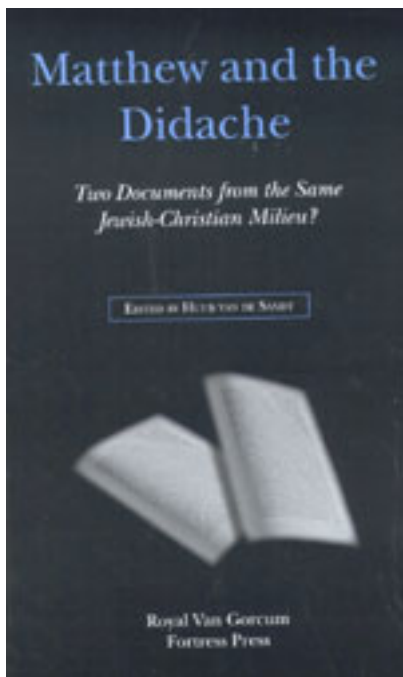


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van de Sandt, Hubb, ed.

*Matthew and the Didache: Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?*

Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum

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When taking a look at the table of contents of this volume, the buyer or librarian may wonder on which shelf one should place it: exegesis (a book about the Gospel of Matthew) or church history (a book about the *Didache*)? This puzzle, however, is precisely the point the authors and the editor want to make. They step across the boundaries of the biblical canon (and of the theological disciplines) to study the literary and historical relationship between the canonical Gospel of Matthew and the noncanonical *Didache*, placing them on equal footing as two documents emerging from one Jewish-Christian milieu in Greek-speaking Syria. The contributions were first presented and discussed at an interdisciplinary conference in Tilburg, organized by the Tilburg Faculty of Theology, on 7–8 April 2003.

The volume is divided into three great sections, dedicated respectively to the question of milieu, to the origins of Matthew and the *Didache*, and to some studies on particular texts or topics. This arrangement already shows that the book is intended as a well-arranged bouquet of scholarly flowers. The articles are numbered as chapters and followed by a cumulative bibliography (243–63), which helps to keep the footnotes in the articles short and also serves as a tool in its own right.

In his introduction (1–9), Huub van der Sandt briefly presents the state of research and the aims of the Tilburg conference, gives a survey about the contributions, and names some fields of discussion.

The first section (11–7) is headed “Milieu.” Bas ter Haar Romeny reviews “Hypotheses on the Development of Judaism and Christianity in Syria in the Period after 70 C.E.” (13–33). Presenting a brief survey of the mix of populations and languages in ancient Syria, especially Edessa, he sketches the possibility of a milieu in which documents such as Matthew or the *Didache* were not yet outside the boundaries of Judaism, since there was no clear-cut sociological distinction between “Jews who came to believe that Christ brought salvation” (29 n. 89) and other Jews who did not share that belief.

Clayton N. Jefford’s contribution (“The Milieu of Matthew, the *Didache*, and Ignatius of Antioch: Agreements and Differences” [35–47]) tries to locate Matthew and the *Didache* (together with Ignatius) in Antioch. It is surely appropriate to assume a common geographical and ecclesial location for Matthew and the *Didache*, since both documents seem to depend on a common stock of traditions. Jefford’s precise identification of the locale with the city of Antioch, however, depends on rather questionable assumptions about the urban background of the *Didache*.

The second section, “The Two Documents: Their Provenance and Origin” (49–84), contains two contributions on introductory questions about Matthew and the *Didache*. Wim Weren’s article on “The History and Social Setting of the Matthean Community” (51–62) proposes a three-stage development, during which a community of pre-70 Galilean “Christian Jews” gradually moved geographically to southern Syria and ecclesially toward being a mixed community separated from fellow Jews and challenged by internal tensions—hence the polemic against Pharisees as well as against (Christian) false prophets.

Aaron Milavec asks: “When, Why, and for Whom Was the *Didache* Created?” (63–84). He locates the *Didache* in the formation of Christian “novices,” who were individually prepared for baptism by spiritual mentors. This gives a convincing answer to the questions “Why?” and “For Whom?” Yet the question “When?” receives separate treatment. Milavec denies any contact to the Gospel of Matthew and hence assumes an early date for the *Didache*. While this conclusion is not wholly convincing, the argument for a baptismal context, especially with regard to former pagans, appears plausible and helpful.

The third section (85–241) treats the question “Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?” in eight case studies. Kari Syreeni’s article on “The Sermon on the

Mount and the Two Ways Teaching of the Didache” (87–103) analyzes the composition history of *Did.* 1–6 and Matt 5–7, with special regard to the two ways (esp. *Did.* 1:1 and Matt 7:13–14). Considering this motif in Matt 7:13–14 to be redactional, he traces it back to a “two-ways source,” which also underlies *Did.* 1–6 and, for example, *Barn.* 18–21. Yet he wisely refrains from knowing too much about this source, which keeps him from arguing for any kind of literary dependence of Matthew and the *Didache* upon each other.

