

Robert K. MacEwen, *Matthean Posteriority: An Exploration of Matthew's Use of Mark and Luke as a Solution to the Synoptic Problem* (Library of New Testament Studies 501; London – New York: Bloomsbury – T&T Clark, 2015). Pp. XXIII + 309. £65,00. ISBN 978-0-56736-434-0

### BARTOSZ ADAMCZEWSKI

Faculty of Theology, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw  
address: Zamiejska 6, 03-580 Warsaw, Poland; e-mail: b.adamczewski@uksw.edu.pl

Robert K. MacEwen is a Lecturer of Biblical Studies and Director of the Chinese Theology Department at the East Asia School of Theology, Singapore. His monograph, which is a reworked version of his PhD dissertation, is devoted to the so-called ‘Matthean posteriority hypothesis’ (= MPH), which postulates Matthew’s use of both Mark and Luke (who in his turn had also used Mark) as a solution to the synoptic problem.

The MPH is a rather neglected hypothesis. Modern works on the synoptic problem usually concentrate on the so-called ‘Two-Document hypothesis’ (= 2DH), which postulates Matthew’s and Luke’s independent use of both Mark and Q, and on the so-called ‘Farrer hypothesis’ (= FH), which postulates Luke’s use of both Mark and Matthew. However, although the FH and MPH are very similar in their logical construction in that they postulate the use of Mark and another Synoptic Gospel by the third evangelist and deny the existence of the ‘Q source’, the supporters of the FH used to present their hypothesis as the only viable hypothesis of ‘Marcan priority without Q’ (see e.g. the main title of the recent LNTS 455 volume), and consequently as the only viable alternative to the 2DH.

MacEwen wants to challenge this modern either/or alternative by undertaking a thorough analysis of the MPH in its historical development, its main arguments, and its ability to answer possible objections to it.

In the introductory chapter of his monograph (pp. 1-26), MacEwen clearly states the need for this study, as well as its purpose, procedure, and limitations. Moreover, he briefly surveys the works of other scholars who proposed some versions of the MPH: G.C. Storr, J.G. Herder, C.G. Wilke (followed by B. Bauer and G. Volkmar), G. Schläger (followed by J.V.M. Sturdy), W. Lockton, E. von Dobschütz (followed by E. Aurelius), H.P. West Jr., R.V. Huggins, E. Powell, M. Hengel, G.A. Blair, A.J.P. Garrow, J.R. Edwards and B. Adamczewski.

In the second chapter (pp. 27-74), MacEwen presents his own arguments in favour of the MPH. He first notes that although Matthew significantly reordered the Marcan material, this fact does not disprove Matthew's use of Mark. Consequently, although Matthew and Luke significantly differ in the order of their common material, this fact does not prove their mutual independence, as the supporters of the 2DH often suggest.

Thereafter, MacEwen convincingly argues that the MPH best explains the presence of the Aramaic word *mamōnas* once in Mt 6:24 and three times in Lk 16:9.11.13, which is surrounded by Lucan *Sondergut* (Lk 15:8-16:12; 16:14-15). Luke generally avoided Aramaisms, so Luke's combination of sources (Q 16:13 with much *Sondergut* on the 2DH) or the reverse direction of borrowing (on the FH) is here rather implausible.

Rather unconvincing is the argument that the use of the verb *thēsauroizō* in Mt 6:19-20 and Lk 12:21 (and not in the parallel text Lk 12:33-34) is best explained by the MPH because on the FH and the 2DH Luke would also use this verb in Lk 12:33-34.

More persuasive is the argument that Mt 5:18 witnesses (on the MPH) not only the directly parallel text Lk 16:17 (or Q 16:16 on 2DH), but also its context Lk 16:16 because Mt 5:17 somewhat surprisingly refers not only to the law, but also to the prophets, who are mentioned in Lk 16:16.

MacEwen's analysis of the complex literary relationship between Mt 10:11-13 and Lk 10:4b-6 is far from being convincing, except for the observation that the word 'peace' in Mt 10:13 par. is generally Lucan and non-Matthean, which favours the MPH.

Likewise, not entirely convincing is the argument that the word 'Beelzebul' in Mt 10:25 (before the association of Jesus with Beelzebul in Mt 12:24-27) originates from Lk 11:15. In fact, it could also originate from Mk 3:22. However, it is true that the narrative inconsistency between Mt 10:25 and Mt 12:24-27 favours the MPH.

MacEwen is much more persuasive in arguing that the Matthean saying concerning care for one sheep on the Sabbath (Mt 12:11), which is inserted into the Marcan story Mk 3:1-6, was borrowed from Lk 14:5, which is an integral part of the story Lk 14:1-6, and consequently the reverse direction of borrowing (on the FH) or the existence of an isolated saying Q 14:5 (on the 2DH) are highly implausible. Alas, MacEwen does not consider the parallels to the Matthean saying in Lk 15:4-6 (finding one lost sheep), which seems to have been conflated by Matthew with Lk 14:5 (caring for a son or an ox on the Sabbath) in Mt 12:11.

On the other hand, the argument from conflation is very persuasive in the discussion concerning the origin of Mt 10:9 (gold, silver, and copper)

as resulting from Matthew's expanding conflation of Mk 6:8 (copper) and Lk 9:3 (silver). This conflation is easily explicable on the MPH, but it is very difficult to explain on the 2DH or the FH.

The second part of the second chapter concerns statistical analysis of strings of verbal agreement which contain four words or more in the Synoptic Gospels. MacEwen argues that on the MPH Matthew was rather consistent in his reworking of both Mk and Lk with roughly the same, high level of verbal agreement. On other hypotheses, the latest evangelist (or evangelists in the 2DH) displayed surprisingly variegated level of agreement with his two main sources.

