evidence to interpret the text of Q by drawing parallels from the *Didache*<sup>48</sup>, a point we will return to later.

44 Cf. W. Stegemann, Wanderradikalismus im Urchristentum? Historische und theologische Auseinandersetzung mit einer interessanten These, in: W. Schottroff/Id., Der Gott der kleinen Leute. Sozialgeschichtliche Bibelauslegungen, München 1979, 94–120, 111 (“bettelarme Existenz von Hungerleidern, doch nicht infolge eines Ethos der Besitzlosigkeit”). Cf. also Stegemann, *Horizont* (n. 1) 86.94f.

45 Stegemann, Wanderradikalismus (n. 44) 113 (“In diesem Kontext bildet die Botschaft der Q Propheten eine Alternative zur Existenzsorge armer Menschen”).

46 Stegemann, Wanderradikalismus (n. 44) 115f. und 117 (“sozialkritisches und sozialetisches Programm”).

47 J. A. Draper, Wandering Charismatics and Scholarly Circularities, in: R. A. Horsley/Id., *Whoever Hears You Hears Me. Prophets, Performance, and Tradition in Q*, Harrisburg 1999, 29–45, 45.

48 Draper, *Charismatics* (n. 47) 40–45.

J. Kloppenborg proceeds in a more nuanced way. Not itinerant charismatics,<sup>49</sup> but “village and town notaries and scribes”<sup>50</sup> are the authorities behind Q. In the socio-economic struggles of these times they feared the loss of influence and opted for some sort of “scribal resistance to a southern, hierocratically defined vision of Israel.”<sup>51</sup> For Kloppenborg there is actually an “ethos” in Q, however, not the ethos of itinerancy, but rather that of scribal resistance, “the ‘alternative tradition’ against the dominant (ruling) exposition of the tradition”.<sup>52</sup> For Kloppenborg “[i]tinerancy’ should not be imagined on the model of Paul’s journeys; it would have looked more like morning walks.”<sup>53</sup> – I guess that Kloppenborg makes a point with both presuppositions! Homeless itinerant prophets, who, according to Q 10:4, were not even allowed to carry provisions with them, certainly had *no means* of framing such a text like the Sayings Source – not to mention the fact that they most probably were illiterate.<sup>54</sup> And indeed the mission journeys of Q-prophets must *not* be compared with those of Paul. In the small countryside of Northern Palestine the distances from village to village were indeed no more than “morning walks”. But this does not invalidate the thesis of itinerancy. Itinerancy – in my opinion – was an emblematic sign underlining the nearness of the forthcoming *basileia*, as Jesus says in Q 9:58–60:

And Jesus said to him: Foxes have holes, and birds of the sky have nests; but the son of humanity does not have anywhere he can lay his head. But another said to him: Master, permit me first to go and bury my father. But he said to him: Follow me, and leave the dead bury their own dead.

Therefore, not the number of miles made the true prophet, but an emblematic lifestyle (*Did.* 11:8 calls this the *τρόποι κυρίου* – the lifestyle of the Lord).

The thesis of village scribes as composers of the Sayings Source has been further developed by Kloppenborg’s disciple W. Arnal. Arnal – as his teacher Kloppenborg as well – sees Galilee as being in the midst of a profound socio-economic crisis: villages in rural Galilee lose out to the urbanization of centres like Sepphoris and Tiberias.<sup>55</sup> Thus, not only the underclass is threatened by

49 J. S. Kloppenborg, *The Sayings Gospel Q. Recent Opinion on the People behind the Document*, in: *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 1 (1993) 2001, 9–34, 22.

50 Kloppenborg, *Gospel* (n. 49) 25.

51 Kloppenborg, *Gospel* (n. 49) 27.

52 Kloppenborg, *Gospel* (n. 49) 27.

53 Kloppenborg, *Gospel* (n. 49) 22.

54 Regarding literacy in early Judaism cf.: C. Hezser, *Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine* (Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 81), Tübingen 2001, 45–47. Coming from the underclass of society also Jesus most probably was illiterate, cf. C. Heil, *Analphabet oder Rabbi? Zum Bildungsniveau Jesu*, in: ders. (ed.) *Das Spruchevangelium Q und der historische Jesus* (SBAB 58), Stuttgart 2014, 265–291, 290f.

