

Introduction

In modern scholarship a new consensus is emerging which dates the Didache at about the turn of the First Century C.E. At the same time, significant agreements between the Didache and the gospel of Matthew have been detected as these writings share words, phrases and motifs. There seems to be an increasing reluctance, however, to support the thesis that the Didache used Matthew. And, indeed, such a close relationship might equally suggest that both documents were created in the same historical and geographical setting, for example in the Greek-speaking part of Syria. In the study *The Didache. Its Jewish Sources and its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity* (CRINT III/5; Van Gorcum / Fortress, 2002), the late David Flusser and I substantiated the evidence supporting the emergence, transmittance, and growth of both writings in a common environment.

Among our arguments suggesting a common environment are that the community of both the Didache and the gospel of Matthew was probably composed of Judaeo-Christians from the outset, though each manuscript shows indications of a congregation which appears to have alienated itself from its Jewish background. Additionally, the Two Ways teaching (*Did.* 1-6) may well have served in some form as a pre-baptismal instruction within the community of the Didache and Matthew. Furthermore, the correspondence of the Trinitarian baptismal formula in the Didache and Matthew (*Did.* 7 and Matt 28:19) as well as the similar shape of the Lord's Prayer (*Did.* 8 and Matt 6:5-13) apparently reflect the use of resembling oral forms of church traditions. Finally, both the community of the Didache (*Did.* 11-13) and Matthew (Matt 7:15-23; 10:5-15, 40-42; 24:11,24) were visited by itinerant apostles and prophets, some of whom were illegitimate.

In order to invite discussion and exchange ideas on this fundamental issue, an international conference was organized by the Tilburg Faculty of Theology. During 7-8 April 2003, a group of approximately 55 participants from around the globe gathered at the Tilburg University campus. Scholars of related fields (New Testament, Second Temple Judaism, Liturgy, Patristic Studies) were brought together to debate about the matter in the light of their diverse specialisms and previous research. This volume contains the edited proceedings of the expert meeting. Instead of looking at the Didache as a subject of study belonging to Patristics only, the document is considered part of a larger environment of Jewish and Christian religious history. If the Didache and Matthew did indeed emanate from the same geographical, social and cultural setting, new questions arise. Who were the Christians standing behind the Didache and Matthew? Can we trace the developing interests of the respective community or communities in the different textual layers of the Didache and Matthew? Is it possible to frame the congregation(s) within the social history of Jews and Jewish believers-

in-Jesus in First-Century Syria? What stage of development or separation between Christians, Jewish Christians and Jews is envisaged?

The way the agreements between the Didache and the Matthean gospel are comprehended and explained clearly affects the way one creates the framework for understanding early Christian communities, their belief structures, and their relations. Similarly, the background against which Matthew and the Didache are viewed has an immediate effect on the interpretation of both documents. If the Didache may be treated as a window on Matthew, through which a picture emerges of the social world the gospel wishes to address, and if the gospel of Matthew may be used as a window through which we can catch glimpses of the Didache community, we may find a way out in several redactional-critical problems of distinguishing between tradition and redaction in the two documents.

There is little doubt, for example, that the author of the gospel of Matthew by recasting the traditional source materials of the life of Jesus also tells the story of Jesus in the light of his own experience. The sharp disagreement between Jesus and the Pharisees, deepened into intense controversies through Matthean redaction may represent the worsening relations between local Jewish communities and the Christian communities. The gospel of Matthew can be used this way as a window through which the critic might catch glimpses of the society, culture, and history of the Matthean community. On the other hand, however, this assumption poses the problem of the gospel being not a literary but a documentary source. Although Matthew allegedly provides the interpreter with a direct view of the historical situation, the latter is usually unable to demonstrate that he has displayed the correct and faithful historical and social world behind the text. Other data, not derived from the gospel itself, may help to overcome this weakness. If the Didache is not dependent on the gospel of Matthew but reflects materials used by Matthew, it would mean that we have in the Didache a window on the social and religious milieu out of which the gospel of Matthew arose. As a 'primitive' teaching manual, largely unaffected by theological developments, it could be particularly interesting in this respect since it might corroborate, readjust, or dismiss a conjectural picture of the historical situation behind the text. Two windows may provide the transparency needed to reach more insight into the situation of the community.

