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Popular Tradition, and
Hidden Transcript in Q

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Oral Performance in Q

EPISTEMOLOGY, POLITICAL CONFLICT, AND CONTEXTUAL REGISTER

Vernon K. Robbins

The essays by Werner Kelber, Richard Horsley, and Jonathan Draper in this volume exhibit three distinctively different performances of academic discourse about oral interpretation of literature. Their essays are contributions to the movement since the last part of the twentieth century to re-introduce the study of oral tradition into interpretation of the Bible. I will address Kelber's essay first, which performs a philosophical discourse it characterizes as "epistemological"; Richard Horsley's "Introduction" and essay second, which enact a political discourse using categories that emerge out of a "conflict model" of culture that "liberation" interpreters introduced into biblical interpretation during the 1980s; and Jonathan Draper's essay third, which emerges out of a cultural and political context that experienced both positive and negative oral uses of the Bible during an era that launched the New South Africa in the 1990s. These three essays, which approach oral tradition from significantly different perspectives, bring major issues concerning the relation of oral to written literature to view in highly informative ways.

Werner H. Kelber: Hybrids in a Philosophical Mode

Werner Kelber's essay is a philosophical exploration of the relation of Q and the *Gospel of Thomas*, which he properly defines in the title as "epistemological." The categories Kelber uses emerge out of the "trajectory" mode of biblical interpretation James M. Robinson and Helmut Koester used to introduce "dynamic" strategies into biblical interpretation during the 1960s to replace what they perceived to be dominant "static" strategies (Robinson and Koester). Kelber's approach to oral and written tradition in the essay has deep roots in twentieth century *wissenschaftliche* German scholarship. This tradition of interpretation is hermeneutical rather than rhetorical (pp. 28, 37, 38; cf. Wuellner 1989; Robbins 2004). Hermeneutical interpreters ground academic discourse in theory that is both explainable and defensible through philosophical discourse. Kelber's essay constructs

its philosophical position by addressing oral tradition as "verbal art" (Bauman 1977; not mentioned by Kelber). The focus is not, then, on dynamics of oral performance. Rather, a philosophical question concerning the nature of orality as "verbal art" in Q and *Thomas* drives the discourse in the essay. Kelber enacts his approach by focusing on "the final stage of gospel constructions," which produces "the outcome of a selective bundling of tradition into new configurations" and makes it "imperative to pay singular attention to the texts in their present form" (p. 28). An irony emerges in the essay when Kelber moves to Q, since Q is a "reconstructed source" rather than a "final text." Nevertheless, Kelber approaches both *Thomas* and Q as "final texts" and draws his conclusions from this perspective.

The special approach in Kelber's essay is to assert that Q and *Thomas* do not belong to the same genre. Rather, each text, in its own way, is a "generic hybrid." Kelber's strategy is to assert that the two "final texts" contain different "oral poetics," because each text has a relationship to different "genres" or "Gattungen" of literature. Kelber achieves this conclusion about *Thomas* by starting with a "certainty" he has about the *Gattung* of *Thomas*, which he has gleaned from Jonathan Z. Smith: "GT's layout of materials by simple coordination brings it into close affinity with the ancient genre of list" (p. 38).¹ In this genre, Kelber states:

Knowledge is managed on the principle of clustering whereby like data tend to attract those of their own likeness. Basically, lists function as technological mechanisms suited for the storing of data which are deemed worthy of preservation. Their primary compositional rationale derives not from hermeneutical impulse, but rather from functional needs." (40)

At this point, then, Kelber's focus is not on the relation of *Thomas* to oral tradition, but on the "philosophical" nature of the final written text as a "storage place." Having achieved this certainty, Kelber takes a decisive turn away from list by disagreeing with Crossan's view that *Thomas* is a "pure list." The beginning and ending of *Thomas*, Kelber asserts, give this "storage place" a "hermeneutical" function as "gospel" (p. 42). Kelber does not clarify in this context what he considers "gospel" to mean, nor does he observe that the beginning and ending are "logia" (sayings) rather than a "narrative" introduction and conclusion. Kelber uses the title at the ending of the "final text" of *Thomas* to define the text in terms of a "desire" to function as a gospel. In the end, then, *Thomas* is not simply a list. Rather, it is a "Sayings Gospel" that "remained beholden to the itemization of sayings characteristic of list, while at the same time claiming a sense of the integrity of the whole (GOSPEL)" (p. 44). At the end, Kelber personifies *Thomas* as a "generic hybrid" with desires. It "aspires" to be both a "list" that stores and a "gospel." The reader is not told what its desires as "gospel" might be.