55 Cf. W. E. Arnal, *Jesus and the Village Scribes. Galilean Conflicts and the Setting of Q*, Minneapolis 2001, 198–203.

poverty, but also the middle class fears social decline. Village scribes are part of this middle class and accordingly some of them willingly adopt the social counter-reality of the Jesus-movement.<sup>56</sup> The framing of Q most certainly was done by “village scribes (κωμογραφηματεύς [sic]), that is, by rural scribes who were moderately, but not spectacularly, educated.”<sup>57</sup> *G. Bazzana* has further developed this thesis<sup>58</sup> and recently *J. Kloppenborg* has returned to the subject matter:

“Those responsible for the framing of Q were likely low level scribes – the sorts of agents who, in a setting where the vast majority of the population was illiterate, routinely served to mediate the relationship between the majority of the population and various levels of bureaucracy.”<sup>59</sup>

In my opinion, the thesis that village scribes framed the document Q does not stand in striking opposition to the assumption that itinerant charismatic prophets were the authorities behind the Sayings Source.<sup>60</sup> Jesus himself most likely was illiterate.<sup>61</sup> The Q-prophets adopted his emblematic ethos – itinerancy, poverty, non-violence – and his lifestyle – wandering preachers who were supported by local sympathizers who sustained the prophets with food and offered them a place to stay overnight. Q 10:4–7a reflects this situation quite well:<sup>62</sup>

Carry no purse, nor knapsack, nor shoes, nor stick, and greet no one on the road. Into whatever house you enter, first say: Peace to this house! And if a son of peace be there, let your peace come upon him; but if not, let your peace return upon you. And at that house remain, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the worker is worthy of one's reward.

There certainly was a strong interplay between poor itinerant prophets and a supporting-group of local residents, who clearly had possessions.<sup>63</sup> The interwoven relationship between these two groups might not only have included providing food and a sleeping-place, but we may assume that it extended to cooperation in the composition of the Sayings Source. In Q we certainly have to reckon with approximately 30 years of oral transmission before the text was

56 Cf. *Kloppenborg*, Gospel (n. 49) 27f. (“local scribal resistance”); Arnal, Jesus (n. 55) 158f.

57 Arnal, Jesus (n. 55) 159.

58 *G. Bazzana*, Kingdom of Bureaucracy. The Political Theology of Village Scribes in the Sayings Gospel Q (BETL 274), Leuven 2015. See also his contribution in this volume.

59 *J. S. Kloppenborg*, A “Parting of the Ways” in Q? in: M. Tiwald (ed.), Q in Context I. The Separation between the Just and the Unjust in Early Judaism and in the Sayings Source – A New Look at the “Parting of the Ways” (BBB 172), Bonn 2015, 123–143, 137.

60 Cf. *Tiwald*, Wanderradikalismus (n. 4) 69, 94–101.

61 Cf. *Heil*, Analphabet (n. 54) 290f.

62 Cf. *Tiwald*, Wanderradikalismus (n. 4) 98–175.

63 This already has been pointed out by *T. Schmeller*, Brechungen. Urchristliche Wandercharismatiker im Prisma soziologisch orientierter Exegese (SBS 136), Stuttgart 1989, 93–98. Cf. also *Schnelle*, Theologie (n. 4) 365.

written down. The text indeed reveals some hints of a long oral growth process: in Q we find catchword techniques, chaining together sayings to thematic clusters and framing these passages in a beginning chronological order.<sup>64</sup> The chaining of catchwords offers possibilities of reconstructing different layers of oral growth – as I have tried to show in the case of the mission speech.<sup>65</sup> But the composition of larger clusters and the general framing clearly points to a written redaction. In my view, itinerant charismatic prophets continued to be the “authorities” behind the Sayings Source, but they were so in connection with scribal activity provided by village scribes. The prophetic theology in Q is too eminent for leaving itinerant prophets completely out of the picture, as it is done by W. Arnal.<sup>66</sup> The *theologoumenon of the violent fate of prophets in Israel* (an extrapolation of the Deuteronomistic fate of prophets) is the most central theological conception in Q, affirming that all true prophets in Israel have been rejected and even murdered (Q 6:22f.; 11:47–51; 13:34f.).<sup>67</sup> Jesus here is interpreted as prophet (Q 13:34) and his messengers as well (Q 6:22f.). The failure of the Q-mission to Israel now is interpreted as a sign of confirmation: Only true prophets are persecuted (Q 6:22f.). The prophetic element is thus still dominant in Q! But on the other hand, there certainly are a lot of sapiential instructions in Q too: “... exhortation is made about both giving (Q 6:30) and receiving (10:7), both borrowing (12:57–59) and lending (6:34–35); the wealthy are directly addressed (12:33–34; 16:13), as are the poor (6:20–21; 12:22–31 ...).”<sup>68</sup> Jesus himself is not only depicted as prophet, but also as child of divine wisdom (Q 7:35). In early Judaism, prophetic eschatology and sapiential theology no longer stood in opposition but sometimes formed a unity – as can be seen in *Musar leMevin* of the Qumran Manuscripts.<sup>69</sup> Thus, in the development of Q “teamwork” between itinerant prophets as guarantors of the old Jesus tradition and village scribes as a theological-sapiential backbone appears to be quite plausible.