This volume is divided into three major parts. *Part One* is about the conceivable setting or milieu in which Matthew and the Didache could have originated. Here the predominant scholarly view is adopted, which situates Matthew and the Didache in some Greek-speaking part of Syria. The two opening essays deal with the development of both Judaism and Christianity in Syria in the period after 70 of the Common Era. *Bas ter Haar Romeny* examines the character and make-up of the communities behind the Didache and Matthew. In his opinion, the Didache and Matthew may have been written "in each other's neighbourhood." His interest centers, however, on the question of getting a reliable picture of the communities behind these documents. Should we describe the Matthean and Didache groups as "Christian" as opposed to "Jewish?" He emphasizes the paucity of relevant sources and the tendentious character of those available. From the Edessa example he derives that we must not view these communities as specifically Jewish or Jewish-Christian with their own elaborate theology. A self-

aware distinction between sharply defined groups even after 70 C.E. is anachronistic. The emergence of Christianity and rabbinic Judaism as distinct entities was a gradual process of dissimilarity and definition. Whereas literary sources, especially ideological or doctrinal, tend to stress differentiation, it is the epigraphic evidence which suggests a far wider range of common life among Jews and Christians.

Clayton N. Jefford is even more specific with regard to the geographical setting for Matthew and the Didache. He recognizes a relationship between these documents and Ignatius. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, wrote several letters that are likely to have had a bearing on the Antiochian situation. Jefford not only points to the Syrian Antioch as the setting of the work of the bishop Ignatius, but also identifies this city as the location where Matthew and the Didache achieved their final form. In this context, a problem arises as a result of the specific nature of the respective materials. While the Didache incorporates Jewish traditions and displays a concern for Judaism, Ignatius represents a Pauline, non-Jewish perspective on what it meant to be a Christian. Jefford considers these opposing views as reflecting the diversity of the Antiochian church. They represent tensions at work within the Christian community of Antioch. In his opinion, the Matthean gospel preserving both the Jewish roots and adding missionary materials may have served as a binding element between the two conflicting poles.

In *Part Two* it is again the provenance and origin of the Didache and Matthew which is central but now the starting point is the distinct texts of the writings themselves. The authors move from the literary world of the documents to the real world to which they refer. *Wim Weren* explores the ways in which Matthew reshaped the traditions at his disposal. He distinguishes three phases in the history of the Matthean community corresponding to three stages in the development of the gospel. Interestingly, he connects two remarkable phenomena. Firstly, after the Jewish War (ca. 70-80 C.E.), the community moved from its place of origin in the border area between Lower and Upper Galilee to the district of Caesarea Philippi, to the Golan and the southern part of Syria, where gentile Christianity began. This change of location may have been occasioned by ongoing and intensive conflicts with the Pharisees. Second, the community's relationship to Judaism was changing. While Matthew's community is still embedded within Judaism in the first phase and also during the bitter conflicts with the Pharisees in the penultimate stage of the community's history, it gradually distanced itself from Judaism in the youngest stage (ca. 80-90 C.E.).

Aaron Milavec underlines the essential and intentional unity of Didache as a "well-integrated and self-contained religious system." He looks at the unity of the manual against the cultural background of its time and dates the text to the mid-first century C.E. In his view, the Didache represents a training program for gentile converts who had decisively and irrevocably broken with their previous lifestyle in Graeco-Roman society. The conversion of a gentile who became an adherent of the Jesus movement would involve a process of complete rejection of his or her original social and religious context and a corresponding acquisition of new values, rules and attitudes. According to Milavec, however, the training program reflected in the Didache does not reveal any coherence with Matthew's gospel. In his view, the Didache and Matthew represent two different religious systems. The framers of the Didache might not only have been unaware of the gospel itself but also of those traditions that guided Matthew's community.