1. Using the view of list as "perhaps the most archaic and pervasive of genres" (Smith 1982:44).

In his discussion, Kelber never observes that a special characteristic of *Thomas* is the presence of "Jesus said," "the disciples said to Jesus," or some variation at the beginning of each of the 114 logia. In other words, Kelber overlooks the attribution of all of the logia to one special personage and this personage's conversation partners, which gives each logion the nature of an "attributed *chreia*." In other words, Kelber fails to emphasize that *Thomas* is an excellent example of a list properly called "a list of sayings of a wise man." Instead, he uses the concept of "list" to dissociate his discussion completely from Robinson's category. This is an extreme move that weakens various aspects of his argumentation. Kelber also avoids any discussion of *Thomas* as an "oral-derived text." Thus, he does not mention the substantial number of Q sayings in *Thomas*;² nor does he discuss clusters of sayings in *Thomas*, present analysis of various logia or clusters to exhibit this orality, or exhibit relationships between some of the sayings clusters in Q and *Thomas* (Robbins 1997:88-92). The absence of these things weakens Kelber's comparison of *Thomas* with Q in serious ways.

Once Kelber has asserted a view of the genre of *Thomas* as a list, which gives it a function as a storehouse of knowledge, and juxtaposed this observation with the aspirations of the final text to function as a gospel, Kelber turns to the nature of the "verbal art" in this "generic hybrid." The issue for him is how this "storage" text might function orally, once it was written with a "primary compositional rationale" that was "not hermeneutical." A key, for him, is the absence of any internal "thematic coherence" that a reader might be expected to "construct" as s/he hears the text read from beginning to end. In other words, the final text has no overarching rhetoric. As a "storage place," composed like a "list," it has "poetics" rather than "rhetorics." Analysis of a text's poetics rather than its rhetorics is, of course, inherent to Kelber's philosophically oriented hermeneutical approach. Rhetorics, as Wuellner explained some years ago (Wuellner 1989), became an alternative to hermeneutics in European interpretation during the twentieth century. Kelber formulates the issue concerning orality in *Thomas* in terms of whether, "as in all oral poetics, we will have to envision alternate [*sic*, alternative] performances of the same sayings and parables" (p. 43). Kelber concludes, then, that although *Thomas* is a "product," namely a storehouse of sayings, "it seeks to remain a process." While the reader might think this is a result of the aspirations of *Thomas* as a "gospel," Kelber says it is a characteristic of "all oral poetry" to remain a process (p. 43). A special characteristic of *Thomas* as verbal art, however, and its "unifying aspect," is present in "its demand for interpretation" in the introduction. *Thomas* "is, therefore, a genre that, in spite of its invocation of gospel, requires patient hearing of each of its sayings and parables. It is, and will always be, plural" (p. 44). Kelber appears to presuppose, then, that a gospel

2. "Of the seventy-nine sayings of *Thomas* with Synoptic Gospel parallels, forty-six have parallels in Q" (Koester 1990b:87).

"wants" one single interpretation. In contrast, *Thomas* presupposes plural interpretations. The "orality" of the verbal art in *Thomas* lies in its interception of any presupposition, even if it is "gospel," that there may be "one single meaning" for any of its sayings. Rather, patient hearing will continually produce plural meanings for the sayings and parables contained in it. Kelber's "hermeneutical" approach, then, presents a conclusion that there is a "hybridity" in the internal nature of *Thomas* that produces a dynamic tension between its function as a storehouse of knowledge and its function as a verbal text demanding interpretation that will always be plural. The necessity for the plurality lies in the absence of a "single thematic topos" throughout *Thomas* (p. 44), which leads us to Kelber's discussion of Q, which he presents as a major alternative to *Thomas*.

Kelber's intellectual definition of Q, for purposes of comparing it with *Thomas*, derives from a conclusion, which he asserts "is almost universally acknowledged," that "Q exhibits a thematically coherent profile" (p. 30). Kelber uses some of Horsley's insights and words to support a position that "kingdom materials" provide "a unifying theme" that can "be intellectually defined in terms of a single thematic proposition" in Q (pp. 37, 44). For Kelber, then, there is an inner "hermeneutical" coherence in Q that does not exist in *Thomas*. What, then, is the nature of this coherence, and what is its relation to orality?