64 Starting with the Baptist, Jesus’ programmatic speeches, instructions for disciples following Jesus, prayer, conflicts of Jesus, judgment.

65 Tiwald, Wanderradikalismus (n. 4) 169–175. Cf. also Arnal, Jesus (n. 55) 181; Zeller, Redaktionsprozesse (n. 4) 105–108.

66 Arnal, Jesus (n. 55) 172–180.

67 Cf. Tiwald, Wanderradikalismus (n. 4) 94–97; M. Tiwald, Hat Gott sein Haus verlassen (vgl. Q 13,35)? Das Verhältnis der Logienquelle zum Frühjudentum, in: Id. (ed.), Kein Jota wird vergehen. Das Gesetzesverständnis der Logienquelle vor dem Hintergrund frühjüdischer Theologie (BWANT 200), Stuttgart 2012, 63–88, 69–75.

68 Arnal, Jesus (n. 55) 173.

69 Cf. J. S. Kloppenborg, Sagesse et Prophétie dans l’Évangile des Paroles Q, in: Dettwiler/Marguerat (ed.), La source des paroles de Jésus (Q), Paris 2008, 73–98, 73f.86.92–98; and J. Kampen, Wisdom Literature (Eerdmans Commentaries on the Dead Sea Scrolls). Michigan/Cambridge 2011, 12–23.

Before concluding this second point, I would like to make a short remark concerning the interpretation of Jesus as “peasant Jewish Cynic”<sup>70</sup> (J. D. Crossan and B. Lang) or regarding the identification of Jesus’ wisdom as a “Cynic approach to life”<sup>71</sup> (B. Mack) or the sole comparison of the social critique of Q with that of Cynics<sup>72</sup> (L. Vaage). Apart from the fact that Q 10:4 demands the omission of staff and purse – an explicit *contradiction* of the Cynic dress-code,<sup>73</sup> embedding Q in its Jewish background has the highest plausibility and the first priority – as shown by C. Tuckett.<sup>74</sup> Cynical Jews most likely are a figment of scholars’ imaginations!<sup>75</sup>

### 3. Is there one trajectory from the itinerants in Q to the Didache?

It is definitely a weak point in Theißen’s thesis that he needs to draw from the Didache in order to complete his picture of itinerant charismatics. Indeed, the Didache imposes strict criteria for distinguishing between true and false prophets. In *Did.* 11 we read:

<sup>4</sup> Let every apostle that cometh to you be received as the Lord. <sup>5</sup> But he shall not remain except one day; but if there be need, also the next; but if he remains three days, he is a false prophet. <sup>6</sup> And when the apostle goeth away, let him take nothing but bread until he lodgeth; but if he ask money, he is a false prophet. <sup>7</sup> And every prophet that speaketh in the Spirit ye shall neither try nor judge; for every sin shall be forgiven, but this sin shall not be forgiven. <sup>8</sup> But not every one that speaketh in the Spirit is a prophet; but only if he hold the ways of the Lord (τοὺς τρόπους κυρίου). Therefore from their ways (ἀπὸ οὖν τῶν τρόπων) shall the false prophet and the prophet be known.

Theißen uses the reference to the *τρόποι κυρίου* to explain that itinerancy was not only a means of contact keeping in the Q-network (thus Kloppenborg<sup>76</sup>) and poverty not only the unalterable situation of have-nots (thus Stegemann<sup>77</sup>), but should really be considered as an ethos – the ethos of the succession of Christ, the “ways of the Lord”, the *τρόποι κυρίου*. Not only Theißen but later also K. Niederwimmer and T. Schmeller have established a link between the itinerant

70 J. D. Crossan, *Der historische Jesus*, München 1994, 553. In the same way B. Lang, *Jesus der Hund. Leben und Lehre eines jüdischen Kynikers*, München 2010, who also talks about “jüdischen Kynismus” (63).