In *Part Three* the subject is handled thematically, by consideration of a number of relevant topics in the order of presentation in the Didache. The introduction to these essays is far from comprehensive, but hopefully one which highlights some of the significant content and debate which characterized the Tilburg conference. *Kari Syreeni* compares the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7) and the Two Ways section in *Did.* 1-6. He argues that Chaps. 1-6 in the Didache function as pre-baptismal catechetical instructions for gentiles entering the church. They are exhorted to leave behind traditional gentile standards of morality and instead embrace a more highly developed ethical behaviour. In his opinion, the Doctrina/Didache version and the Barnabas text of the Two Ways may be Christian products without guarantee that their immediate ancestors were purely Jewish documents. Syreeni shows that there are important traditional-historical links between Matthew and the Didache but he, at the same time, ascertains that the paucity of common material in the Sermon on the Mount and *Did.* 1-6 does not support the hypothesis that Matthew might have known some form of the Two Ways tradition. He thinks it unlikely that Matthew's gospel and the Didache were written in the same community in about the same period.

John S. Kloppenborg examines the sayings of Jesus in what is called the *sectio evangelica* of the Didache (*Did.* 1:3b-2:1). Unlike the greater part of the first six chapters of the Didache, this section is a late addition to the Two Ways source of the Didache. The specific themes of this passage remind us of sayings in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew. The question is whether this evangelical section in the Didache draws on Q, on the Synoptic gospels or on an independent Jesus tradition, that is, material of a Matthean type not derived from the gospels as we have them. No consensus of scholarly opinion has emerged as yet. Kloppenborg applies the insights of recent years in determining what is redactional and what is source material in a gospel, before he reaches conclusions concerning the relationship between the evangelical section of the Didache, the finished gospel and the material behind the gospel. He argues that *Did.* 1:4 evidences Didache's knowledge of Luke's redaction of Q. The verse provides sufficient indication that the compiler of the Didache might have been aware of Q and of the distinctively Lukan transformations of this source. This conclusion has a bearing on the dating of the evangelical section. Its insertion into the Two Ways tradition cannot have occurred much "before the early to mid-second century, when Luke's gospel was in circulation." All this leaves the possibility open, however, that in other cases (*Did.* 8:2; 9:5b; 15:3,4; 16) the Didache might have used pre-synoptic material, resting on a source or sources common to both the Didache and Matthew.

Peter J. Tomson deals with the halakhot concerning fasting and praying in *Did.* 8 and Matt 6. Halakhot reflect a standard of one's behaviour and, in that quality, define one's identity as a Jew. In *Did.* 8 the composer of the Didache denounces a group of opponents before proceeding to the Eucharist prayers of his community. This polemical demarcation *vis à vis* the "hypocrites", which is also found in Matthew, probably reflects the schism between the Didache community and Rabbinic Judaism. The disparaging term "hypocrites" referring to the Pharisees, represents the feelings of animosity in the community of the Didache and Matthew against their adversaries. We are facing a rupture in halakha between two Jewish groups here. The conflict comes down to two points. Firstly, Didache chooses Wednesdays and Fridays as fasting

days and this position varies from the Pharisees and rabbis, who favoured Mondays and Thursdays. Secondly, both the Didache and Matthew maintain an alternative Jewish tradition as to which prayer was to be recited three times a day. They require the Lord's Prayer to be recited. Tomson points out that in the light of the almost identical versions of the Lord's Prayer in an analogous polemical context, *Did.* 8 and Matt 6:1-18 may well represent the rules of one and the same community at a certain stage in history.

Gerard Rouwhorst focusses his attention on the eucharistic prayers in *Did.* 9-10. He asks how the Eucharist of the Didache relates to the institution narratives in the New Testament. Many scholars dispute the contention that the prayers of *Did.* 9-10 are eucharistic prayers as they do not include the words of institution. The idea, however, that an institution account must be present if a ritual is to be assessed as indisputably eucharistic is merely a preconceived theory of historical development based on common, but later, practice. For what is most common is not necessarily most ancient. According to Rouwhorst, the development of the Eucharist can no longer be reconstructed with the help of indications borrowed from the New Testament institution narratives. This may also be the reason that he did not find striking similarities between the ritual pattern of the meal underlying *Did.* 9-10 and the gospel of Matthew. In any case, it certainly is worth keeping his conclusion in mind that though many passages in the Didache display a clear resemblance with Matthew, this does not hold for the meal prayers of the Didache.