Kelber asserts that "[t]he modern breakthrough for the genre critical study of Q" (p. 32) occurred with James M. Robinson's essay "Logoi Sophon: On the Gattung of Q" (1971), but this progress introduced a serious misunderstanding. Severe limitations for interpretation followed as the result of Robinson's focus on "individual sayings" rather than "clusters of sayings" in Q (p. 31). Two decades later, Helmut Koester identified "seven clusters of sayings" in Q, but his focus "on composition and redaction" (1990b) in individual sayings still prevented the analysis from moving forward in a truly productive manner. At this point, Kelber identifies the problematics of Robinson's thesis about Q and *Thomas* as "reduction to a single genre" of *logoi sophon* (p. 33). Robinson "postulated the existence of a cross-cultural genre or *Gattung* which he called *logoi sophon* (sayings of the sages, or words of the wise)" (p. 32). Kelber's strategy with both *Thomas* and Q, then, is to start with a "breakthrough" in the understanding of genre ("list" for *Thomas*; and "sayings of the wise" for Q). As we saw above, Kelber disqualified the genre "sayings of the wise" for *Thomas* by replacing it with "list of sayings." We will see below that Kelber replaces "sayings of the wise" for Q with the genre of "manual." For Kelber, the correct observation for each final text is that it is a "generic hybrid," and none of the strands in either hybrid is to be associated with a generic concept of "sayings of the wise." This is, one might think, a remarkable denial of the nature of sayings attributed to wise men in these texts! Here is the way Kelber enacts the analysis.

Kelber's first step is to present "five major objections" to the view that *logoi sophon* can be understood as a widespread cross-cultural genre. The fourth and fifth objections are the means by which he moves to his thesis of "hybridity." Fourth, "Q and *Thomas* are so different as to disallow identification with a single genre"; and fifth, Robinson's essay on *logoi sophon* "has next to nothing to say about Q itself" (p. 33). Kelber considers this final point to be the "death blow" against Robinson's *logoi sophon* view of Q: "Surely, any genre designation of Q must remain unconvincing unless it is demonstrated by intense analysis of the present text" (p. 33). Kelber does not mention that the detailed investigations of Q by John Kloppenborg were designed to demonstrate "by intense analysis of the present text 'the nature of Q as an instance of *logoi sophon*.' At this point in the essay, then, Kelber addresses the *logoi sophon* thesis in the form in which it was launched by Robinson to inaugurate a program of analysis of Q, rather than discussing the thesis of Q as *logoi sophon* in its strongest form (Kloppenborg).

Instead of addressing the work of Kloppenborg, Kelber turns to the work of Horsley, which works with "sociological forces of power relations" (Horsley) and Q as oral performance. As Kelber indicates, the work of Horsley and Draper conflicts with his own concepts of "sayings Gospel," "biography," and "manual." Kelber resolves this conflict by adapting Schröter's concept of an interface of *Spruchsammlung* and *Biographie* with the proposal that "we should think of Q in its final form as a generic hybrid, participating both in biography and in manual" (p. 39). Q, then, is neither a "list" nor a "gospel"; it is a hybrid of "manual" and "biography."

Kelber's vocabulary is grounded in literary-historical categories that are resistant to oral rhetorical dynamics. This causes Kelber to be "haunted by feelings of anxiety about the sense of instability an oral-derived text brings to hermeneutics. Indeed, Q's meaning in oral performance is not quite the measurable quantity it has sometimes appeared to be in print culture. And yet, from the perspective of oral aesthetics, the designation of Q as a single text with a single meaning may well appear to be a grave misunderstanding" (p. 39). While Kelber uses Horsley's assertion that kingdom materials constitute one single unifying theme for Q to distinguish Q from *Thomas* (p. 44), in the context of discussing Q on its own terms, he asserts that there probably is no single meaning in Q.

Throughout Kelber's essay, then, the reader detects cognitive dissonance produced by natural tensions between a philosophical approach grounded in literary-historical categories and gestures toward oral-rhetorical approaches grounded in sociological-anthropological categories. Many observations are informative and strong. Other assertions, however, reveal the absence of an approach that is readily comfortable and familiar with orality. The natural home of the discourse in Kelber's essay is philosophical inquiry rather than rhetorical orality.