71 B. L. Mack, *A Myth of Innocence*, Philadelphia 1988, 69.

72 L. E. Vaage, *Gallilean Upstarts. Jesus’ First Followers According to Q*, Pennsylvania 1994, 10 12, 103.

73 Cf. Tiwald, *Wanderradikalismus* (n. 4) 145f.

74 Cf. the critique of C. Tuckett, *A Cynic Q?*, in: *Bib* 10 (1989) 349–376.

75 Cf. Tiwald, *Wanderradikalismus* (n. 4) 138–146.

76 Cf. Kloppenborg, *Gospel* (n. 45) 22.

77 Cf. Stegemann, *Wanderradikalismus* (n. 44) 111.

prophets of Q and these of the Didache,<sup>78</sup> perceiving them as situated on the same trajectory. It is certainly clear that Q, the Gospel of Matthew and the Didache stem from the same geographical and religious setting: Jewish Christianity in Syria/Northern Palestine.<sup>79</sup> According to U. Luz, the community behind the Gospel of Matthew was founded by itinerant prophets of Q,<sup>80</sup> and the Gospel of Matthew influenced the community of the Didache.<sup>81</sup> We can therefore reckon with a trajectory beginning with Q, continuing to Matthew and extending to the Didache. The time of composition for these documents matches the trajectory: 60s for Q, 80s for Matthew and about 100 for the Didache.<sup>82</sup> This timeline also fits in with the theological developments: in Q the community has not yet broken with the synagogue,<sup>83</sup> in the Gospel of Matthew the “parting of the ways” has already occurred,<sup>84</sup> but the community is still observant to the Tora,<sup>85</sup> in the Didache the Jewish roots are still visible (e.g., *Did.* 13:3: first-fruit, high priests) but the distance to Jewish customs widens (e.g., *Did.* 8:1).<sup>86</sup> The itinerant prophets of the Didache thus seem to be a later version of their predecessors in the Sayings Source. This development seems logical: in Q, the Mission Speech announces emblematic poverty (Q 10:4: “no purse, nor knapsack, nor shoes, nor stick”), nonviolence (Q 10:3: “I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves”; Q 10:4: no stick – the stick served primarily as a weapon and not as a

78 Cf. K. Niederwimmer, *Die Didache* (KAV 1), Göttingen 1989, 77–80; K. Niederwimmer, *Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Wanderradikalismus im Traditionsbereich der Didache*, in: W. Pratscher/M. Öhler (ed.), *Quaestiones theologicae. Gesammelte Aufsätze*, Berlin 1998 (BZNW 90), 70–87, 70f. Schmeller, *Brechungen* (n. 63) 78–83.

79 Regarding the origin of Q cf. Tiwald, *Gott* (n. 67) 64 (“Nordpalästina”; “galiläisch syrischen Grenzraum”). For the origin of Matt cf. U. Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, vol. 1: Mt 1–7 (EKK I/1), Zürich<sup>3</sup> 1985, 73–75 (“aus dem syrischen Raum”; “Antiochien nicht die schlechteste Hypothese”). For the origin of the Didache cf. Niederwimmer, *Didache* (n. 78) 80 (“Syrien oder palästinensisch syrischen Grenzraum”).

80 Cf. Luz, *Matthäus* (n. 79) 66 (“daß das Matthäusevangelium aus einer Gemeinde stammt, die von den wandernden Boten und Propheten des Menschensohns der Logienquelle gegründet worden ist”).

81 Cf. Luz, *Matthäus* (n. 79) 75: “Die Didache ist in einer durch Mt geprägten Gemeinde entstanden.” But it might also be that the Didache drew from material similar to the Sayings Source Q; cf. Niederwimmer, *Didache* (n. 78) 77.

82 For Q cf. Tiwald, *Wanderradikalismus* (n. 4) 70–73; for Matt cf. Luz, *Matthäus* (n. 79) 76; for the Didache cf. Niederwimmer, *Didache* (n. 78) 78f., who reckons with two strata, the pre-didachistic dating back to the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century and the didachistic redaction dating to 110–120 CE.

83 Cf. Tiwald, *Gott* (n. 67) 85.

84 Cf. P. Foster, *Matthew’s Use of ‘Jewish’ Traditions from Q*, in: M. Tiwald (ed.), *Kein Jota wird vergehen. Das Gesetzesverständnis der Logienquelle vor dem Hintergrund frühjüdischer Theologie* (BWANT 200), Stuttgart 2012, 179–201, 199.

85 Cf. Luz, *Matthäus* (n. 79) 239f.: The commandment of love is central but the community of Matthew still observed the ritual laws!