André Tuilier considers the apostles, prophets and teachers appearing in *Did.* 11-13 and in Matthew. He situates the Didache in the period that the three charismatic leadership roles gradually disappeared and an innovation of offices took place at ca. 70-75 C.E. Two considerations are important. First of all, there is the relationship between Matthew and the Didache. Matthew's gospel was an Aramaic compilation of the *logia* (words) of the Lord at the outset. In a later stage, the collection was translated for the sake of the Christian mission to the Greek-speaking peoples in the Hellenistic East. Since the Greek translation of this collection is likely to have initially circulated in various forms, the editor of the Didache, without knowing our canonical gospel of Matthew, may well have had one of these versions at his disposal. This explains the Didache's divergence from readings in Matthew with regard to the Jesus traditions. Another point which requires attention is the following. The decline of the authority and reputation of the itinerant charismatics is, according to Tuilier, due to the growing diffusion of the gospel of Matthew. At first, the Aramaic and Greek copies of the gospel supported and supplemented the mission of the charismatics but as time went by, it ultimately was the increasing spread of this gospel which brought about a gradual cessation of the charismatic ministries. The internal dynamics of the gospel radiating the belief in God, altruistic love, confidence in the Spirit and, at the same time, its directives against undisciplined wandering teachers and prophets ushered in a new era where the visiting charismatics became scarce and lost importance.

Huib van de Sandt establishes that the reproof passages in *Did.* 15:3 and Matt 18:15-17 reflect a community's reworking of a kind of rule which has a special parallel in the Manual of Discipline (1QS), a major manuscript found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. A comparison of the correspondences between 1QS 5:23b-6:1b and our reproof

passages shows that Matt 18:15-17 and *Did.* 15:3 are connected collaterally, through their dependence on this or a similar Jewish ancestor. Two things are significant. Firstly, the reproof passage in the Didache seems to represent an earlier setting in the development of the tradition than the one in Matthew. The evidence surveyed shows that the Didache and 1QS present similar materials in the same sequence in relatively extensive passages (*Did.* 14:1-15:3 // 1QS 5:10a-6:1) while both writings have almost identical wordings in the clauses with which we are directly concerned (*Did.* 15:3a = 1QS 5:24b-25). Secondly, the materials in Matthew and the Didache represent a revised form of the tradition which is closely related to the one reflected in 1QS. The revised form of the tradition was not due to the peculiar views of the individual authors. The fact that Matthew and the Didache both independently transmuted and rewrote a Jewish reproof tradition akin to Qumran thought was a result of the immediate ties they had with the community where this tradition was transmitted. The injunction may have been altered and adapted within Jewish or Jewish-Christian circles, which maintained highly refined ethical standards.

Joseph Verheyden examines the relationship of *Did.* 16 with the eschatological discourse in Matt 24-25. The hypothesis that the Didache had access to the gospel of Matthew cannot be built upon a mere listing of the parallels, as has sometimes been done in the past. Like Kloppenborg, Verheyden too considers the presence or absence of redactional materials in the Synoptics as decisive for the assessment whether the Didache is familiar with the finished gospels or with traditions behind these gospels. With respect to *Did.* 16 he argues in favour of the Didachist's dependence on the gospel of Matthew and explores the implications of this conclusion for the explanation of the eschatological scenario of Didache's final chapter. Verheyden's reading of *Did.* 16 with an eye on Matthew shows that we are not dealing here with gospel materials that have been cut loose from their original context and freely reused in a variety of ways. He comes to an opposite conclusion. In his opinion, it is difficult to escape the impression that the composer of *Did.* 16 was inspired by Matthew's eschatological scenario to a much greater extent than one would gather from the verbal parallels only.