John S. Kloppenborg examines “The Use of the Synoptics or Q in Did 1:3b–2:1” (105–29). He points to the recent tendency in research to consider the *Didache* as independent from the final forms of Matthew and Luke and marks some difficulties for the reconstruction of sources used by the *Didache*, due to the imponderabilities of textual transmission and the allusive use of sources. Then he turns to a detailed analysis of the *sectio evangelica* *Did.* 1:3b–2:1, checking for every single saying whether the *Didache* used Q or redactional Matthew or Luke.

Peter J. Tomson studies “The Halakhic Evidence of Didache 8 and Matthew 6 and the Didache Community’s Relationship to Judaism” (131–41). He understands *Did.* 8 and Matt 6 in terms of halakah, that is, as rules for practical religious life, exemplified on fasting and prayer. In comparison to rabbinic discussion on these topics, he states clear differences, which are, however, (still) distant from the polemic found in Matthew. He traces the schism between the communities of Matthew and the *Didache* and those of post-70 Judaism to the deviant “halakic” developments of the Christian communities.

The contribution by Gerard Rouwhorst is devoted to “Didache 9–10: A Litmus Test for the Research on Early Christian Liturgy Eucharist” (143–56). Rouwhorst marks this section as the most difficult one in the *Didache* for historians of liturgy, since it reflects a “eucharistic” celebration without an institution narrative. He comes to a negative result with regard to the scope of the volume, since in *Did.* 9–10 close similarities to Matthew can hardly be stated.

The article by André Tuilier deals with “Les charismatiques itinérants dans la Didaché et dans l’Évangile de Matthieu” (157–72); those who are not too fluent in reading French will appreciate the detailed English abstract. According to Tuilier, the *Didache* was composed around 70–75 C.E., using Matthew’s Aramaic *logia* (mentioned by Papias), which were subsequently translated into Greek and—around 80–100 C.E.—became the canonical Gospel of Matthew. He locates the *Didache* in an intermediate stage between leadership by itinerant charismatics and by local church hierarchy; the two-ways teaching presents something like “le premier code de droit canonique” (166), and the canonical Gospel of Matthew regulates the apostolic teaching. Tuilier’s emphasis on the development of tradition as a problem for constructing literary dependences is

undoubtedly important, but one can hardly avoid the impression of a somewhat simplistic view of church history.

Huub van de Sandt opens “Two Windows on a Developing Jewish-Christian Reproof Practice: Matt 18:15–17 and Did. 15:3” (173-192) and relates these two texts with Qumran material, especially 1QS 5:20b–6:1b, which describes the annual examination of the community’s members. Both Matt 18:15–17 and *Did.* 15:3 show certain correspondences to the Qumran text, but van de Sandt does not claim their direct dependence on 1QS, but rather dependence on a related tradition that both Matthew and the Didachist “softened,” demanding benevolent and merciful *correctio fraterna*.

Joseph Verheyden examines “Eschatology in the Didache and the Gospel of Matthew” (193–215). A review of recent discussion on the relationship between *Did.* 16 and the Gospel of Matthew leads to the conclusion that the author of *Did.* 16 did use Matt 24. Thus, in the second part of his contribution, he reads *Did.* 16 “with an eye on the Gospel of Matthew” (201), thus appreciating not only verbal correspondences between both texts but also the closer and the more remote parallels and allusions.

Finally, Jonathan Draper asks: “Do the Didache and Matthew Reflect an ‘Irrevocable Parting of the Ways’ with Judaism?” (217–41). He considers Matthew and the *Didache* as documents of an “insider-quarrel,” since there is no polemic against *Ioudaioi*. A development can be traced from the *Didache*, which openly asserts the differences to other Jewish groups (the “hypocrites”) to Matthew, which reflects a later stage of conflict when the “hypocrites” seem to have won the place, so that Matthew’s fellow Christians hide their specific forms of piety. He concludes that even at the time when Matthew was composed, the “parting of the ways” was not yet accomplished, but the final break already seemed unavoidable.

This volume presents a wide range of approaches to the relationship of Matthew and the *Didache* but nevertheless provides the less-informed reader with a good survey. The contributions in the third section, with their different emphases and results, cover virtually the complete text of the *Didache*. If, for reasons of balanced judgment, something negative is to be said about this book, it is printed in comparatively small letters, which can make reading a bit tedious. But anyone who undergoes this small discomfort will be rewarded. By the way, eventually I decided to place this volume on the church history shelf.