86 Cf. Niederwimmer, *Didache* (n. 78) 165f., 232.

walking-device<sup>87</sup>; Q 6:29: “The one who slaps you on the cheek, offer him the other as well; and to the person wanting to take you to court and get your shirt, turn over to him the coat as well”) and homelessness (Q 9:58: “Foxes have holes, and birds of the sky have nests; but the son of humanity does not have anywhere he can lay his head”). So it is intriguing to interpret the *τρόποι κυρίου* in *Did.* 11:8 as the follow-up version of Q-prophets’ lifestyle. At least we can conclude that in the *Didache* the *τρόποι κυρίου* served as a means to distinguish between true and false prophets. As we know from Lucian’s *De morte Peregrini* 11–16, there were many itinerant charlatans in the second century CE who abused the good faith of Christians.<sup>88</sup> It is therefore quite understandable that the *Didache* narrowed down the status of a prophet to very special criteria: the *τρόποι κυρίου*. In *Did.* 11:3, the prescription on how to deal with itinerant apostles and prophets is realized “according to the decree of the Gospel”. Gospel here does not focus on the kerygma of Jesus’ death and resurrection but refers to the “handed-down words of the *kyrios*”<sup>89</sup> – “gospel” for the *Didache* focuses on the “*regula Christi*”.<sup>90</sup> Therefore, it seems convincing that the *τρόποι κυρίου* can be identified with the lifestyle of Jesus that his disciples also adopted in the mission account Q 10:2–12.

Drawing parallels between Q prophets and prophets of the *Didache* becomes even more likely when one opens up the horizon to itinerant prophets in the whole Syrian region. Here the old attempt by G. Kretschmar to put the Syrian itinerant charismatics of *Didache*, Lucian of Samosata, and Pseudo-Clementine Literature into one picture<sup>91</sup> must not only be opened up by inserting the Q prophets as well, but also by taking into consideration the wandering emissaries of the Johannine Corpus and the itinerant author of Revelation. Concerning the latter two, it is agreed that they have their theological and geographical roots in Syria-Palestine:

As far as the Johannine community is concerned, the most convincing theory assumes a Jewish habitat in Syria near the border to Palestine.<sup>92</sup> According to M. Theobald the Gospel of John seems to have drawn from oral Jesus-traditions very similar to the Sayings Source<sup>93</sup> – this he has shown in a painstakingly analysis of

87 *Tiwald*, *Wanderradikalismus* (n. 4) 160.

88 Cf. *Tiwald*, *Wanderradikalismus* (n. 4) 296–298.

89 Cf. *Niederwimmer*, *Didache* (n. 78) 75 (“überlieferten Worte des *Kyrios*”).

90 *Niederwimmer*, *Didache* (n. 78) 76.

91 Cf. *Kretschmar*, *Askese* (n. 16) 36f. *Kretschmar*’s article is anteceded by *von Harnack*, *Lehre* (n. 16) 154–157, where he muses about the polarity between charismatic and hierarchic structures in the *Didache*.

92 Cf. *M. Theobald*, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes. Kapitel 1–12* (RNT), Regensburg 2009, 98 (“Syrien in der ‘Nachbarschaft Palästinas’”). Here (94–97) one can also find a detailed *status quaestionis*.

93 Cf. *M. Theobald*, *Herrenworte im Johannesevangelium* (HThK 34), Freiburg i. Br. 2002, 197f. 545.

old Jesus-logia in the Fourth Gospel. But Theobald even goes one step further: though excluding a relationship of direct dependency between Q and the Fourth Gospel,<sup>94</sup> he identifies the roots of the Johannine logia-tradition in the milieu of itinerant prophets operating in the region of the Syrian-Palestine border.<sup>95</sup> These results find a parallel in an article of C. Tuckett, who also excludes a direct dependency between Q and the Gospel of John, but who underlines that the “FG [sc. Fourth gospel] certainly seems to share a significant, and distinctive, christological trajectory with Q, even if FG may be further ‘advanced’ along it.”<sup>96</sup> This opinion also is shared by E. Broadhead, who states, “While specific lines of dependency may or may not exist, FG [sc. Fourth Gospel] and Q certainly root in the same pool of primitive Christian traditions.”<sup>97</sup> – Consequently, the emissaries of the Johannine letters (e. g., 2 John 10 and 3 John 5–8.10) must be understood as a remnant of the old itinerant habits in incipient Syro-Palestinian Christianity. It seems G. Theißen and I. Broer are correct when they interpret the messengers of 2/3 John in the context of the itinerant charismatics as we have them in Q and in the Didache.<sup>98</sup>

But there are even more parallels: like the Didache, 2 John 10 also decrees special norms according to which a true itinerant brother can be distinguished from a false one. Unlike the Didache, for 2 John 7 the false messengers are not so much parasitic freeloaders (whom *Did.* 12:5 calls χριστέμποροι – “Christ-mongers”) but rather supporters of a beginning Gnosis, “who do not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh”. But the general tendencies remain the same: establishing strict rules to distinguish between true and false itinerant preachers.