Jonathan A. Draper's study covers the Didache as a whole. In his opinion, there existed no monolithic, uniform, orthodox Judaism at the end of the first century but rather diverse Judaisms. There was no fundamental distinction between the Didache and Matthew on the one hand and a single unitary Judaism on the other. The word "hypocrite" in *Did.* 8:1-2 is not directed against Judaism but expresses opposition of a Jewish community against the practice of the nascent rabbinic movement. It points to an inner Jewish quarrel. This understanding is crucial in appreciating the next step of Draper's argument. In his opinion, the strong agreements between Matthew and the Didache indicate that these documents come from the same Jewish community at a different stage of development. He settles the question of evolution from one to the other on the basis of internal evidence. Six key terms are analysed which are used with a different valuation in Didache and Matthew. As a result, Draper finds that both documents in their final form represent different stages of development in the process of alienation from Israel. He discovers a gradual transition from a predominantly Jewish-Christian community in the Didache to an increasingly gentile community in Matthew. Moreover, while little polemic against nascent Rabbinism is found in the Didache, the Matthean gospel shows a growing

tension felt by the community over the infringement of Pharisaic authority putting them on the sideline. The final rift with Israel has not yet occurred in Didache and Matthew, but the chasm is so deep that “it is certainly on the horizon, even inevitable.”

It remains to briefly offer some final observations. Nearly all papers presented in this volume concur that the Didache has significant words, phrases and motifs in common with the gospel of Matthew. As one could have imagined, however, they convey no uniform solution to these similarities. A main obstacle in an attempt to assign Matthew and the Didache to the same milieu appears to be the question whether the composer of the Didache was familiar with the finished gospel of Matthew and other Synoptics *or* with traditions underlying these gospels. Some papers argue that at least some passages in the Didache are dependent on the canonical Matthew and/or Luke (Kloppenborg, Syreeni, Verheyden) while others contend that the Didache and Matthew are related in their dependence on common tradition (Tomson, Tuilier, Van de Sandt, Draper). This issue is important since the second option would provide us with a direct view into a given historical situation or even into the development of the community behind Matthew and the Didache. Once one accepts the Didache's independence of canonical gospel sources, the Didache might reproduce an earlier, simultaneous or later *Sitz im Leben* of the same community as the one reflected in Matthew.

The essays in this volume of course do not agree with all points Flusser and I made in *The Didache*. I will not here respond to, let alone refute, the questions and objections raised by scholars in this volume, since they often do not touch upon the subject. However, one diverging view calls for comment. I refer to those scholars who argue that the community of the Didache (Tomson) or the community of both the Didache and Matthew (Draper) is to be viewed as still embedded within Judaism by the time these writings were edited. Their argument, briefly put, runs as follows. Matthew and the Didache were probably composed after the Jewish war. This is the period when the influence of the rabbis, the successors of the Pharisees, became stronger. The rise of Rabbinism in this period is coupled with the consolidation of the rabbinic academy in Yavne (Jamnia) and occasions the promulgations of legal decisions which laid claim to religious authority. But the decisions made in Yavne were not held as normative everywhere. On the contrary, it is quite conceivable that the members in the community of Matthew and the Didache felt bitter about this attempt of the Jewish central authority to manage their lives and resented the rabbis gaining control of the public sphere. The label “hypocrites” in the polemic sections of Matt 23 and *Did.* 8 is likely to be directed against this particular Jewish group. The best background for interpreting the tension and sense of crisis in the Didache and Matthew is therefore the conflict between this community and emergent Rabbinism.

At first sight, this historical context is a plausible and appealing reconstruction for understanding the disagreement expressed in Matthew and the Didache. Whereas before the Jewish war Judaism exhibited a degree of pluralism which permitted Jewish Christians to exist as one group among many, a fierce tendency toward uniformism appeared in post-70 Judaism under leadership of the rabbis. And indeed, the rabbinic measures in the post-war years were to have a great effect on Judaism as it redefined itself. But how far along was the rabbinic process of unification by the time that the

gospel of Matthew and the Didache were written? At the end of the first and the beginning of the second century C.E. the Yavne academy seems to have enjoyed the highest esteem and its decrees probably were accepted by most Israelites as valid and binding.¹ Moreover, at this time the Birkat Ha-Minim, the benediction against the heretics, appears to have been inserted into the liturgy. Jewish Christians are likely to have been a major target of this synagogue denouncement.² Is it not possible, then, that at this stage the community of the gospel of Matthew and the Didache shared a consciousness of their views being suppressed by coalescing Judaism in general?