Richard A. Horsley: Polarities in a Political Mode

Richard Horsley's essay is a political exploration of Q driven by discourse that creates polarizing frameworks to investigate the nature of orality in peasant culture. While Kelber's essay creates epistemological alternatives from a philosophical position polarized against Robinson's view of Q and Thomas as "sayings of the wise," Horsley creates a list of opposites from a social-political position to create a framework for the oral performance of Q in the context of village life in Galilee. On the one hand, the approach enacts the dynamics of the beginning stages of "new paradigm" investigation as described by Thomas Kuhn. On the other hand, the approach generates a contracultural environment of interpretation where major alternatives are presented as polar opposites. Where Kelber presents alternatives to create hybrids, therefore, Horsley presents alternatives to create opposites.

By my count, Horsley's essays introduce at least ten polarities. The initial four are socio-political in nature:

1. Elite culture versus popular culture;
2. Great tradition versus little tradition;
3. Israelite "established order" tradition versus "resistance and rebellion" tradition;
4. Herodian and other elites of Tiberias versus surrounding villages and ordinary residents.

The next six concern oral and written communication:

5. Print culture versus oral culture;
6. Writing versus oral composition;
7. Copying versus composing;
8. Quotation of scripture versus presentation of images, motifs, and patterns from cultural memory;
9. Individual sayings versus speeches;
10. Public transcript versus hidden transcript.

In Horsley's essays in this volume, the first term in the list is negative: hegemonic, oppressive, and destructive. The second term, in contrast, is positive: rebellious, resistant, and life-giving. The socio-cultural perspective in the essay, then, is from popular culture upwards, rather than elite culture downwards. Many biblical scholars would undoubtedly choose the first term as positive rather than the second term. Who wants to side with rebellious and resistant culture over against a culture that establishes order? Many interpreters read the Bible for the purpose of establishing order. This, for Horsley, is the issue. Should interpreters read the Bible from a perspective of dominant, elite culture, or should they read it from a

perspective of subordinated, popular culture? Horsley's argument is that a majority of the population lived in popular culture in antiquity and a minority lived in dominant culture. Rather than presenting the view of a minority of the population who were born or adopted into dominant culture, the Bible, in Horsley's view, presents the perspectives of a majority of the population who were forced to live in environments of subordinated, oppressed culture.

The polarized terms listed above provide a framework for Horsley to analyze and interpret the clusters of sayings in Q 6:20-49 from the perspective of rebellious, life-giving, popular culture. This culture uses oral performance as its mode of communication. Any use of writing, therefore, is an oral usage. The question for Horsley is if biblical interpreters can find a way to analyze written texts as oral-derived compositions. While the irony in Kelber's essay is the approach to Q as a "final text," the irony in Horsley's essay is the approach to a reconstructed, written text as an oral text. Horsley sees no traces of "writing composition" in the portions of Q he analyzes. The written texts before him are "oral-derived." Horsley's models are Jeremiah and his scribe Baruch. Jeremiah initially dictated to Baruch for over a decade the oracles God spoke to him, and Baruch wrote them on a scroll. When the king destroyed the scroll, Jeremiah again recited the oracles and Baruch wrote them on another scroll. Horsley's point is that Jeremiah carried these oracles in his memory, without any recourse to writing. The written text was an oral-derived text. Jeremiah retained the oracles in memory, so he could recite them again, when the written text was destroyed, and his scribe could write them down again, in virtually the same form they existed in the initial instance (p. 19). Horsley might have explored major variations of length and wording in manuscripts of Jeremiah, using data from Qumran in particular, to suggest that "oral" composition grows and varies as much as, or even more than, "scribal" composition. But he prefers an approach to oral performance as "reliable" recitation from memory.

Horsley, and the scholars on whom he depends, have substantive evidence to support the case that members of popular culture energetically promulgate polarized pictures of their relationships to those who have power over them. The misleading thing, of course, is that if "an outsider" asks members of the subordinate popular culture if they see the bosses, landlords, and political leaders over them as their enemies, they will tell about their good relationships with them and access to them, by which they receive many benefits. In other words, the "public story" they present regularly does not emphasize their negative views toward them. This takes us to one of the most profound aspects of Horsley's essay. Using insights from James Scott's *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (1990), Horsley argues that Q 6:20-49 represents the "hidden transcript" being performed by Galilean Christians. But it is more than this. "Q portrays 'Jesus' as having boldly declared the hidden transcript in the face of

the power-holders, in pronouncing woes against the Pharisees and prophetic condemnation of the Jerusalem rulers" (p. 22). The challenge that Horsley sets for himself, then, is to analyze Q 6:20–49 as a presentation of the "hidden transcript" that Galilean Christians have promulgated "publicly." How could this be done?