Another parallel between Q, Johannine literature and Didache can be found in the high esteem for prophets and the reluctance to introduce bishops and deacons as leading authorities. Bishops and deacons emerged in the *Gentile* Christian Communities, whereas in *Jewish* Christian communities prophets and

94 Cf. M. Theobald, Das Johannesevangelium und Q. Wie groß ist ihre gemeinsame Schnittmenge und wie erklärt sie sich?, in: C. Heil/G. Harb (ed.), Built on Rock or Sand? Q Studies: Retrospects, Introspects and Prospects (BETL), Leuven (forthcoming), (“Weder der Vierte Evangelist noch auch die von ihm verarbeitete ‘Zeichenquelle’ fußt unmittelbar auf dem Spruchevangelium”).

95 Cf. Theobald, Q (n. 94): “Logienquelle und Johannesevangelium bzw. der Trägerkreis eines wichtigen Segments johanneischer Wortüberlieferung wurzeln in einem vergleichbaren Milieu, dem der Wandermissionare des syrisch palästinischen Grenzgebiets ” (original in italics).

96 Cf. C. Tuckett, The Fourth Gospel and Q, in: R. T. Fortna/T. Thatcher (ed.), Jesus in Johannine Tradition, London/Leiden 2001, 281–290, 289.

97 E. K. Broadhead, The Fourth Gospel and the Synoptic Sayings Source. The Relationship Reconsidered, in: R. T. Fortna/T. Thatcher (ed.), Jesus in Johannine Tradition, London/Leiden 2001, 291–301, 301.

98 Cf. Theißen, Nachfolge (n. 2) 109; Broer/Weidemann, Einleitung (n. 4) 70.

presbyters were in charge of leading functions.<sup>99</sup> Thus, it is not surprising that in the Johannine Corpus itinerant prophets (e. g., 2 John 10 and 3 John 5–8.10; cf. 1 John 4,1 and John 4,19) and a πρεσβύτερος (2 John 1:1; 3 John 1:1) hold leadership ministries.<sup>100</sup> For H.-J. Klauck, the difficulties between Diotrophes and the Presbyter in 3 John 10 result in the same situation as we have it in *Did.* 15:1f.:

Appoint, therefore, for yourselves, bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, men meek, and not lovers of money, and truthful and proved; for they also render to you the service of prophets and teachers. Despise them not therefore, for they are your honored ones, together with the prophets and teachers.

“Prophets and teachers” here clearly are the older institution – the author has to play down the differences between the “bishops and deacons” as newcomers on the one side and the “honored” prophets on the other. Some groups in the community of the *Didache* even seem to “despise” bishops and deacons. – In 3 John 10 Klauck sees the same problem. Here it is Diotrophes – whom Klauck puts in line with the “monarchic bishops” that we know from Ignatius of Antioch – who imposes the rule of a bishop against the charismatic authority of the Presbyter and his itinerant emissaries.<sup>101</sup> The old ethos of itinerant prophets as leading authorities in the Jewish Christian communities – as we find it in the Sayings Source – persisted tenaciously and led to tensions between local bishops and itinerant prophets.

In Revelation we encounter a similar situation. The author behind this book identifies himself as a prophet (Rev 1:3; 22:9) who is in charge of seven communities (Rev 1:4.11: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea) that he most likely visits as an itinerant preacher, wandering from one community to the next. Geographically the seven communities are situated in a circle with not too long distances from one location to the next.<sup>102</sup> The scheme follows the same pattern as Q: itinerancy here does not mean “long-range mission” for the purpose of evangelizing completely new territories (as in the case of Paul), but rather covering smaller distances to maintain the contact between Christian communities. When J. Kloppenborg correctly noticed that

99 Cf. M. Tiwald, Die vielfältigen Entwicklungslinien kirchlichen Amtes im Corpus Paulinum und ihre Relevanz für heutige Theologie, in: T. Schmeller/M. Ebner/R. Hoppe (ed.), *Neu testamentliche Ämtermodelle im Kontext* (QD 239), Freiburg i. Br. 2010, 101–128, 110f., 117f.

100 Cf. H. J. Klauck, *Gemeinde ohne Amt? Erfahrungen mit der Kirche in den johanneischen Schriften*, in: Id., *Gemeinde Amt Sakrament. Neutestamentliche Perspektiven*, Würzburg 1989, 195–222, 207–209.

101 Klauck, *Gemeinde* (n. 100) 220: “Damit gleicht er von seiner Stellung her dem monarchischen Bischof, wie er uns etwa gleichzeitig in den Briefen des Ignatius von Antiochien entgegentritt.”