To be more specific, as far as Matthew is concerned, scholarly opinions are much divided in assessing its social setting. For there are indications in the gospel of Matthew displaying a “parting of the ways” between its community and the “synagogue.”³ Matthew sometimes seems to draw a sharp distinction between himself and his community on the one hand and the ‘Jews over there’ on the other. Nonetheless, the failure to reach unanimity in this respect draws attention to the complexity of the material and to the difficulty of distinguishing sharply delineated groups. We should be alert to the risk of literary sources, especially ideological or doctrinal, tending to stress differentiation and boundaries of separation as a way of keeping the tensions alive (Ter Haar Romeny). Similarly, it is not easy to obtain scientifically justifiable criteria for the evaluation of the evidence in the Didache. Was the community of the Didache a competing group within the larger fabric of Judaism in its day? Or does the term “hypocrites” in this manual reflect the deteriorated relations between the particular Didache community and the Jewish opponents in general?

In my view, the ritual of *Did.* 9-10, which belongs to the same liturgical section (Chaps. 7-10) as the antecedent polemic against the “hypocrites”, may shed light on this puzzle in the Didache. It probably expresses practices and beliefs that were commonly accepted within the community. Now, if we pay close attention to the eucharistic prayers, rendered here, a peculiar phenomenon is found. According to a wide scholarly consensus these eucharistic prayers are grafted on the Birkat Ha-Mazon, the Jewish meal prayer. The supplication for the triumphant reunion of the church in *Did.* 9:4 and 10:5 is bound up with the biblical expectation of salvation for the people of Israel. In this respect, the Didache prayer echoes the third benediction of the Birkat Ha-Mazon, in which the people of Israel and the city of Jerusalem are central. The desire for a concrete historical return to Jerusalem was characteristic of the belief of Jews inside and outside the Land of Israel. Jews, though scattered throughout the ancient world, maintained the bond with the motherland and the holy city. Surprisingly, however, the elements like “Israel, your people,” “Jerusalem, your city,” “Zion,” “your altar,” “your temple,” which constitute the substance of the supplication in the Birkat Ha-Mazon, do not return in the Didache prayer. Apparently, the Christian longing for a gathering of the dispersed church into the kingdom as reflected in the eucharistic

¹ See Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People* 1, 524-26.

² See Gafni, “The Historical Background,” 17-18; Tomson, “The Halakhic Evidence,” in this volume, p. 140.

³ See in this volume the papers of Weren, pp. 53, 62; Tomson, p. 141 and n. 52 and Draper, 221-22 (in his reference to Graham Stanton).

prayers of *Did.* 9-10 does not include the Jewish hope for a restoration of Israel and Jerusalem.⁴

The liturgy of the *Didache* thus shows indications of a community which has ceased to consider itself a variety of Judaism. What may have caused the congregation to move away from its roots? The *Didache* obviously was composed for the initiation of gentiles into their community. This already becomes clear in the supplementary long title of the *Didache* (*Doctrine of the Lord [brought] to the Nations by the Twelve Apostles*) and in the rules concerning baptism. Similarly, the Two Ways doctrine of Chaps. 1-6 apparently is intended as a prescriptive code principally for gentiles who had grown up in households in which pagan gods and pagan standards of morality abounded. In Syria, and particularly in Antioch, a mixture of different peoples, religions and traditions was found. Since the gathering of the church into God's kingdom no longer has any connection with the gathering of Israel in the *Didache* liturgy, it is not far-fetched to suppose that the conversion of gentiles may have affected the community in the last stage of the development of the *Didache*, even to the extent of becoming a separate movement. By the time the *Didache* was composed, many of them were already baptized and adopted in the community.

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Huub van de Sandt

⁴ See Van de Sandt, "The Gathering of the Church in the Kingdom" and compare also Van de Sandt-Flusser, *The Didache*, 33-34, 325-29.