Supported by insights from James Scott's work on hidden transcripts and John Miles Foley's works on oral tradition, Horsley adapts Bernard Brandon Scott and Margaret Dean's "sound mapping" approach to written texts to display the rhythm, alliteration, balance, and allusions in Q 6:20–49. The baseline for him is the existence of "measured verse" in the speeches, that sound like poetry and exhibit the presence of "oral performance" (p. 56). The display of the text is, indeed, convincing. The display of the text is guided by the conclusion that "[k]ey markers of oral-derived texts are the repetition of words, sounds, and verbal forms, and parallel lines and sets of lines." (p. 66). Then Horsley interprets the "context, register, and cultural tradition" of Q 6:20–49 from the perspective of renewal of covenant, in particular as it exists in the Community Rule and Damascus Rule found at Qumran. The analysis of Q 6:20–49 is convincing. The content of the sayings, the focus on poverty-wealth, indebtedness-giving, etc. supports his reading of the text as one of the hidden transcripts of Jewish tradition made public among Galilean Christians.

In the midst of Horsley's interpretation of Q 6:20–49, however, a number of questions emerge. Here are some of the questions: (1) How did Q 6:20–49 become a written text? (2) Did any manifestations of "writing" come into Q 6:20–49 in the process of embedding it in a larger written text? If not, why not? (3) How can interpreters begin to analyze the differences between the "oral-derived" text of Q 6:20–49 and the "written" text of the Sermon on the Mount? It will, in fact, be important to include the Sermon on the Mount in the discussion. Horsley has not seemed to notice, for instance, that the recitations of scripture in the Sermon on the Mount do not have the technical form of "scribal quotation" but the oral form of "proverbial speech" (p. 70). How does one account for this oral aspect of the Sermon on the Mount?

Horsley's model for the writing down of Q 6:20–49 seems to be the relationship of Jeremiah to Baruch, but here he faces a problem of the relation of orally performed text in Aramaic to a written text in Greek. Horsley mentions this as a "problem" (pp. 52–53), but it either does not occur to him to use insights from the *Progymnasmata*, which tell us how people learned to compose in Greek from the dictation of a *grammateus*, a teacher of writing, or he is opposed to using such evidence. He, as many other NT interpreters, continue to be unaware, it appears, that Theon's *Progymnasmata* in particular exhibits many aspects of the interface between popular and elite culture in Mediterranean society and culture, as exhibited by its extensive use of Cynic *chreiai*. The absence of insights from the *Progym-*

nasmata in this volume weakens the discussion in substantive ways, since these manuals show how people learned how to write "orally performed speech" in Greek. (See Kennedy 2003.)

As stated above, Horsley offers a solution to the existence of Q 6:20–49 in Greek by suggesting that the writing down occurred "in the villages or 'regions' of Tyre, Caesarea Philippi, and the Decapolis" (p. 53), which is a very interesting suggestion. It is precisely in these locations that one can appropriately think of *progymnastic* teaching of Greek writing to be occurring. Instead of investigating the discussion of the *Progymnasmata* by NT interpreters, Horsley uses significant space in his introduction (pp. 11–15) to launch a "death blow" to Kloppenborg's and Arnal's argument that village clerks (*komogrammateis*) in Galilee were the likely writers of Q in Greek. Horsley's identification of the "surrounding regions" as a locale for the composition in writing of Q is a most interesting proposal. Even though Horsley uses the relationship of Jeremiah and Baruch as the major model for how Q may have been written, he does not tell the reader if he thinks Q first was written down in Aramaic, or whether it was translated from Aramaic into Greek while it existed solely in an "orally composed" form, then the Greek version of it was written down in the villages and regions of Tyre, Caesarea Philippi, and the Decapolis.

Another question Horsley does not address is the relation of the writing activity at Qumran with the "orality" of the Community Rule and Damascus Rule he analyzes for analogs to the covenant renewal performance that was the context for the composition of Q 6:20–49. He includes a number of very good paragraphs about Hebrew text and memory, using insights from excellent essays from Daniel Boyarin, Martin Jaffee, and William Scott Green. Horsley's omission of the *Progymnasmata* from the discussion, however, leaves a gap that makes it impossible to discuss in a substantive manner how Q 6:20–49 might have migrated from an oral performance environment located in Aramaic language to an oral-derived text written in Greek. Here a perspective of "ABK" (Anything but Kloppenborg) haunts his essays. Since Kloppenborg's analysis is the "unacceptable opposite" of the analysis Horsley enacts, there can be no admission of the presence of *chreiai* in Q, even if there are narrative introductions to Jesus' sayings, which are the special characteristic of a *chreia*.