102 The distance between Ephesus (today Selçuk) and Smyrna (today İzmir) is about 70 km and one of the longer distances between the seven cities.

itinerancy in Q serves the purpose of maintaining a “network of localized groups”<sup>103</sup> and not long-range mission as in the case of Paul, then the same is true with the itinerants of Didache, 2/3 John and Revelation. However, this does not contradict the assumption that itinerancy was seen as an emblematic lifestyle, but even fosters such a conception: itinerancy in the case of Paul follows the means of missionary efficiency – but in the case of Q, Didache, 2/3 John and Revelation not *mission* but *spiritual guidance* is needed. According to the τρόποι κυρίου in *Did.* 11:3 only a prophet who follows the lifestyle of the Lord is worthy of exercising such spiritual authority. Itinerancy reflects an emblematic lifestyle that was honoured by the communities – as can be seen in the high esteem of itinerant prophets in *Did.* 11:7; 13:1; 15:1f.: they are the “honored ones”.

Unlike the Didache, in Rev there is no mention of bishops – which is astonishing for a book written in the final decade of the first century CE and addressing the community of Ephesus, where at this time most certainly bishops existed. At least in Acts 20:17 Luke mentions the “elders” of Ephesus, whom he also calls ἐπίσκοποι in v. 28. The fact that such ἐπίσκοποι are not mentioned in Rev seems to be a sign of “resisting a change in church order”, as demonstrated by P. Trebilco.<sup>104</sup> The author of Revelation most certainly was a Palestinian Jew who left Israel before or shortly after the Jewish war.<sup>105</sup> In Asia Minor he continues adhering to the old itinerant ethos and obviously refuses to acknowledge the authority of bishops. Parallels to the Didache, which asks its readers not to “despise” bishops and deacons, might be drawn! Furthermore, Paul is also criticized in 2 Cor 11:7; 12:13 (cf. 1 Cor 9:12) for not sticking to the ethos of poverty, but earning his own money. Perhaps here we can see best that poverty and itinerancy not only served the purpose of missionary efficiency, but followed even more the rules of an emblematic lifestyle. This seems only possible if for Jesus himself a poor and itinerant life was not only functional as a means of higher missionary mobility, but was also already charged with a deeper message. The picture of ravens who “neither sow nor reap nor gather in barns, and yet God feeds them” and the example of the lilies, who “do not work nor do they spin. Yet ... not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these” (Q 12:24.27), becomes a Jesuanic paradigm of faith in the Lord’s provision and the upcoming

103 Kloppenborg, Gospel (n. 49) 22.

104 P. Trebilco, *The Early Christians in Ephesus from Paul to Ignatius* (WUNT 166), Tübingen 2004, 715.

105 M. Stowasser, “Dies spricht für dich, dass du die Werke der Nikolaiten hasst” (Offb 2,6) Ein frühes Zeugnis für den Konflikt um Anpassung oder Widerstand? in: R. Klieber/M. Stowasser (ed.), *Inkulturation. Historische Beispiele und theologische Reflexionen zur Flexibilität und Widerständigkeit des Christlichen*, Wien 2006, 203–227, 223: “dass der Prophet Johannes aus dem syrisch palästinischen Raum stammte, den er im Gefolge des ersten jüdischen Kriege (66–70 n. Chr.) verließ, um seine Tätigkeit nach Kleinasien zu verlegen.”

*basileia*. Later on a prophet, who did not follow this lifestyle, might easily be confronted with the reproach of being a “person of petty faith” (Q 12:28).

All this shows that the old Palestinian ethos of poor and itinerant prophets persisted quite tenaciously in the early Church – simply because it was the lifestyle exemplified by the Lord himself – the *τρόποι κυρίου*. Q interprets this lifestyle by depicting Jesus as true prophet (Q 13:34) and as child of divine wisdom (Q 7:35); the title Messiah is still missing. The identification with Jesus’ lifestyle and his prophetic mission was constitutive for Q – the first followers of Jesus saw their own fate interwoven with the fate of Jesus: the *theologumenon of the violent fate of prophets* says that all true prophets in Israel have been rejected and even murdered (see above). So not only the lifestyle of Jesus, but also his rejection becomes emblematic for a true prophet (Q 6:22f.): the failure of Q-missionaries is interpreted as a confirmation of being a true prophet and as participating in the fate of the master: Q 6:40 states, “A disciple is not above the teacher, it is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher.” The conception of following the *τρόποι κυρίου* is thus already present in Q, even without the wording of *Did.* 11:8.