The third, most elaborate chapter (pp. 75-187) is devoted to various challenges to the MPH. The first of them is the alleged greater primitiveness of some Matthean formulations in the Mt-Lk material. As concerns this problem, MacEwen rightly argues that the case of Matthew's 'debts' against Luke's 'sins' in the Lord's Prayer (Lk 11:4 par.) is in fact dubious, mainly due to Matthew's known redactional tendency to strengthen parallelism. The same may refer to Matthew's 'good things' against Luke's 'Holy Spirit' in Lk 11:13 par., although in this case MacEwen favours greater primitiveness of the Lucan version. Matthew's reluctance to include exhortations to preach before Mt 10 (cf. also Mt 9:1 diff. Mk 5:18-20; Lk 8:38-39) could indeed explain his shorter version in Mt 8:22 diff. Lk 9:60. Likewise, Matthew's reference to 'sword' (Mk 10:34) could indeed have resulted from the placing of Luke's less harsh saying concerning 'division' (Lk 12:51) in the context of the warnings concerning persecutions and death (Mt 10:17-31). Accordingly, MacEwen rightly argues that the examples of Matthew's alleged greater primitiveness against Luke are in fact not as numerous as it is often assumed.

MacEwen's analysis of the International Q Project leads him to the conclusion that this project slightly favours Matthean wording in the reconstructed Q, and consequently it supports the 2DH and, to some extent, the FH against the MPH. However, MacEwen does not analyse the certainty with which the IQP scholars assigned the wording of their reconstructed Q to either the Matthean or the Lucan version of the Mt-Lk material. Such an analysis would show that Matthean version is much more rarely, in fact only exceptionally attributed the certainty {A} to be more primitive than its Lucan counterpart.

The second topic discussed in this chapter is Matthew's omission, on the MPH, of at least 14 parables present in Luke. MacEwen rightly argues that Matthew's omissions could have been caused by Matthew's tendency to avoid doublets with the Marcan version (Lk 7:41-43; 13:6-9), omit material concerning Samaritans (Lk 10:29-37), avoid material that was hard to understand and morally ambiguous (Lk 11:5-8; 16:1-12; 18:1-8), omit negative references

to wealth (Lk 12:13-21; 14:28-33; 16:19-31), avoid unspecified references to community morality (Lk 15:8-10), rework the Lucan material (Lk 15:11-32 cf. Mt 21:28-32), and avoid excessive antinomianism (Lk 17:7-10; 18:9-14), although MacEwen states that the last example is more difficult to explain.

The third challenge to the MPH, which is discussed by MacEwen, consists in the presence of discordant passages in the Mt-Lk non-Marcian material. According to the American scholar, the Matthean infancy narrative shows numerous structural and literary similarities to the Lucan infancy narrative, but Luke's use of Matthew is here slightly more unlikely than Matthew's reworking of Luke. MacEwen argues that Matthew's differences from Luke could have resulted from Matthew's use of other, non-Lucan traditions. Alas, MacEwen does not discuss the role of Matthew's ethopoeic description of Joseph in terms related to his eponymous scriptural predecessor (the importance of dreams, safely stay in Egypt, etc.).

MacEwen's analysis of the burial and resurrection narratives leads him to the conclusion that 10 significant Mt-Lk non-Marcian agreements in this material favour the MPH against the FH, and the 3 agreements which favour the FH can also be explained by the MPH.

As concerns Matthew's and Luke's great sermon (Lk 6:20-49 par.), MacEwen rightly argues that the Mt-Lk agreement in the narrative setting of this sermon at Mk 3:7-13 parr., so in the place in which there is no reconstructible Q material, favours some kind of literary dependence between Matthew and Luke (against the 2DH). Moreover, MacEwen is right in concluding that the Matthean procedure of expanding the Lucan great sermon (on the MPH) is much more consistent with his redactional treatment of Marcian material in his other sermons than is the reverse Lukan procedure of abbreviating and scattering the Matthean great sermon (on the FH) in comparison to Luke's redactional treatment of Marcian material in his other sermons.

The fourth issue discussed in this chapter is the reconstruction of the redactional habits of the third evangelist on various synoptic hypotheses. MacEwen rightly argues that the 2DH and, to a slightly lesser extent, the MPH better explain Matthew's consistently anthologizing recontextualization of earlier material than does the FH for Luke's apparently highly complex recontextualization of his material on the FH, and much better than does the 'Two-Gospel hypothesis' (= 2GH) for Mark's redactional procedures in this proposal. Moreover, MacEwen rightly notes that on the MPH (against the 2DH) Matthew retained some narrative settings for his Lucan non-Marcian material.

The monograph is supplemented with a conclusion (pp. 188-196), in which MacEwen opts for the MPH as the main alternative to the 2DH, and an

elaborate appendix (pp. 197-280), which includes 25 tables, which visually show the cases and patterns of agreement and disagreement between the Synoptic Gospels.

In sum, MacEwen deserves great praise for his thorough analysis and evaluation of the MPH in comparison to three other synoptic hypotheses (the 2DH, the FH, and the 2GH). The American scholar takes pains to analyse arguments for and against various synoptic solutions and evaluate them not simply in abstract and merely subjective terms, but usually against the background of the evangelists' redactional habits known from other parts of their works.

One major weakness of this study is its total lack of interest in earlier New Testament writings, especially Paul's letters, and roughly contemporary writings, especially the Acts of the Apostles, in their possible influence upon the Synoptic Gospels. In fact, a thorough analysis of the relationships between these writings and the Synoptic Gospels could shed new light on the value of the MPH and other synoptic hypotheses.