A number of items in Q 6:20–49 that Kloppenborg and others have judged to be "redactional" at a stage of writing could help to support Horsley's thesis. For example, careful attention to the introductory exhortation in Q 6:27 may help with the argument that the "register" of this section is covenant renewal. In the context of an oral performance of a covenant renewal discourse as Horsley describes it, it is likely that "But I say to you who hear" (Luke 6:27a) would be heard as a tag that evokes "Hear O Israel" (Deut 6:4) in the Shema. The focus on the *topos* of "love" in Q 6:27b–38, then, reconfigures "Love the Lord your God with all your

heart, with all your soul, and with all your might" in the following verse of the Torah (Deut 6:5). Since this exhortation is not present in reconstructed Q, one could argue that the Greek writer of Luke 6:27–38 has transmitted an "oral tag" related to the "oral-derived" dynamics of this text as covenant renewal by adding this introduction to Q 6:27–38.

There is one part of Horsley's display I consider inaccurate. Horsley has misread Q 6:27–38 in a manner that creates an inaccurate "balancing" of the verses. Q 6:36–38 are, in my judgment, 1, 2, and 3 that form the balanced conclusion to 6:27–38. Q 6:39 presents another tag in the form a narrative introduction, "He also spoke to them an analogy (*parabolē*)." After the section that reconfigures the Shema (Q 6:20–38), Q 6:39–45 introduces a question that opens the next section of the speech. This section elaborates "by analogy" (see Theon *Progymnasmata*) the covenant-renewal *topos*, which Q has reconfigured by that point into "love as God loves." As Draper observes, Q continues after the "sayings" of Jesus with two miracle stories (Luke 7:2–17). We will see below that these function as *paradeigmata* that Jesus himself enacts. This is a natural "next step" in an "elaboration," which exists at the interface of oral composition and *progymnastic* written composition. This, however, is a topic for the discussion of Draper's essay.

Jonathan A. Draper: Contextual Register in a Continuum

Jonathan Draper's essay exhibits an awareness of a continuum between oral and scribal composition that Kelber does not address and Horsley appears not to accept. Draper knows that oral performers tell stories in addition to giving speeches. Therefore, he includes narrative material as well as sayings material in the section of text he analyzes. Kelber and Horsley, in contrast, operate in a mode characteristic of much "rhetorical" analysis of NT texts that presupposes that "oral" performers can only present a "speech." Again, careful attention to the *Progymnasmata* removes this misunderstanding. An oral performance may be a matter of elaborating *topoi* by telling stories, as well as by formulating proverbial, balanced speech.

One of the keys to Draper's essay is the well-grounded insight that there are no "original performances" or "original texts." Rather, "[t]here are only particular performances, varying according to circumstances" (p. 72). This means that Luke 6:12–7:17 is a "particular performance," which an interpreter must analyze in toto. This is a major difference from Horsley who, in spite of some statements to the contrary, enacts his interpretation as though he were working with an "original performance" that could be rewritten through dictation. This appears to come from using Jeremiah and Baruch as his model for how Q became a written text. When the "original" scroll Baruch wrote was destroyed by the king, Jeremiah dictated "once again" the oracles God had given him to proclaim, and Baruch wrote them down "again." The way Horsley tells this story suggests that he at least implic-

itly thinks of an "original text" dictated to Baruch and written down, then destroyed and written down again through dictation. Draper insists that each performance would have been "a particular performance" containing certain variations from one another. The task of interpretation, then, is to analyze the "particular performance" that stands before the interpreter.