This ethos even prevailed when it was “exported” from Palestine to Syria and to Asia Minor, and survived until the second and third century in Syria: here the Gospel of Thomas, Lucian of Samosata, the Pseudo-Clementine literature and the Acts of Thomas give proof of itinerant disciples as well as of wandering ascetics and homeless charlatans.<sup>106</sup> In the *Didache*, the “ways of the Lord”, the *τρόποι κυρίου* (*Did.* 11:8), became the dominant criterion for a true prophet and helped to distinguish between right and wrong. In the Johannine literature and in Revelation we also encounter a struggle for criteria enabling one to distinguish between true and false prophets, but here the criteria are of theological nature. Nevertheless the old ethos of Jesus’ itinerant ministry is still operative, although the situation has changed: especially in Gentile Christian communities that were not accustomed to Jewish prophetic traditions, local residentiary bishops and deacons now fulfil the ministry of spiritual guidance. Rivalry between the old Jewish Christian system and the new Gentile Christian ministry is an obvious consequence – conflicts were predetermined (as before the conflict between “Hebrews” and “Hellenists” in Acts 6:1–6). Certainly all of this remains a reconstruction – but the better a thesis is interwoven with its historical background, the higher its plausibility is. At the very least, we have been able to show the following: the emblematic lifestyle of Jesus – itinerancy and poverty – persisted with great tenacity and survived as the “ways of the Lord” for a longer time span than one would judge *prima facie*. Here our vision is certainly influenced by the harmonizations carried out in Luke’s Acts, who tried to project the actual min-

106 Cf. *Tiwald*, *Wanderradikalismus* (n. 4) 289–310.

istry of bishops and deacons into this own account of church history (e. g., Acts 20:17.28: the mentioning of bishops/elders in Ephesus at the time of Paul, or Luke's tendency to bring the Hellenistic septemvirate of Acts 6:1–6 in line with the later ministry of deacons<sup>107</sup>). But in reality, the old prophetic institution of itinerant preachers prevailed for a much longer time than such a harmonized church history might make us believe.

## Conclusions

- 1) The economic situation in the Galilee at the time of Jesus was complex. Hellenisation, urbanization and collaboration with the Romans caused a deep split within the Jewish population – leading some to wealth and luxury, but forcing others into tenancy and poverty.
- 2) Jesus' expectation of the reign of God cannot be separated from the socio-economic backdrop in Palestine. Even if Jesus understands his ministry primarily in a religious way, his theological conceptions respond in a very creative way to the socio-economic challenges. The forthcoming reign of God – which Jesus announces and prepares – will create a counter-reality by restoring the prelapsarian world that God created in the beginning. In early Judaism, the expectation was common that in eschatological times the protological world-order would be restored.<sup>108</sup> For Jesus, the process of eschatological transformation has already started, but, unlike many other groups in early Judaism, he does not espouse violence or rebellion by armed force as necessary – the *basileia* is realized by God like “yeast, which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour until it was fully fermented” (Q 13:21).
- 3) Jesus not only announces this reign of God in his parables, but he also prefigures the coming salvation in symbolic actions: forgiveness of sins, fraternal banquets, miracle healings, and last, but not least, in his lifestyle: his emblematic poverty and itinerancy express Jesus' uttermost confidence in God's providence and in his forthcoming reign – his lifestyle and his program are the same!
- 4) Especially Jewish Christian circles in Syro-Palestine adopted the lifestyle of Jesus and transformed it into an ethos of imitating Christ: the Q-mission speech, the *τρόποι κυρίου* in Didache, itinerancy in the Corpus Johanneum and the book of Revelation attest to such an ongoing tradition. Hereby

107 Cf. P. Gaechter, Die Sieben (Apg 6,1–6), in: ZThK 74 (1952) 129–166.

108 Cf. M. Tiwald, ΑΠΟ ΔΕ ΑΡΧΗΣ ΚΤΙΣΕΩΣ ... (Mk 10,6). Die Entsprechung von Protologie und Eschatologie als Schlüssel für das Tora Verständnis Jesu, in: U. Busse/M. Reichardt/M. Theobald (ed.), Die Memoria Jesu. Kontinuität und Diskontinuität der Überlieferung (BBB 166), Bonn 2011, 367–380, 368–372, 379f.

itinerancy should be imagined in tight interconnection with local residentiary supporting groups. This refers not only to material support for itinerants, but might also be imagined as including far-reaching theological interchange. Thus, in the composition of the Sayings Source, oral traditions of itinerants were most likely revised, framed and written down by local residentiary village scribes.

- 5) The trajectory of Jesus' ethos of itinerancy and poverty can be traced until the second and third century: the Gospel of Thomas, Lucian of Samosata, the Pseudo-Clementine literature, and the Acts of Thomas. But in reality, this ethos has never ceased to exist throughout the course of church history and has been frequently "reinvented": Anthony the Great (+ 356, selling all his possessions, and giving it to the poor; cf. Matt 19:21), the Hiberno-Scottish mission and their "*peregrinatio religiosa pro Christo*" (6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries), Francis of Assisi (+ 1226, preacher of humility and poverty), Liberation Theology in modern Latin America and the latest attempts of Pope Francis to re-establish a poor and socially-committed church can be seen as vivid signs of life of the old Jesuanic ethos.