Another key to Draper's essay is his understanding that there is "a continuum between 'primary orality' and 'textual orality,' in which oral forms persist even after a person may become literate" (pp. 72–73). Every oral text from antiquity available to interpreters today is an "oral-derived text," namely it exists only in written form. This is not a substantive problem, however, in Draper's view. An oral-derived text will exhibit its "orality" in its sound balance, alliteration, assonance, binary oppositions, measured verse, and rhythm (p. 81). If it is not an oral-derived text, it will not have these qualities. Foley's use of the work of A. N. Doane, not cited in Draper's essay, helps to confirm Draper's assertion. Doane posits four kinds of interfaces between orality and literature:

1. the scribal transcription of a performed event,
2. the oral "autograph" poet who serves as his or her own scribe;
3. the literate poet who knows the tradition well enough to emulate an oral performance in writing. (Doane: 76, cited in Foley 1995:74);
4. a scribe who may be thought of as composing in the oral traditional manner, an act [Doane] calls "reperformance." Doane describes the last kind of scribe in the following manner:

Whenever scribes who are part of the oral traditional culture write or copy traditional oral works, they do not merely mechanically hand them down; they rehear them, "mouth" them, "reperform" them in the act of writing in such a way that the text may change but remain authentic, just as a completely oral poet's text changes from performance to performance without losing authenticity. (Doane: 80–81, cited in Foley 1995:74–75)

In the light of these four alternatives, Draper's insight about the continuum between oral and written texts is highly welcome. Still another key to Draper's essay is his understanding that "Galilee was not a truly oral culture, since writing was known and used even if the majority of the members of that culture were illiterate" (p. 75). The important thing in this kind of setting is to be aware that "Oral texts written down do not lose the most characteristic features, although clearly the paralinguistic features will be lost—gesture, intonation, pause, pitch, and so on" (p. 76).

Draper's "rhythmographic" representation of Luke 6:12–7:17, following guidelines from Scott and Dean's "sound mapping," divides the sections of the text accurately, in contrast to Horsley's, which makes a mistake at 6:36–38, as discussed above. Then his analysis on the basis of tenor, field, and implied and real communicative event is highly instructive and suggestive. Draper comes close to observing that a "key" to 6:27–38 is the Shema, when he writes that "They are required of 'all Israel': 'to you who hear'" (p. 95). Instead of suggesting that Luke 6:27–38 is likely initially to evoke the Shema in the hearing of the audience, he moves directly to an analysis based on the "Holiness Code" in Lev 18–20. The verses Draper displays suggest that Luke 6 does in fact reconfigure the Shema on the basis of stipulations in the Holiness Code. I think he misses a part of the "orality" of Luke 6, however, when he does not notice the likely oral resonance with the Shema when the text has Jesus say, "But I say to you who hear" (6:27a).

Having asserted the importance of narrative as well as speech in the covenant discourse, Draper does not comment on "He also told them an analogy" (*parabolēn*) in 6:39. Again, the likely reason is the absence of information from the *Progymnasmata* in the discussion. *Parabolē* (analogy) is a key *topos* for hearers in the Mediterranean world. "Can a blind man lead a blind man?" introduces the analogy of "seeing" to explain the nature of "hearing." The question introducing the analogy sets the context for the six references to "the eye" in 6:41–42. When the speaker moves to the analogy of trees that bear fruit in 6:43–45, then onto a question that focuses on "doing what I tell you" (6:46), the hearer waits to hear if the speaker has moved away from the *topos* of "seeing." The speaker signals the conclusion to the speech by asserting, "I will show you" what the person who comes to me and hears my words and does them is like (6:49). The final analogy presenting the two houses is designed to remove "the blindness" to which the speaker referred at the beginning of the section. With the conclusion (6:46–49), the "eye" of the hearer is able to see the ability of the person who "hears the words and does them" to withstand all kinds of difficulties (6:47), in contrast to the ruin of the person "who hears and does not do them" (6:49). The hearer has "seen" all of these things, of course, "by analogy."

Draper's analysis is correctly informed, in addition, when it includes the two healing stories in Luke 7:2–17. As he observes, the reference to "When all his words were completed in the hearing of the people" is a metonymic reference to Moses at the end of Deuteronomy (again showing the importance of the evocation of the Shema in Luke 6:27). This reference, however, is simply a transition to two healings that evoke the declaration that "A great prophet has arisen among us!" in Luke 7:17. Again, the absence of the *Progymnasmata* from the analysis is noticeable. At this point, the Mediterranean hearer will know that the speaker has moved beyond "analogy" to "example" (*paradeigma*). The story teller now shows the hearer by example how Jesus enacts the blessings of covenant renewal amidst

God's people, in a context where a centurion enacts the teaching of "loving your enemies." The key *topoi* in the first healing story are the "love" of the centurion which led him to "build" the synagogue. The centurion is showing "by example" how to enact the "love" the speaker talked about in Luke 6:27–38 and the "building" the speaker talked about in Luke 6:48–49. Then when Jesus heals the only son of the widow of Nain, as Draper observes, the storyteller shows the "covenant renewal enacted by the 'prophet like Moses'" (p. 97). This is the final presentation "through example" in the oral performance. As Draper says, Jesus becomes the "prophet like Moses" who renews the covenant through his speech and action.

Conclusion

There are significantly different "signals" among the essays in this volume written by Werner Kelber, Richard Horsley, and Jonathan Draper. All of the authors attack the "print culture perspective" that, in their opinion, drives modern biblical interpretation. Yet each approaches the problems in a different way. Their attack is noticeably aggressive, and one of the reasons may be their focus on Q, which is both "strongly asserted" and "highly disputed" in the field of NT studies. The intensity of the "fight" over Q creates a "performance arena" (Foley 1995:79–82) in which polarization is the most natural way to proceed. Inasmuch as the essays are designed to introduce a "new paradigm" for analyzing discourse in the Gospels, one might consider it natural that Kelber's and Draper's essays, in particular, adopt such an aggressive, polarizing position. Only Draper's essay, which is nurtured by extensive information about oral performances in South Africa in particular, limits its oppositional modes of thinking to the conflict between elite culture rulers and popular culture subordinates. Draper knows from firsthand experience that orality and literacy mingle together in multiple ways.

In their analyses, Horsley and Draper are pursuing issues of rhetorical elaboration, which have been investigated in the synoptic Gospels since the 1980s. Much of their analysis is looking at "rhetorical elaboration," the "working out" (*exergasia* [Greek] or "refinement" *expolitio* [Latin] of a "topic" (*topos* [Greek], *locus* [Latin]) or "subject" (*res* [Latin]), which can also take the form of the "working" (*ergasia*) or elaboration of a contextualized saying (*chreia*; Mack and Robbins). Neither author, however, uses insights from these investigations which could help them to exhibit the nature of the oral-derived text they are interpreting. In fact, it is not clear that Draper and Horsley have a clear grasp of the widespread "elaboration techniques" that were taught during the final stage of grammatical training, when students were taught how to "compose" in writing on the basis of oral recitation to them. As I have tried to show, their analyses could be improved and assisted in a number of ways if they were to incorporate insights from these manuals into their work.

Though I have articulated perhaps more disagreements than usual in this response, I want to make it clear that I am deeply appreciative, and deeply indebted, to the conversation taking place in these essays and the courage that is being taken to display aspects of orality in the written texts before us. I consider the issues of orality to be very important for New Testament interpreters to master. It is clear, however, that we are only at the beginning stages of learning how to approach them. I applaud the courage and energy present in these essays and look forward to the time when insights from them will incorporate more robust rhetorical analysis and interpretation of all of the NT writings.

The Riddle of Q

ORAL ANCESTOR, TEXTUAL PRECEDENT, OR IDEOLOGICAL CREATION?

John Miles Foley

In medieval literature it is conventional to begin with the "modesty" *topos*—words to the effect that the writer or speaker, supposedly handicapped by a lack of expertise or knowledge, can offer only a qualified and necessarily limited view of the matter at hand. In most such cases the idiomatic force of this strategy is less to indemnify the writer or reader against criticism than to rhetorically amplify the tale-telling that follows. Asking readers or listeners to excuse an unfortunate but unavoidable liability amounts by agreed-upon convention to securing the authorial high ground.

Let me start by affirming that no such rhetorical *topos* is intended here. As an outsider to the field of biblical scholarship, I truly am at a marked disadvantage in commenting on this thought-provoking symposium on Q: the papers by Werner Kelber, Jonathan Draper, and Richard Horsley, as well as the responses by Joanna Dewey and Vernon Robbins. My home field is oral tradition, principally ancient Greek, early medieval English (Anglo-Saxon), and contemporary South Slavic, which I examine chiefly from the perspective of comparative studies, anthropology, and linguistics. What I can perhaps contribute here thus derives not from a professional immersion in the history of New Testament research and scholarship, then, but precisely from its absence. That is, I will attempt to comment on the manifold different ideas about Q by adducing comparative parallels, by citing and briefly exploring verbal ecologies from other times and places. Like the folklorist who cautions that any oral tradition is best understood stereoscopically—by attending to both the "emic" (internal or ethnic) and "etic" (external or analytical) realities—I will try to supply a comparative perspective on what my colleagues in this symposium are discussing from a specialist point of view. In the spirit of inquiry and an ongoing heuristic, I will phrase most of my comments not as pronouncements or air-tight affirmations, but rather as suggestions and proposals.